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Press Release.....

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY TO HOST 2005/2006 FHSAA FOOTBALL FINALS

MIAMI, FL Feb 21, 2005 The Miami-Dade Sports Commission (MDSC) announced today that Miami-Dade County has been selected by the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) as the host site for the 2005 and 2006 FHSAA Football Finals. The state's high school football championships event will come to Miami for the first time since the neutral site championship format was adopted.

The first four state champions will be crowned on December 2-3, 2005, at Florida International University with the title games for classes 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B. The second weekend will feature classes 3A, 4A, 5A, and 6A, and those games will be played at Dolphins Stadium on December 9-10. Miami will host the games again in 2006.

"I am very pleased that the Football Finals will be coming to Miami-Dade County for the first time in the history of this prestigious event," said Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Alvarez. "I am sure the student-athletes, parents, coaches, and fans will enjoy a wonderful atmosphere for high school football this December."

The bid to host the event was submitted by the Miami-Dade Sports Commission, in partnership with the Greater Miami Athletic Conference (GMAC) representing the host school district.

"With so many young people representing our community in the state championships over the years, it is exciting to be able to bring the event to Miami-Dade County," said Mike Sophia, executive director of the Miami-Dade Sports Commission. "The GMAC has done a wonderful job of hosting other FHSAA events here in the past, and we have had great support from our partners at Dolphins Stadium and Florida International University to help us make this happen. We expect it to be a fantastic event for the community, the FHSAA, the participants, and everyone involved."

The FHSAA selected Miami-Dade County from a field of five cities that bid to host the event, including Gainesville, which has hosted the event the last two years. "I am excited to announce that the FHSAA Football Finals will be played in Miami for the next two years," FHSAA Commissioner John A. Stewart said. "The FHSAA staff was fortunate to have five outstanding proposals from which to choose. The proposal submitted by the Miami-Dade Sports Commission, however, was far and away the most impressive. FIU Community Stadium and Dolphins Stadium both are outstanding facilities that will ensure all 16 state finalist teams have championship-caliber surfaces on which to play."

The preliminary schedule for the 2005 FHSAA Football Finals would be as follows:

Friday, December 2

- Class 1B Championship Game, 1 p.m. at Florida International University
- Class 1A Championship Game, 7 p.m. at Florida International University

Saturday, December 3

- Class 2B Championship Game, 1 p.m. at Florida International University
- Class 2A Championship Game, 7 p.m. at Florida International University

Friday, December 9

- Class 3A Championship Game, 1 p.m. at Dolphins Stadium
- Class 5A Championship Game, 7 p.m. at Dolphins Stadium

Saturday, December 10

- Class 4A Championship Game, 1 p.m. at Dolphins Stadium
- Class 6A Championship Game, 7 p.m. at Dolphins Stadium

The Florida High School Athletic Association will administer the event, with the sports commission and GMAC overseeing the implementation locally. Final details and contracts are currently being discussed, and more general information on the event, as well as how to purchase tickets, will be released in the coming days.

About Miami-Dade Sports Commission

The Miami-Dade Sports Commission was created by the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners in 2003, and opened for business in April of 2004. The sports commission promotes youth and amateur sports in Miami-Dade County, and works to secure sports events that will generate economic impact for the community. Since last April, the MDSC has successfully secured 12 events with a direct economic impact of more than \$20 million, including the 2006 Sunshine State Games and the 2005 International Powerlifting World Championships.

Website: <http://www.MiamiSports.org>

Florida High School Athletic Association

The Florida High School Athletic Association is the governing body for interscholastic athletic competition in Florida.

Website: <http://www.FHSAA.org>

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