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Visit Winston-Salem and Community Partners Score Several Major Sporting Events for 2026-27 and 2027-28

A team effort between Visit Winston-Salem and a host of community partners leads to big results, including two NCAA Regional, generating over 900 room nights and \$700,000 in visitor spending.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WINSTON-SALEM, NC (Nov. 5, 2024) — The Greater Winston-Salem area has scored a series of big wins after two area facilities were selected to host NCAA regional events for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 seasons.

Ivey M. Redmond Sports Complex in Kernersville was awarded the 2026 NCAA Division II Cross Country Regional, with Winston-Salem State University serving as the host institution.

Meanwhile, Bermuda Run Country Club was awarded the 2028 NCAA Division I Women's Golf Regional, with Wake Forest University acting as the host institution. Visit Winston-Salem collaborated with each host partner and site to help secure the selections, which were announced by the NCAA in a [press release](#) in early October.

The two events are projected to have a significant economic impact, generating over 900 hotel room nights and pumping an estimated \$700,000 into the local economy. Visit Winston-Salem President Stephanie Pace Brown said hosting these types of tournaments helps solidify the region as a top-tier destination for sporting events. More importantly, they help support countless local jobs and generate millions in state and local taxes.

"Sports tourism continues to be a driving force for the local economy and a big part of Forsyth County's \$1 billion tourism industry," Brown said. "So much work goes on behind the scenes to secure these events, and the process is highly competitive. We're fortunate to have many outstanding partners here in Forsyth County, including our local venues and universities, who work quietly and tirelessly each day to bring these types of events here."

The 2026 NCAA Division II Cross Country Regional marks a significant milestone for Winston-Salem State, as it became the first HBCU ever selected to host an NCAA Cross Country Regional event.

"It's a tremendous honor to be selected for the 2026 NCAA Division II Men's and Women's Cross Country Regional Championships," said WSSU Director of Athletics Etienne Thomas. "We look forward to demonstrating not only that WSSU is capable of hosting a high-caliber event; but we can do so in a way that will leave a lasting legacy for the future of athletics in our community."

Thomas also noted that securing the bid was a "total team effort," as Winston-Salem State collaborated with Visit Winston-Salem and the Town of Kernersville to win the bid. Kernersville Town Manager Curtis Swisher discussed why winning these events is important for the community.

"These championships will bring approximately 28-30 teams from five states to the Forsyth County area, providing a big economic boost to the businesses," Swisher said. "Ultimately, Kernersville was selected due to the quality of the Ivey Redmond Complex and the tireless work of our partners behind the scenes, particularly Visit Winston-Salem. I'm confident that many more championship events are heading our way in the future."

Less than 20 minutes from downtown Winston-Salem, [Ivey M. Redmon Sports Complex](#) has become a perennial tournament favorite in recent years. Highlighting its amenities is a cross-country course offering varying loop options. Officially named the Holiday Inn Express Cross Country Course, the site has hosted several major events over the years, including the 2013 ACC Championships.

"We've made major enhancements to the cross country course to improve its adaptability," said Kernersville Parks & Recreation Director Ernie Pages. "The course is ideal for standard 5ks but can also be configured to hold 8k, 6k, and 2ks. This provides a great advantage for both spectators and race officials."

The Cross Country Regional is just one of several major events scheduled at the complex. Officials with Conference Carolinas recently announced they were holding their 2025 Cross Country Championship at the facility. Conference Carolinas consists of 16 member schools competing primarily at the NCAA Division II level. "We are thrilled to be holding the 2025 Men's and Women's Cross Country Championships at Ivey M. Redmon Sports Complex," said Conference Carolinas Commissioner Chris Colvin. "It's one of the premier courses in the Southeast and will give our student-athletes a great championship experience. The location was also important to us as the course sits near the middle of our footprint, making travel easy for our institutions."

Meanwhile, **the NCAA Division I Women's Golf Regional** will return to Bermuda Run Country Club, which hosted the same event earlier this year. The selection is the latest in a string of collaborative wins for Wake Forest, Visit Winston-Salem, and Bermuda Run, a private club just west of Winston-Salem. In addition to hosting the 2024 NCAA Women's Golf Regional, the club will also host the NCAA Division I Men's Golf Regional in 2026.

Wake Forest Director of Athletics John Curry praised the collaborative effort. "We are excited to bring more value to the community through these events," he said. "We're also incredibly grateful to groups like Visit Winston-Salem for assisting with the [bid] process. Bermuda Run did a wonderful job hosting the NCAA Women's Regional in May, and we have no doubt the 2028 event will be equally successful. It's a world-class facility, and the staff there are second to none."

The NCAA Selections: How it Works

The process to secure the NCAA began when the NCAA announced it was conducting a comprehensive site selection process this year, simultaneously putting most of its championships up for bid for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 seasons. This cycle marked a shift from a four-year to a two-year site selection process. The association received more than 1,200 bids from member schools, conferences, cities, and sports commissions, all competing to host preliminary and final rounds of predetermined championships across Divisions I, II and III.

Visit Winston-Salem team members, led by Senior Sports Development Manager Bonny Bernat, worked with partners to submit bids through the NCAA's online portal. The submitted bids were reviewed by NCAA oversight committees in each respective sport. The committees selected the sites they believed would provide "the ultimate experience for the respective student-athletes." The NCAA announced the winning sites in early October, awarding more than 240 selections across 47 states. North Carolina is hosting 17 total NCAA events, the third most in the nation behind Florida (22), Pennsylvania (20), and Texas (20).

About Visit Winston-Salem

Visit Winston-Salem is the official sales and marketing agency for the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County tourism industry. The organization is charged with developing and implementing initiatives that position the city as an attractive destination for leisure, meetings, conventions, groups, and sporting events.