

# THE HUDDLE

## HAMILTON COUNTY, INDIANA



## THE WINNING DESTINATION

### America's Fastest Growing Sport Coming To Westfield

A nationally-televised pickleball event expected to attract more than 1,000 players is coming to Grand Park in January 2024. A multi-year agreement between the Association of Pickleball Players (APP) and local sports tourism bodies in Hamilton County was reached and will set the stage for America's fastest growing sport to be added to the list of marquee events in Central Indiana.



The APP's inaugural Collegiate Championships and Midwest Open will be in Hamilton County's Grand Park January 3-7, featuring the nation's top college pickleball teams in a newly-created team format. Alongside the collegiate event will be the Midwest Open, which is available to players of all ages and skill levels. Players will be competing for a wild card entry into a designated 2024 APP Tour competition.

"We're honored to bring the first major collegiate pickleball championships to the great city of Westfield at the amazing Grand Park sports campus," APP founder Ken Herrmann said. "It's going to be a wonderful experience for many people to come to, right after the holiday season. There will be no better way to kick off the new year."

Grand Park, one of the nation's premier facilities for large-scale amateur sporting events as well as the home of the Indianapolis Colts training camp, will field 28 pickleball courts and a championship court for the APP. Amenities will include player locker rooms, stadium seating and other fan engagement amenities.

In addition to the capabilities of hosting the large-scale pickleball event in Grand Park, the Grand National Racquet Center is under development in Westfield and will house pickleball, tennis and squash facilities. The new racquet sports center, located just north of Grand Park, is expected to open in 2025.

The pickleball action coming to Westfield is unique in several ways. Grand Park and the upcoming Grand National Racquet Center both allow the APP to thrive during the winter months and avoid any weather issues. Most pro pickleball events are held outdoors. Additionally, new playing surfaces will be brought into that can host pickleball but are also suitable for basketball and volleyball.

"We know this event will be played in one of the world's best facilities, without weather interfering," said John Moorin, a local pickleball enthusiast who helped bring the APP to Westfield. "The new floors are not only suitable for pickleball but also expand our capabilities to host more basketball and volleyball."

Herrman added: "We have all of the ingredients for a highly successful event, the first of many over the upcoming years."

Bringing marquee events to Hamilton County is always a team effort, and this score was no different. The Hamilton County Sports Authority, Hamilton County Tourism, and the Indiana Bid Fund partnered to provide the necessary resources and collaboration for what promises to be a memorable event for pro and amateur pickleball.

“We overcame obstacles because the public and private sectors came together,” Moorin said. “This will be a must-play event and must-see TV for years to come.”