



USA Masters Games 2020 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Postponed to 2021

For Immediate Release:

News Media Contacts:

Hill Carrow, CEO, USA Masters Games 919.678.1651 hcarow@usamastersgames.com

Eric Engelbarts, Executive Director, State Games of Michigan, Local Organizing Committee for the 2020 USA Masters Games, 616.608.1837 eengelbarts@stategamesofmichigan.com

Collins Lowder, Sport Manager, USA Masters Games, clowder@usamastersgames.com

April 10, 2020, Grand Rapids, MI: Today the USA Masters Games headquarters and the offices of the State Games of Michigan, Local Organizing Committee for the 2020 USA Masters Games, jointly announced the postponement of the Games to 2021.

Hill Carrow, CEO of the USA Masters Games said, “On behalf of the USA Masters Games, and our Grand Rapids Host Organization, the State Games of Michigan, we want to emphasize that our number one priority is the health and well-being of all participants in the USA Masters Games. With that objective in mind, and given the great uncertainty and concern surrounding the current worldwide coronavirus pandemic, it has been determined that it is in the best interests of the safety of Games athletes for the Games to be postponed for one year.”

The Games, previously scheduled for June 19-21 and June 26-28, 2020, will now be held Thursday, June 24, through Sunday, June 27, 2021, in Grand Rapids. Even though they are moving to next year, the name of the Games will remain as the “2020 USA Masters Games.” “We’re following the example of the International Olympic Committee,” Carrow added, “When they decided to keep it the ‘2020 Summer Olympic Games’ in 2021, we said to ourselves, ‘that’s a good idea!’; so we are doing the same thing with the USA Masters Games.”

From the start of the virus crisis, Games organizers have remained optimistic that the Games could still be held in June of this year. However, that optimism has now been tempered by the reality of the inability of Masters athletes to train due to shelter in place requirements or closed venues. Combined with the major challenges of travel, both domestic and international, these factors weighed heavily on the decision to postpone.

Mike Guswiler, President of the West Michigan Sports Commission in Grand Rapids, said, “As one can imagine, rescheduling a large 24-sport event is a major undertaking, and we will collaborate closely with the Games rightsholder and our great local event partners as we transition to these new dates. Throughout this process we remain committed to bringing the participants a special Grand Rapids and West Michigan experience at the biggest and best USA Masters Games ever!”

Eric Engelbarts, who serves as the Executive Director of both the State Games of Michigan and the Local Organizing Committee for the 2020 USA Masters Games, stated, “First, I want to assure participants in the 2020 State Games of Michigan, that those Games are not being postponed, but the timing of the sports

competitions are all in flux now as we shift the schedule and location of events to dates, likely throughout the summer, that will hopefully allow this year's events to take place.”

“As for the USA Masters Games,” he continued, “We understand that many of those athletes who have registered, or who were considering registering for the USA Masters Games, will have questions, and our intent is to provide the answers as soon as possible. However, we ask for patience as we work through the large number of details while our LOC staff is having to work remotely under state and local government lockdown restrictions.”

To start the transition, LOC representatives will soon be contacting all 2020 USA Masters Games registered athletes about their registration and their hotel accommodations. Athletes currently registered for the Games will be eligible for one of three options: Option 1: A transfer of their registration to the postponed dates in June 2021 in Grand Rapids, MI; Option 2: A donation of their registration fees to the USA Masters Games ; or Option 3: Receive a refund via the original payment method.

In addition, athletes that have booked their hotel through the 2020 Games registration system (i.e. RoomRoster) will be contacted and allowed to cancel the reservation without penalty.

Further updates will be posted on the Games website at www.usamastersgames.com as they become available. In the meantime, the Games organizers want to express their gratitude for so much support of the USA Masters Games and their best wishes for everyone to stay safe, healthy, and as active as possible (while maintaining social distancing, of course) during these stressful times.

About the USA Masters Games: The USA Masters Games is the National Sports Festival for Adult Athletes, ages 21 and over. The Games feature 24 sports, Opening & Closing Ceremonies, Games Village, social activities, and entertainment. The inaugural USA Masters Games took place in Greensboro, NC, from Thursday, July 21 to Sunday, July 31, 2016. The second USA Masters Games were held Thursday to Sunday, June 22-25, and Thursday to Sunday, July 13-16, 2017 in San Diego, California. In the third edition of the Games in Grand Rapids in 2021, the USAMG will be hosted in conjunction with the 2021 State Games of Michigan (SGOM) and will be organized locally by the SGOM staff and volunteers. For more information on the USA Masters Games, visit usamastersgames.com.

About the Meijer State Games of Michigan: The Meijer State Games of Michigan, a West Michigan Sports Commission signature event, is an Olympic-style, multisport event that welcomes athletes regardless of age or ability level. The games embody the values of participation, sportsmanship, and healthy living among the residents of Michigan. Since 2010, Meijer State Games of Michigan has hosted over 65,000+ athletes. The Meijer State Games of Michigan has also contributed over \$25 million in estimated economic impact to cities throughout Michigan. For more information on the Meijer State Games of Michigan, visit stategamesofmichigan.com.

About the West Michigan Sports Commission: The West Michigan Sports Commission, a 501 (c) (3) charitable non-profit corporation, works to identify, secure and host a diverse level of youth and amateur sporting events to make a positive impact on the region's economy and quality of life. Since its inception in 2007, the WMSC has booked 646 sporting events and tournaments that attracted more than 1 million athletes and visitors, generating \$297 million in direct visitor spending. For more information on the West Michigan Sports Commission, visit westmisports.com.