



Atlanta to Host 2003 Girls Junior Olympic Championships

ATLANTA (Sept. 11, 2001) – After a highly selective bidding process, Atlanta won USA Volleyball’s bid to host the 2003 Girls Junior Olympic Championships from June 21-July 2, 2003, at the Georgia World Congress Center (GWCC). Atlanta edged out Houston to secure the event.

In 2001, 573 girls teams and their fans totaling 30,000 visitors descended upon Salt Lake City, Utah, and the 2003 estimate is set at 40-45,000 visitors and a total estimated economic impact of \$25 million. The Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau (ACVB) and the Atlanta Sports Council, along with the hotel community, GWCC, MARTA and the Ambassador Force, were able to demonstrate to USA Volleyball that Atlanta is the premier destination for the championships, last held on the East Coast in 1995.

“Atlanta offers the perfect atmosphere for youth sports,” said Spurgeon Richardson, ACVB president. “We have the finest facilities with a large number of hotel rooms within walking distance, we are accessible to 80 percent of the nation within two hours via Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport, and we have family-friendly restaurants, transportation and attractions. Combine all of that with our great Southern hospitality found in unique sources like the Ambassador Force, and you won’t find a better host city anywhere.”

Atlanta is known as the sports capital of the world and a major supporter of both youth and women’s sports. Home to seven professional sports teams, including women’s professional soccer, Atlanta has state-of-the-art sports facilities. Since Atlanta was awarded the Olympics, Atlanta has hosted two Super Bowls, two TOUR Championships and the PGA Championship and five World Series as well as the Atlanta Cup – youth soccer’s largest state tournament, the WUSA Founders Cup II and the 2002 Men’s Final Four. Atlanta will host the 2003 Women’s Final Four, the 2003 NBA All-Star Game, the 2004 U.S. Figure Skating Championships and the annual Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl.

"Hosting this event is a great way for Atlanta to continue to build on its Olympic legacy," said Gary Stokan, Atlanta Sports Council president. "We're proud to have been selected to host the championships and will bring together our unmatched event-hosting resources to prove once again why Atlanta is the sports capital of the world."

Established in 1913, the ACVB is a private, non-profit organization created exclusively to market metro Atlanta and Georgia as the premier conventions, meetings and leisure destination in the regional, national and international marketplace, and favorably impact the Atlanta economy through conventions and tourism.

The Atlanta Sports Council promotes the value of sports growth in Atlanta and Georgia by acting as an authority on the economic impact, visibility and quality of life issues associated with sports. Its mission is to lead, organize and support sports development with the goal of building Atlanta's reputation as the Sports Capital of the World.

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