

Hospitality Community Gears Up for Ryder Cup It's Our Best Chance to Shine, says Detroit Metro CVB

Sold out for more than a year, the 2004 Ryder Cup is putting metro Detroit on the international stage. Taking place at Oakland Hills Country Club in Bloomfield Hills over the week of September 12–19, 2004, the event is drawing golfers, officials, enthusiasts, members of media and the simply curious to the region in unprecedented numbers, with the PGA alone having booked some 40,000 roomnights for the event.

Expected to have a regional economic impact of more than \$100 million, the Ryder Cup will be attended by more than 1,000 credentialed media representatives from 18 countries and 200,000 spectators throughout the week. The event will also be televised live on the USA and NBC networks, reaching an audience of 127 million viewers outside of the United States and will be aired in 76 countries and territories.

The first of many such high-profile sporting events coming to the area, metro Detroit organizations and businesses are working feverishly to make sure the region is presented in the best possible light. These upcoming events include the 2005 Major League Baseball All-Star Game, Super Bowl XL in 2006, first and second round NCAA Men's Basketball in 2006, the PGA Championship golf tournament (also at Oakland Hills) in 2008 and the NCAA Men's Basketball Final Four in 2009.

As part of this effort to make sure both visitors and broadcast audiences see metro Detroit as a thriving leisure and business destination, the Detroit Metro Convention & Visitors

Bureau has been working with the PGA to ensure that all visitors leave the region with positive memories. For example, the DMCVB has:

- Published 300,000 copies of its commemorative Ryder Cup issue of *Visit Detroit* magazine
- Coordinated with hotels and transportation companies to distribute the magazine
- Created maps of Oakland County for the PGA
- Developed a dedicated Ryder Cup Web site that includes relevant links, including available hotel inventory
- Sent media kits with gift boxes to 1,100 members of the international media
- Hosted familiarization tours for professional golf writers
- Worked with the Wales Tourism Board, the Ireland Tourism Board and the European PGA Travel Group to ensure that travel accommodations were secured
- Acted as a liaison between Ryder Cup principles and local officials

The DMCVB will also be an active participant during the Ryder Cup. It will have, for example, a media center booth at the Oakland Hills Country Club; banners and staffed welcome desks at major airports; welcome posters that will be distributed to member hotels and restaurants; buttons that will be given out to hospitality personnel to welcome Ryder Cup guests; and welcome letters that will be distributed to hotel guests.

The DMCVB is using this valuable experience to assist future Ryder Cup sites, including Ireland, which is hosting the Ryder Cup in 2006, and Louisville, Kentucky, which is

hosting the event in 2008. It is also meeting with the Ministry of Tourism of Wales to explain how the DMCVB worked with the PGA to create a positive impact on the community.

“We feel that the Ryder Cup is the perfect opportunity to reinforce the positive image many people have about the region,” said Larry Alexander, president and chief executive officer of the DMCVB. “And we’re not stopping here; in the future, we expect other such sporting events to further our goals of making metro Detroit the most desirable destination in the American Midwest.”