

Holiday News from SPI

As we head towards the close of 2018 we at Sports & Properties, Inc. are excited to report that the sports market and our portfolio continue to grow, with 2019 looking to be one of the busiest years on record. Special thanks to all of you in the industry who make our work in sports events, facilities, sponsorships, and tourism so enjoyable. We wish everyone the very best for the holidays and the start of the new year.

Hickory, NC, Has Transformation in Mind

Hickory, NC, a long-time hub for the furniture industry, is experiencing a very interesting economic situation that might typically make other communities jealous. The Greater Hickory region is enjoying a record low unemployment rate of 2.7%. While on its face this appears to be an excellent situation, in reality there are currently 5,000 unfilled jobs in Hickory. To help address this problem Hickory has decided on a highly proactive approach involving a variety of plans to attract more people to Hickory both as visitors and as permanent residents with a goal of growing the population and workforce. The Hickory Trail, a 5.2 mile multi-use pathway connecting downtown and Lake Hickory, is the centerpiece of new development funded by \$40 million in bonds focused on improving and enhancing the community and its quality of life.



In addition, the City of Hickory sees sports as a great means to bolster visits to town, with the accompanying economic impacts, but perhaps even more importantly, introducing visitors to an attractive community where they might move and fill those jobs. To help position the city to grow its share of the sports market, the City has retained SPI to conduct a sports tourism market study. The study is currently underway, but the end result will be an events and facilities plan designed to significantly expand the regional sports economy long-term.

U.S. Figure Skating Championships Three-Peat

Greensboro, NC, has landed America's premier figure skating event for the third time, a feat never before achieved by any city in the southern U.S. Greensboro previously hosted the 2011 and 2015 U.S. Championships. Similar to 2011 and 2015, Sports & Properties, Inc. led the Bid Committee and now will lead the Local Organizing Committee for the championships. SPI will head a collaborative LOC team comprised of the Greensboro Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, the Greensboro Sports Foundation, the Greensboro Sports Commission, and North Carolina Figure Skating.



"We are very excited to be selected to host the U.S. Figure Skating Championships again in 2020," said **Hill Carrow**, CEO of SPI and Chairman of North Carolina 2020, the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) for the event. "We will be working to top our excellent ratings as a previous host when the Championships won the Event of the Year in 2015. In particular we will be focused on attracting large and enthusiastic crowds of spectators to support the outstanding U.S. Figure Skating athletes who are among the best figure skaters in the world."

The 2020 USFS will also include the first-ever U.S. Figure Skating National High Performance Development Camp, January 26-29, 2020 at the Wake Competition Center, currently under construction near Raleigh-Durham International Airport in Morrisville, NC. SPI is particularly delighted to be hosting a national event that nicely ties together the two major metros in central North Carolina - the Triangle and the Triad.

All-Event Ticket Packages for the Championships are now on sale. To make a purchase, to learn more about the event, or to sign up for the USFSC 2020 newsletter, visit www.ncskate2020.com.



St. Pete Pier Naming Rights Enters Sales Phase

During the first half of this year SPI was retained by the City of St. Petersburg, FL, to perform a naming rights valuation analysis and develop a naming rights sales plan (Phase I) for the new \$80 million St. Pete Pier under construction on Tampa Bay in the heart of Downtown St. Petersburg. Development of the pier is projected to be complete by December 2019, so the City has decided to move forward with naming rights sales (Phase II) that could be in place in time for the pier grand opening at the end of next year. SPI has been asked to head up the sales phase which is expected to get fully underway by no later than the first of the new year.



Olympic Water Polo To Launch Active 2019 Event Schedule

The largest water polo tournament in North Carolina history is slated for the Greensboro Aquatic Center, Friday, January 11 to Sunday, January 13, 2019. The USA Water Polo Olympic Development Program East Regional Championship will feature 32 teams – 16 men's teams and 16 women's teams – all vying to be crowned regional champion. In addition, the tournament serves as a key part of the identification and selection process for the USA Water Polo Pipeline National Teams including the Developmental, Cadet and Youth National Teams. These teams lay the foundation for what will eventually become the USA Water Polo Men's and Women's Olympic Teams.



Olympic Development Program
East Regional Championship
Greensboro 2019

"We have been so impressed with the Greensboro Aquatic Center, and we know the athletes who will be competing there will be very happy with the venue," said **Ryan Cunnane**, USA Water Polo Director of Events. Sports & Properties, which led the bid for the championships and will helm the LOC, is most delighted with USA Water Polo's intent to leverage the tournament to help position the Greensboro Aquatic Center as a hub location for growth of the sport in the region. Towards that end, USAWP, with the help of their equipment sponsors/vendors, will donate to the aquatic center additional goals and equipment designed to get young athletes interested and participating in the sport.

Upcoming Events

- **Jan. 11-13, 2019** - USA Water Polo Olympic Development Program East Regional Championships, Greensboro Aquatic Center, Greensboro, NC
- **Mar. 1, 2019** - Nastia Liukin Cup (USA Gymnastics Junior National Championships), Greensboro Coliseum Complex, Greensboro, NC
- **Mar. 2, 2019** - American Cup (International Gymnastics World Cup Tour), Greensboro Coliseum Complex, Greensboro, NC
- **April 11-14, 2019** - National Collegiate Table Tennis Championships, Greensboro Coliseum Complex Special Events Center, Greensboro, NC
- **May 21-26, 2019** - Atlantic Coast Conference Baseball Championship, Durham Athletic Park, Durham, NC
- **July 24-Aug 3, 2019** - AAU Junior Olympic Games, Greensboro Coliseum Complex & NC A&T State University, Greensboro, NC
- **Jan 20-26, 2020** - US Figure Skating Championships, Greensboro Coliseum Complex, Greensboro, NC
- **Jan 26-29, 2020** - US Figure Skating National High Performance Development Camp, Morrisville, NC

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SPI is a sports and entertainment development and marketing firm specializing in sports tourism, facility analysis and planning, naming rights and major sponsorships, and major event management.

www.sportsproperties.com | 401 Harrison Oaks Blvd. Suite 210 | Cary, NC 27513 | Phone: 919.678.1651

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