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Triad lands inaugural USA Masters Games, with 21 sports across 10 days

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The **Greensboro Coliseum Complex** and other venues around the city will play host next summer to the inaugural USA Masters Games for athletes 25 and older competing in more than 20 sports.

The 10 days of competition begin July 22, 2016, with opening ceremonies at the Greensboro Coliseum, which will be a hub for the games and include a Games Village that will serve as a social and organizational center for thousands of competitors.

"We see Greensboro as having all the right components for a highly successful mega-event like the Masters Games, including venues, volunteers, resources, experience, accommodations, transportation and most of all, the local "can-do" attitude," said Hill Carrow, CEO of the USA Masters Games.

Greensboro Coliseum Complex Managing Director Matt Brown said that the games take Greensboro's history of hosting amateur athletic competitions, such as the U.S. Figure Skating Championships, the ACC basketball tournaments and the USA Gymnastics Championships, "to a whole new level."

The games will tap into the entirety of the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, with venues such as the **Greensboro Aquatic Center**, White Oak Amphitheatre, the Pavilion and the Special Events Center hosting events.

The USA Masters Games will kick off in Greensboro, then move to other locations around the country on a biennial schedule, with the games being held on even-numbered years.

Henri Fourrier, president and CEO of the Greensboro Convention and Visitors Bureau, said that the area could be looking at hosting "well over 6,000 athletes," which would make the games the biggest national participant sports event Greensboro has ever hosted. Given the size and extended length of the games, the area could likely use as many as 20 hotel properties during the event, Fourrier said.

Among the sports expected to be included: Athletics/Track & Field, Baseball, Basketball, Bowling, Canoe/Kayak, Cycling, Diving, Figure Skating, Golf, Martial Arts/Taekwondo, Rowing, Soccer, Softball, Swimming, Synchronized Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Triathlon/Duathlon, Volleyball, Water Polo, Weightlifting, and Wrestling.



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Greensboro has been selected to host the inaugural USA Masters Games in 2016.

Among the venues beyond the coliseum complex that will be included are public facilities such as Bryan Park, the Greensboro Sportsplex, Spencer Love Tennis Center, and Carolyn Allen Community Park, as well as university sites at **N.C. A&T State University** and UNC-Greensboro. Oak Hollow Lake in High Point is also expected to host rowing, canoe and kayak competitions.

The games will be promoted and staged in conjunction with the national government body for each sport, and be conducted at the national championship level. USA Diving has already selected the inaugural games as that sport's summer national championships.

"These games are a huge deal," said Kim Strable, president of the Greensboro Sports Commission.

Strable said the games will help the community "build or enhance" relationships with at least 20 major sports governing bodies, with each of those sports perhaps considering Greensboro for future Masters-level events.

"This is the kind of event that many of the biggest sports-tourism-oriented cities in America would just love to have," Strable said.

The games will be another high-profile amateur sporting event staged by Carrow in Greensboro. CEO of Cary-based Sports & Properties Inc., Carrow has been deeply involved in the U.S. Figure Skating Championships in 2011 and 2015, the Gymnastics Championships, various high-level swimming championships and many other high-profile amateur sporting events.

In 1987, he led the effort for the U.S. Olympic Festival, which was held at multiple venues around North Carolina with a significant presence in Greensboro.

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