



TSC Holiday 2021 News

Here we are in the 2021 Holiday Season, with the coronavirus surging once more thanks to the Omicron variant and sports events and league play suffering postponements and cancellations again. Amidst these adverse impacts, the sports tourism industry soldiers on working to sustain what will now surely be a more extended comeback from the depths of the pandemic. Despite the continuing tough row to hoe, the Triangle Sports Commission (www.trianglesportscommission.com) is pleased to be wrapping up its 21st year of operations and playing an important role in the re-emergence of the sports sector.

Raleigh Area Masters Swim Team 40th Anniversary

The Raleigh Area Masters Swim Team (RAM), the largest and oldest of the adult swimming clubs in North Carolina, was founded in 1981 and celebrated its 40th Anniversary this year. The team is a registered workout group within North Carolina



Masters Swimming. Raleigh Area Masters (www.swimram.org) holds a dozen or more coached workouts every week throughout the year at various Raleigh pools including Millbrook Pool, Optimist Pool, and Pullen Park Pool. RAM and its members have served in leadership positions in North Carolina Masters and United States Masters Swimming, and have been recognized with the three highest Masters swimming national awards including the USMS Staff Award, Dot Donnelly Service Award, and Ransom Arthur [Lifetime Achievement] Award. The team is very active locally as a community partner of the Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department where it assists the department with its aquatics programming for local Raleigh youth. RAM annually hosts the North Carolina State Masters Swimming Championships, and this year commemorated its anniversary in typical workmanlike

manner, hosting the U.S. Masters Swimming National Championships for the 5th time. For the team's outstanding positive impacts locally and nationally, the **Triangle Sports Commission recently recognized RAM for its four decades of leadership and significant contributions with a special presentation** at the team's noon workout at Optimist Pool. Presenting an award plaque to team **President, Mark Rubacky**, was **Hill Carrow, RAM Founder** and current CEO of the Triangle Sports Commission.

Year in Review

With 2022 fast approaching, we take this opportunity to highlight 2021 successes from a year of survival, resilience, revival, perseverance, and, most important, persistence.

First Quarter: U.S. Candidate for the 2027 World University Games



**CANDIDATE
SUMMER
WORLD
UNIVERSITY
GAMES**

In February, the U.S. International University Sports Federation confirmed North Carolina as its Host City Partner for the U.S. bid for the 2027 Summer World University Games. The World University Games (WUG) are the second-largest international multi-sport event behind the Olympic Games, and are considered the Olympics for college and university athletes from around the world. The bid, led locally by the Triangle Sports Commission's North Carolina Bid Committee (www.ncwug2027bid.com) presents the opportunity for central North Carolina to step out on the global stage and reap the benefits of visitors from 150 countries, hundreds of millions of dollars in local economic impacts, and worldwide broadcast viewership.

Second Quarter: WakeMed Soccer Park & USAB NTC Rise to the Occasion

Leaders of the Triangle Sports Commission originated the idea for what is now WakeMed Soccer Park, and helped lead the initial fundraising, designs, and development that led to opening of the park in Cary in 2002. Later, the TSC led a second round of fundraising for the park that resulted in its major expansion in 2012. The long-term value of these investments was demonstrated like never before when WakeMed served as the primary host of the first-ever combined Men's and Women's NCAA Soccer Championships (with both tournaments being held entirely within the state of North Carolina – another NCAA first) in May.

Not to be outdone, the **USA Baseball National Training Complex**, another regional venue that came to be thanks to the leadership of the Triangle Sports Commission in recruiting USA Baseball and its national training complex to the Triangle, hosted its 11th NCAA Division II Baseball National Championships in June.



The Championship was won by North Carolina's own **Wingate University**, located in Wingate, NC.

Third Quarter: Aquatics Take Center Stage; International Candidacy Begins

The first **Masters Swimming National Championships** in two years were co-hosted

by the Raleigh Area Masters Swim Team and the Triangle Sports Commission in **July**. Despite a variety of restrictions due to the pandemic, including no spectators allowed, the meet hosts were able to recruit over 500 volunteers to help ensure a competitive and enjoyable championship experience for all 870 athletes. The meet went so well that **Mark Rubacky, Meet Director**, won the **USMS National Championship Meets Award**, and **Hill Carrow, Local Organizing Committee Chair**, was awarded the **Dot Donnelly Service Award** at the USMS Annual Convention in September.

In **August**, the TSC hosted the **10th Anniversary edition of the Masters Swimming High Performance Camp (HPC)**. A long-time Community Partner of U.S. Masters Swimming, the TSC was asked by USMS to establish the USMS HPC in 2011. (The TSC was the first-ever event held in the Greensboro Aquatic Center, which also celebrated its own 10th Anniversary in August.) This year's 2021 HPC was sold out and featured the top Masters swimming coaches and instructors in the U.S. Through its 10 years, the camp has improved and enhanced the swimming experience of hundreds of adult swimmers from around the world.



September 1 marked the **opening of the international bid process for the 2027 Summer World University Games**, and North Carolina USA bid leaders submitted their formal Letter of Intent and bid fee on day one. The primary competition at this point is a South Korean bid centered in the region around Daejeon, South Korea. Leaders of the U.S. Bid travelled to Switzerland, home of the international governing body for the Games, in early September to meet with governing body executives and senior management of international sport federations.

On **Friday, September 24**, the **North Carolina Swimming Hall of Fame** (www.ncswimhalloffame.com), after two previous Covid-related postponements, was finally able to host its **2020 Induction Ceremony** at the Embassy Suites Crabtree Hotel in Raleigh. The TSC provides the staff support for the NC Swimming Hall of Fame. Inductees included Mecklenburg Aquatic coach and national USA Swimming officer, **Peter Carney**; Open Water champion and Olympic Coach (also Kinston native and NCSU alum), **Sid Cassidy**; long-time head coach at UNC Chapel Hill, **Pat Earey** (presented posthumously); NC State Women's Swimming star, **Beth Harrell**; and Masters Swimming national and world record-holder, **Fritz Lehman**.



Fourth Quarter: World University Games Bid Gains Urgency

Greensboro has been added to North Carolina's Bid for the World University Games, adding to the bid's already stellar lineup of facilities, but also combining two of the three largest metro areas in the state into an even more impressive and impactful team.



As we conclude 2021 and head towards the new year, FISU, the international governing body for the World University Games, has added new urgency to the bid process by shortening that process by 25%, leading to an announcement of the **winner of the 2027 Summer World University Games in October 2022** (versus January 2023 previously). This will no doubt ramp up the bid activity significantly in 2022 – which, in turn, will be a good thing for sports tourism in both the Triangle and Triad.

Giftng at Holiday Time

We thank you for your ongoing support of the Triangle Sports Commission and our events and activities. We wish you the best for the holidays, and hope you will please keep us in mind as you look for those last-minute items, by starting with Amazon Smile (<https://smile.amazon.com>), designating the Triangle Sports Commission as your charity, and then shopping as usual. Each purchase generates a small contribution from Amazon to the TSC. It's so easy! Happy New Year!



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