

Des Moines, Iowa, will host 2008 Acrobatic Gymnastics National Championships

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., Oct. 11, 2007—Des Moines, Iowa, will showcase the nation's best in acrobatic gymnastics when it hosts the 2008 Acrobatic Gymnastics National Championships, July 27-31, at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium. Approximately 650 athletes are expected to compete in the five-day event.

"We are happy to take this dynamic sport to Des Moines," said Steve Penny, president of USA Gymnastics. "This is a great opportunity for fans to see the United States' top acrobatic gymnasts compete in what we expect to be an exciting event."

The Acrobatic Gymnastics National Championships features competition in men's pair, women's pair, mixed pair, women's group and men's group in Levels 5-10, junior elite and senior elite. An acrobatic gymnastics pair consists of a base and a top. A women's group is comprised of a base, middle and top partner, while a men's group has a base, two middle partners and one top partner. Bases generally are older athletes who display strength and balance and top partners generally are younger athletes who display flexibility and agility. Middle partners often are required to show a combination of all attributes.

The 2008 Acrobatic Gymnastics National Championships crowns U.S. champions, is part of the selection process for the junior and senior national teams, and determines the members of the Junior Olympic National Team (Levels 8-10). It also is the selection event for the 2008 Winterthur Cup, an international competition in Winterthur, Switzerland.

"We are incredibly excited to host the 2008 Acrobatic Gymnastics National Championships in Des Moines," said Al Lorenzen, director of sports, Des Moines Area Sports Commission. "We look forward to partnering with USA Gymnastics to make the event a memorable one for everyone involved. We are proud of Des Moines and look forward to performing with the same level of excellence that the competitors will bring to their routines."

"We are excited to partner with USA Gymnastics and the Des Moines Area Sports Commission to host the 2008 Acrobatic National Championships at Vets Auditorium," said Global Spectrum's Matt Homan, general manager of the Iowa Events Center. "It is an honor to be a part of such a prestigious event, with athletes from across the United States striving to reach their goals in Des Moines."

At the 2007 Visa Championships, Julian Amaro of Pleasanton, Calif., and Tyler Spray of Livermore, Calif., earned their third consecutive U.S. all-around title in senior elite men's pair, and the trio of Mariah Henninger of Walnut Creek, Calif., Ally Kidd of Livermore, Calif., and Tisa Penny of San Leandro, Calif., successfully defended its senior elite women's group title. Savannah Shields and Mallory Henthorn, both of Blue Springs, Mo., won women's pair, while in mixed pair, the duo of Andre Solodar of San Jose, Calif., and Xiau-Ling Wee of Monte Sereno, Calif., earned the all-around gold medal.

Acrobatic gymnastics gained valuable exposure and fans across the country when former world champions Arthur Davis and Shenea Booth made it to the finals of "America's Got Talent" on NBC in 2006. The duo received praise and a following for their inventive and dynamic routines.

About Iowa Events Center

The four-venue Iowa Events Center is owned by Polk County, and managed by Global Spectrum (global-spectrum.com), the fastest growing firm in the public assembly facility management field with more than 70 facilities throughout the United States and Canada. The Philadelphia-based company is part of one of the world's largest sports and entertainment companies, Comcast-Spectacor, which also owns the Philadelphia Flyers of the National Hockey League, the Philadelphia 76ers of the National Basketball Association, the Philadelphia Phantoms of the American Hockey League, Flyers Skate Zone, a series of community ice skating rinks, Comcast SportsNet Philadelphia, a regional sports programming network, Ovation Food Services, a food and beverage services provider, New Era Tickets, a full-service ticketing and marketing product for public assembly facilities, and Front Row Marketing Services, a commercial rights sales company and 3601 Creative Group, a full-service in-house advertising agency. In a partnership with Disson Skating, Comcast-Spectacor annually produces 10 nationally televised figure skating spectaculars on NBC.

Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Greater Des Moines Convention and Visitors Bureau (GDMCVB) brings together the interests of area government, trade, civic organizations, tourism organizations, hotels/motels, restaurants, retailers, and attractions in order to build outside visitor traffic to the area. The bureau is the area's liaison between potential visitors to the area and the businesses/organizations, which will host them. It acts as an information center, convention management consultant and marketing/promotion agency for greater Des Moines.

About USA Gymnastics

Based in Indianapolis, USA Gymnastics, the national governing body for gymnastics in the United States, encourages participation and the pursuit of excellence in the sport. For more information, log on to www.usa-gymnastics.org.

#