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First Four Stays in Dayton

University of Dayton

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The NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Committee announced the NCAA tournament First Four will be played at University of Dayton Arena through 2018.

"We're happy for the University, the region and its basketball fans that we'll continue to be part of March Madness. This will provide the University and region an opportunity to showcase our attributes
to a global audience. We want to thank everyone in the community who has been so instrumental in helping bring the NCAA Men's Division I Basketball Championship to Dayton," said Tim Wabler, University of Dayton vice president and director of athletics. "We are thankful the NCAA continues to provide the University and region the opportunity to be part of one of the nation's great sporting events."

University of Dayton Arena has hosted more NCAA men's Division I basketball tournament games — 105 — than any other venue in the nation. It will add to that mark when it hosts the 2015 First Four March 17-18. Fans can purchase tickets for the 2015 First Four by visiting NCAA.com/mbbtickets.

University of Dayton Arena has hosted the NCAA tournament in 28 seasons, including recent opening weekends in 2013, 2009 and 2006. March Madness has opened in Dayton since 2001 — from 2001-10 as the Opening Round and from 2011-14 as the First Four.

"The University of Dayton is a top-tier national university and is no stranger to the national stage. The same can be said for our region," University of Dayton President Daniel J. Curran said. "It takes a great deal of teamwork to sustain this great event and it should come as no surprise that this region is one that can work together to make great things happen."

With the help of the First Four Local Organizing Committee, in 2011 the University and region played host to Virginia Commonwealth, which went from First Four to Final Four. In 2012, it hosted U.S. President Barack Obama and British Prime Minister David Cameron in 2012. In 2013, all 10 First Four and second- and third-round games sold out, setting a record. In 2014, the First Four drew capacity crowds and record-setting viewership and ratings.

The committee, an all-volunteer group, has rallied community leaders, sponsors and organizations to showcase the region as the epicenter of college basketball and its commitment to hosting first-class events. The committee has organized family-friendly events surrounding the NCAA Tournament — the Hoopla Four Miler community fun-run and the Hoopla STEM Challenge for area youth. The STEM challenge is designed to tie together the excitement of March Madness to the power of science, technology, engineering and math education and engage area youth with hands-on exhibits and demonstrations from many of the country's top organizations and research institutions. Both events will continue in 2015.

Since 2012, the organizing committee has worked with local businesses to provide more than 10,000 tickets to area military personnel and children to attend the First Four as part of the Hoopla Ticket Program.

"Dayton is home to America's No. 1 host site and home to America's most passionate college
basketball fans, whose commitment to the NCAA Tournament has no equal," said JP Nauseef, Local Organizing Committee chairman. "In the proposal to NCAA, we highlighted the strength of our community and the unwavering support of our basketball fans, which have a well earned reputation as the best in the country.

"The Dayton region has taken ownership of these games. Since 2012, more than 150 businesses have stepped up to support The Big Hoopla events. This is a total team win for which everyone deserves credit. This community has stepped up and delivered time and again."

For more information, contact Sports Information Director Doug Hauschild at 937-229-4390.

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