



CONVENTION &
SPORTS BUREAU



MEDIA CONTACTS:

Alex Temkin, Tournament Chair - New England Region Volleyball Association, Cell 413-531-2480

Roxann Link, Tournament Director - New England Region Junior Commissioner, Cell 508-868-5316

Laura Soll, Communications – **Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau, 860-688-4499, Cell 860-833-4466**

Amanda Schoonmaker, Communications - **Connecticut Convention Center, 860-728-2605, Cell 860-748-7315**

“MIZUNO NEW ENGLAND WINTERFEST” GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT MEANS BIG \$\$ BUSINESS THIS WEEK

Free Admission for Spectators at All Times

HARTFORD, CONN. – January 16, 2014 – Volleyball will mean big business for the Capital Region later this week when the New England Region Volleyball Association (NERVA) hosts the “2014 Mizuno New England Winterfest Volleyball Tournament” for girls at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford.

Tournament organizers and the Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CTCSB) are looking forward to welcoming close to 6,000 visitors from New England and the Northeast U.S. during the long Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. Attendees will stay in 26 hotels **this Friday, January 17 through Monday, January 20, 2014**. Approximately 2,000 players, 250 coaches, 100 officials and volunteer tournament staff, and 3,500 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 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 800 matches in a single location encourages college recruitment decision-makers to come and scout as many players as possible.”

The 2014 Winterfest will feature more athletes than ever before, notes Temkin. “This year, we are adding one more court for a total of 25, enabling us to accept a record 196 volleyball teams for the tournament. There will be 12 matches per court every day, each lasting no more than one hour.” **Admission to the matches is free for spectators and no reservations are needed.** “In addition, we are holding a Recruiting Seminar for parents of volleyball players where they will learn from head coaches what they need to know about applying to colleges with volleyball programs.”

“Kicking off the new year with the Mizuno New England Winterfest Tournament is especially important to Greater Hartford because the event will generate approximately \$1.8 million in revenue in this region and beyond over the long holiday weekend,” states Curt Jensen, Director of Sports Marketing for the Connecticut Convention & Sports Bureau (CTCSB). The CTCSB has been working with the New England Region Volleyball Association ever since the tournament expanded from just regional and moved up to the Connecticut Convention Center with a national status in 2010. The CTCSB manages the tournament’s hotel reservation process, which involves close to 4,100 overnight rooms at 26 hotels in the Greater Hartford area, an increase of nearly 13 percent over last year’s bookings. “In addition to spending money in our hotels, attendees will dine in a wide variety of restaurants, shop in area stores, and enjoy Connecticut attractions just a drive away.”

“Hartford is a great location for our sports event and region really makes our players and fans feel welcome,” adds Tournament Chair Temkin. “Downtown restaurants extend their hours, customize menus, and really do their best to accommodate our group.”

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“We have had the pleasure of hosting this ever-growing tournament since 2010,” says Michael Costelli, General Manager of the Connecticut Convention Center. “Our staff is excited and ready to provide a terrific weekend for everyone coming to enjoy the action.” This is the fifth 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 2017.

On **Friday evening at 7 p.m.**, a **College Showcase** will be held where 250 athletes will participate in practice drills and scrimmage. More than 75 college coaches and recruiters will be on-site to watch and evaluate the players’ skills on an individual basis.

On **Friday evening at 7:30 p.m.**, **parents of volleyball players are invited to a Recruiting Seminar** where a panel of college coaches will tell them what they need to know about college recruitment including calendars, NCAA terms and related topics. Panelists will include: Tim Byram, Head Women's Volleyball Coach at Endicott College; Evin Gilgio, Head Women's and Men's Volleyball Coach at Wentworth Institute of Technology; Moira Long, Head Women's Volleyball Coach at Springfield College; Peter Maneggia, Head Volleyball Coach at Eastern Connecticut State University; and Bob Weiner, Head Volleyball Coach at Keene State College. This free program is open to all parents of volleyball players – whether or not their child is participating in this tournament. No advance reservations are needed.

On **Saturday between 7:35 a.m. and 7:45 a.m.**, **the tournament will open with a special ceremony and ceremonial opening serve.**

On **Saturday and Sunday**, two identical Coaching Clinics will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Local volleyball coaches may attend for \$20 per session, and 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 schedule:

- **Friday, Jan. 17:** College Showcase, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. – Drills & Scrimmages
- **Saturday, Jan. 18:** Opening Ceremony 7:35 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.
- **Saturday, Jan. 18:** Tournament 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Saturday, Jan. 18:** Volleyball Coaches Clinics, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Advance registration required, \$20 per session.
- **Sunday, Jan. 19:** Volleyball Coaches Clinics, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. – Advance registration required, \$20 per session.
- **Sunday, Jan. 19:** Tournament 8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- **Monday, Jan. 20:** 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.*

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*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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