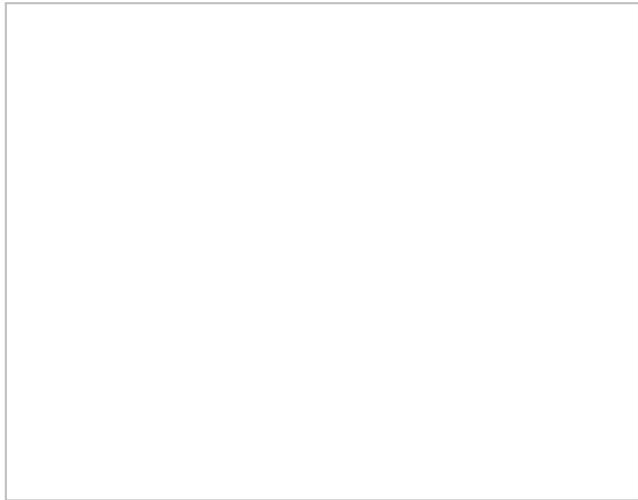


Quidditch tourney an economic boon for Columbia area

[ColaDaily.com is your source for free news and information in Columbia and the Midlands.](#)

US Quidditch Cup 9 brought more than the magic of “Harry Potter” to the Columbia area last weekend. It also brought a significant economic boost to the area.

The [two-day tournament](#) at Saluda Shoals Park attracted an estimated 5,000 people each day and generated more than \$850,000 in local spending, according to data from the Columbia Regional Sports Council. The numbers provided by the council are initial, conservative estimates, said Grayson Hopp, the council’s sales manager.



Teams from across the United States competed in last weekend’s US Quidditch Cup 9 in Columbia. (Photo by Brindy McNair)

Visitors who came to Columbia from across the United States to support the 60 teams that competed in the tournament did not confine themselves to Saluda Shoals Park. Many patronized Columbia’s restaurants and breweries as well as area attractions such as Riverbanks

Zoo & Gardens, the South Carolina State House and Lake Murray, Hopp said.

“This event brought people to our city that had never been here before or had only driven through,” she said. “The uniqueness of the event and the huge social media presence put Columbia on the map for people around the world who weren’t even here for the tournament.”

The sports council estimates the economic impact of the tournament to be \$857,897, which is at least \$150,000 more than was projected prior to the tournament.

The economic impact is comparable to other large events in the Columbia area, such as the Famously Hot New Year celebration, which had an [economic impact of \\$1.2 million](#) dollars this past year, Hopp said.

The sports council also hosts the U.S. Tennis Association Junior Team Tennis National Championship in conjunction with the Lexington County Recreation and Aging Commission. The four-day event has come to the Lexington area each of the past four years, and its economic impact on the region typically is between \$460,000 and \$680,000, Hopp said. The tournament will return to Lexington for a fifth consecutive year in October.

“When you put together together the media impact plus economic impact, it’s safe to say (US Quidditch Cup 9) was the largest event we (at the sports council) have bid on,” Hopp said.

The city’s first stint hosting a US Quidditch Cup tournament went smoothly, with no reports of traffic or crowd-control problems. Rather, it was the impact of what happened months before the tournament that presented a challenge.

“A major unforeseen issue was, of course, the October flood, which certainly caused some setbacks with construction of Saluda Shoals Park,” Hopp said. “But the Irmo Chapin Recreation Commission did an amazing job with getting everything completed in time.”

While this was Columbia’s first time hosting a quidditch tournament, sports council staff hope it won’t be the last.

“We have already bid on hosting in 2017,” Hopp said, adding that the sports council would like Columbia to host a regional US Quidditch Cup tournament or, even better, the national tournament once again. “We are very interested in hosting in the future.”

[Columbia](#), [Columbia Regional Sports Council](#), [Quidditch Cup 9](#), [sports](#), [US Quidditch](#)



Quidditch tourney an economic boon for Columbia area added by [Brindy McNair](#) on April 19, 2016

[View all posts by Brindy McNair →](#)

Comments

