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**Page 1 of 2**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**MIDWEST WHEELCHAIR TENNIS TOURNAMENT COMING TO WEST MICHIGAN**

*Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association (GRWSA) to host ITF and USTA sanctioned  
Midwest Wheelchair Championships presented by Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital*

Grand Rapids, Mich, July 14, 2009 – On July 24-26, 2009 top-ranked international wheelchair tennis athletes from the United States, France and Canada, including 17 players from West Michigan, will compete in the Midwest Wheelchair Championships. The Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association (GRWSA) will host the competition at a new venue this year - Orchard Hills Tennis Center (115 Crahan Ave. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525). Athletes will compete for a total of \$11,500 in prize money sponsored by Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital.

The Midwest Wheelchair Championships are sanctioned by the United States Tennis Association (USTA) as well as by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) and are a stop on the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour. The tournament will showcase men and women ages 18 and older competing in various divisions. A junior division for teen athletes will also be offered.

Athletes are expected to travel to West Michigan from all across the United States, France and Canada. Many of the athletes hold national and international rankings and have competed in past Olympics, World Team Cups and the 4 major Grand Slams. Formally ranked #1 US player Steve Welch (Texas) and former Paralympian and returning champion Stefane Goudou (France) will be in attendance.

GRWSA / West Michigan athletes scheduled to compete at the Midwest Wheelchair Championships include:

Curt Bender, 47 - Zeeland  
Pat Besta, 39 – Belmont  
Dan Bolhouse, 5 – Caledonia  
Scott Bonk, 41 – Grant  
Dave Briggs, 38 – Belmont  
Matt Clements, 25 – Grandville  
Scott Cole, 22 – Wyoming  
Jocelyn Dettloff, 35 – Kentwood  
Suzi Egeler, 34 - Belmont

Randy Ketchapaw, 28 – Wayland  
Susie Kluting, 16 – Coopersville (junior)  
Chris Melton, 14 – Zeeland (junior)  
Beth Redford, 45 - Cascade  
Vicky Schmidt, 40 – Grand Rapids  
Jessica Spote, 21 – Marne  
Valerie Wallace, 42 - Rockford  
Bryan Wilkinson, 25 – Wyoming

To request an interview or for information on contacting these or any other athletes, please contact Lynn Bender, Tournament Director at (616) 283-3377 or email at [lynncurt10s@yahoo.com](mailto:lynncurt10s@yahoo.com)

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## **Page 2 of 2**

### About the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour:

The NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour originated in 1992 with 11 international tournaments. It has grown into a tour comprising more than 125 events in approximately 34 countries around the world. The tour concludes with the most prestigious event, the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Masters, a year-end world championship for the top eight men and top eight women players. For more information about the NEC Wheelchair Tennis Tour, please visit [www.itftennis.com/wheelchair/tournaments/index.asp](http://www.itftennis.com/wheelchair/tournaments/index.asp).

### About the Grand Rapids Wheelchair Sports Association:

The mission of the GRWSA is to provide and promote competitive and recreational wheelchair sports for persons with physical disabilities. The GRWSA was founded by Luanne Westenbroek in 1980 to send local tennis players to various tournaments throughout the United States. Grand Rapids hosted the first USTA Indoor National tournament in 1991. For more information about the GRWSA, please visit [www.grwsa.com](http://www.grwsa.com) or call Lynn Bender at (616) 283-3377 or email at [lynncurt10s@yahoo.com](mailto:lynncurt10s@yahoo.com)

### About West Michigan Sports Commission:

The West Michigan Sports Commission's main goal is to promote Michigan's West Coast as the premier venue for hosting a diverse level of youth and amateur sporting events, enhancing the economy and quality of life in the region.