



CONVENTION &
SPORTS BUREAU



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“MIZUNO NEW ENGLAND WINTERFEST” VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT MEANS BIG \$\$ BUSINESS ***Saturday’s Ceremonial Opening Serve by Nicole Millage of Silver Medal-winning U.S. Women’s Volleyball Team – Paralympic Games***

HARTFORD, CONN. – January 15, 2013 – Volleyball will mean big business for the Capital Region this weekend when the **New England Region Volleyball Association (NERVA)** hosts the **“2013 Mizuno New England Winterfest Volleyball Tournament”** at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

Tournament organizers and the Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CTCSB) are looking forward to welcoming more than 5,000 visitors during the long Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend from all over New England, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and as far away as California and Bermuda. The attendees will stay in 27 hotels **this Friday, January 18 through Monday, January 21**. Approximately 1,900 players, 200 coaches, 100 officials and volunteer tournament staff, and 3,000 family members and fans are expected.

“The Mizuno New England Winterfest is the largest volleyball tournament – girls or boys – held in New England and is designed to showcase female high school volleyball players, ages 14-18, to college coaches and recruiters from throughout the Northeast,” explains Tournament Chair Alex Temkin, the new Volleyball Coach at the University of Hartford. “The Northeast has one of the largest concentrations of Collegiate Division II and Division III schools in the country, and there are many Division I schools here as well. Having more than 250 matches in a single location encourages college recruitment decision-makers to come and scout as many players as possible.”

The 2013 Winterfest will feature more athletes than ever before, notes Temkin. “This year, we are adding two courts for a total of 24, enabling us to accept a record 188 volleyball teams for the tournament. There will be 12 matches per court, each lasting no more than one hour.” Admission to the matches is free for spectators and no reservations are needed.

“Kicking off the new year with the Mizuno New England Winterfest Tournament is especially important to the Greater Hartford region because the event generates revenue in the area and beyond over a long holiday weekend,” states Curt Jensen, Director of Sports Marketing, Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CTCSB). The CTCSB (formerly the Greater Hartford Convention & Visitors Bureau) has been working with the New England Region Volleyball Association ever since the tournament expanded from just regional and moved to the Connecticut Convention Center with a national status in 2010. The CTCSB manages the tournament’s hotel reservation process, which involves 4,000 overnight rooms at 27 hotels in 11 local cities and towns. “In addition to spending money in our hotels, attendees will dine in a wide variety of restaurants, and enjoy Connecticut attractions that are just a drive away.”

“We are pleased to host this dynamic tournament, having watched it grow since its first year here in 2010,” says Michael Costelli, General Manager of the Connecticut Convention Center. “Our staff is ready to provide a

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terrific weekend and we hope that many Connecticut residents come to enjoy the action.” This is the fourth consecutive year that the Mizuno Winterfest is being held at the Connecticut Convention Center. The New England Region Volleyball Association has committed to holding the event at the venue through at least 2015.

This year’s tournament will feature a **Friday night** College Showcase where 320 athletes will participate in practice drills and scrimmage. Coaches and recruiters from nearly 50 colleges can watch and evaluate the players’ skills on an individual basis. During that period of time, the girls’ parents will attend a recruiting seminar to learn about the recruiting process, NCAA rules, and related topics.

On **Saturday, January 19** between 7:35 a.m. and 7:45 a.m., the tournament will open with a special ceremony. The official “Ceremonial Serve” will be made by Nicole Millage, a member of the U.S. Women’s Sitting Volleyball Team that won a Silver Medal in the 2011 and 2012 Paralympic Games.

Also on Saturday, two identical Coaching Clinics will be held from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Local volleyball coaches may attend at no charge, but they must register in advance at www.newwinterfest.com.

Spectator admission is free and no advance tickets are required to the New England Region Volleyball Association’s “Mizuno Winterfest” at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

Tournament hours:

- **Friday, January 14:** Showcase, 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. – College Showcase – Drills & Scrimmages
- **Saturday, January 15:** Opening Ceremony 7:35 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.
- **Saturday, January 15:** Tournament 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Saturday, January 15:** FREE Volleyball Coaches Clinic, 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. – Advance registration required.
- **Sunday, January 16:** Tournament 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Monday, January 17:** Tournament 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

About the New England Region Volleyball Association (NERVA) and the Mizuno New England Winterfest

Volleyball Tournament: *The New England Region is one of many Regions in the United States that aid in the governing of the sport of volleyball. Regional Volleyball Associations (RVAs) are member organizations of USA Volleyball (USAV). The RVAs serve as the grassroots function for the USAV and individually and collectively serve as a catalyst for USAV functions. Each Region is independently operated and is led by a Regional Commission. For more information about the Mizuno New England Winterfest Volleyball Tournament, visit www.newwinterfest.com.*

*The **Connecticut Convention & Visitors Bureau (CTCSB)** works in partnership with the state’s businesses, institutions, nonprofit organizations, and surrounding communities to market all of Connecticut – all convention and meeting venues, hotels and attractions, and sporting venues – as a premier destination for international, national, regional and statewide conventions. The Connecticut Sports Convention Advisory Board, a division of the CTCSB, focuses its efforts on attracting and serving international, national and regional sporting events. For more information, visit www.ctmeetings.org or call 860-728-6789.*

*The **Connecticut Convention Center** in Hartford is the state’s premier meeting venue and the largest full-service convention facility between New York and Boston. Overlooking the beautiful Connecticut River, it features 140,000 square feet of exhibition space, a 40,000-square-foot ballroom and 25,000 square feet of meeting space, as well as ample sheltered parking. The award-winning facility is served by more than 6,500 local area hotel rooms. For more information, visit www.ctconventions.com or call 860-249-6000.*

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