



For Immediate Release
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Badger State Summer Games Moving to the Fox Cities

[Fox Cities] – The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau and Wisconsin Sports Development Corporation (WSDC) announced today that the American Family Insurance Badger State Summer Games will move to the Fox Cities for the 2009, 2010, and 2011 Games. The Games have been held in Madison since their inception in 1985.

“The Badger State Games are a Wisconsin institution and we are very proud to be selected as the new host site,” said John Burgland, chair of the Bureau’s Board of Directors. “It’s a testament to the strength of sporting facilities in the Fox Cities.”

“The Fox Cities are a great sports destination,” commented Lynn Peters, executive director of the Bureau. “Sporting groups recognize not only our wonderful facilities, but the incredible local fan and volunteer support generated for each event.”

“Moving the American Family Insurance Badger State Summer Games to the Fox Cities helps us accomplish our mission, which is statewide in terms of geographic scope,” said Ron Vincent, Chief Executive Officer of the Wisconsin Sports Development Corporation, the owner of the American Family Insurance Badger State Games. “We currently hold several events in the Greater Madison, Central Wisconsin/Wausau and Milwaukee areas. Moving the American Family Insurance Badger State Summer Games to the Fox Cities Area gives us an opportunity to call another part of Wisconsin home. Diversifying the geographic location of our events allows us to better promote sports tourism and fulfill our mission by fostering participation, competition and memorable experiences through events and programs that support good health, active lifestyles and a sense of community.”

The American Family Insurance Badger State Games emerged as part of a national State Games movement to provide competitive opportunities for amateur athletes.

Modeled after the Olympics, the philosophy of the American Family Insurance Badger State Games is that everyone plays regardless of age or ability; everyone is welcome and everyone plays. The Games embody the values of participation and good sportsmanship. BSG remains Wisconsin's only Olympic-style sports festival and is truly a grassroots organization that relies on the dedication of thousands of volunteers and the support of corporate partners.

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A key element in securing the event was an \$180,000 grant received from the Fox Cities Sports Authority through its charitable fund at the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region. The grant will be paid out over the three years the event is held in the Fox Cities.

“We are pleased to have this opportunity to support the Convention & Visitors Bureau’s efforts to bring the Badger State Games to the Fox Cities,” said Mike Reese, vice-president of the Fox Cities Sports Authority. “Fifteen years ago, we needed funds to build Fox Cities Stadium. Through its Capital Development Fund, the Bureau gave us seed money to build the stadium. At that time, we promised the Bureau and other donors that we’d support events that are important to tourism and the quality of life in the Fox Cities. Our grant for the Badger State Games is just one of the ways we are keeping our promise to the Bureau and the community.”

There are 10,000 participants in American Family Insurance Badger State Summer Games in events from archery to gymnastics to rowing and swimming. The 2009 Games are tentatively scheduled for June 19-21 and June 26-28.

“We plan to use a number of local facilities,” commented Pete Schueppert, director of sports sales for the Bureau, “including the Heart of the Valley YMCA, Fox Cities Racquet Club, USA Youth Sports Complex, Appleton’s Memorial Park and several local high school facilities.” The Bureau conservatively estimates the annual economic impact of the Badger State Games to the Fox Cities will be more than \$900,000.

“Moving this type of event from its long-time home will probably cause a change in the participant dynamics, so it’s difficult to estimate the number of hotels rooms that will be used,” said Peters. “However, in terms of economic impact, we believe this event has the potential to be one of the largest that the Fox Cities have hosted.”

Total tourism expenditures in the Fox Cities were more than \$383 million, and tourism created 6,467 jobs and \$110.65 million of resident income in 2006.

The Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau is a private, not-for-profit corporation working to develop an economically viable convention and visitor business in the Fox Cities. This is accomplished by attracting meetings, conventions and tournaments to the community and promoting area attractions and special events to tourists and other visitors.

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