

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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- MEDIA ADVISORY -

**Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau Debuts
The Sarasota County Sports Commission**

The Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau (SCVB) is excited to announce the formation of the Sarasota County Sports Commission (SCSC). This commission will provide the SCVB Board of Directors and Jason Puckett, Director of Sports, with direction and guidance on sports marketing and sports product development. The SCSC will provide oversight and recommendations on annual sports marketing sponsorships and will provide feedback and direction on potential sports tourism initiatives. The commission will be a continuation of the SCVB's sports tourism efforts and programs over the past six years.

Sports tourism has been a major economic driver for Sarasota County. In FY 2010, the SCVB sponsored 33 events that generated just over \$23 million in economic impact and filled nearly 27,000 hotel rooms. "By the end of FY 2011, we will have sponsored and supported over 50 sporting events in the community. This helps to support our local businesses and, with the county allocating bed tax funding for two major athletic facilities, Ed Smith Stadium and Nathan Benderson Park, we felt this was a natural progression that will help us continue to be competitive with other destinations," states Virginia Haley, President of the SCVB. The mission of the Sarasota County Sports Commission will be to position Sarasota County as the must-experience sports destination on Florida's Gulf Coast through quality events and initiatives.

The SCSC will consist of Jason Puckett, Director of Sports, and a panel of advisory members. The SCVB Board of Directors will be accepting applications to serve on the commission immediately. Those interested in receiving an application can contact Mr. Puckett directly at jpuckett@sarasotafl.org. The members are to be appointed by the Chair of the SCVB Board of Directors annually to a one-year term and may serve for a maximum of three consecutive terms. The SCSC will not exceed eleven members and will have a minimum of seven members, with four positions being appointed from the following organizations: Sarasota County Government, Sarasota County Parks & Recreation, Sarasota Area Sports Authority and Sarasota/Manatee Hotel Sales Committee. Candidates must meet one of the following criteria: SCVB partner, Sarasota County business or association, Sarasota County resident. Preference is given to those with sports organizational experience, to members from the different regions of Sarasota County and to those who represent key segments of the County's sports assets.

The Sarasota County Sports Commission serves under the direction of the Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau. The SCVB leads and supports the tourism industry in Sarasota County by providing the highest quality and most innovative marketing programs and promotions to ensure the continued growth of tourism and travel from visitors around the world. It is the mission of the SCVB to make Sarasota County the must experience destination on Florida's Gulf Coast.

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