

## Wells Fargo NAIA Division I Women's Basketball National Championship Tournament

### ***Who is NAIA?***

The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), headquartered in Kansas City, Mo., is a governing body of small athletics programs that are dedicated to character-driven intercollegiate athletics. This association is connected with the Frontier Conference which includes Montana and Idaho schools like Rocky Mountain College, MSU – Northern, Carroll College, Montana Tech, U of M Western, University of Providence and Lewis & Clark State.

The seed of the NAIA began in 1937 with the tipoff of a men's basketball tournament in Kansas City that has become the longest running event in college basketball. Out of the tournament grew the NAIA, an association that has been an innovative leader in collegiate sports. The NAIA was the first collegiate athletics association to invite historically black institutions into membership and the first to sponsor both men's and women's national championships.

In 2000, the NAIA reaffirmed its purpose to enhance the character building aspects of sport. Through Champions of Character, the NAIA seeks to create an environment in which every student-athlete, coach, official and spectator is committed to the true spirit of competition through five core values.

### ***Who is Visit Billings?***

Visit Billings is a Destination Management Organization or DMO. The organization is dedicated solely to fostering the tourism industry in the community and region. Visit Billings is funded by the State Lodging Tax and the Tourism Business Improvement District – both charges assessed to visitors staying in local hotels. The mission of Visit Billings is to generate room nights for lodging facilities in the city of Billings by effectively marketing the region as a preferred travel destination. If hotels are full, so are restaurants, retailers, and tourism attractions, which all grow the local economy. Visit Billings helps grow and market existing events in Yellowstone County while attracting new events to town as well.

The Visit Billings team works to grow visitation at Montana's Trailhead in a variety of ways. Leisure marketing as well as meeting, convention and sports event recruitment are the primary focuses of the DMO. The Visit Billings staff helps bring major city-wide events like Wing Ding 38 and the BMOW MOA Rally to town, but also helps grow existing events like the Montana Marathon and Montana High School Association Tournaments. Helping bring events to Billings is only part of the goal. It's crucial that visitors enjoy their time in town and want to return down the road. **This is where the business community and local residents, in general, come into play. Help us ensure our guests feel welcome and have a great time in town so they will want to return.**

**Wells Fargo NAIA DI Women's Basketball National Championship Tournament Details:**

Dates: March 14<sup>th</sup> – March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Venue: MetraPark

308 6th Ave. N

Billings, MT 59101

**Wednesday, March 14 - First Round**

Day Session: 8:30 am, 10:15 am, 12:00 pm, 1:45 pm,

Evening Session: 4:00 pm, 5:45 pm, 8:00 pm, 9:45 pm

**Thursday, March 15 - First Round**

Day Session: 9:00 am, 10:45 am, 12:30 pm, 2:15 pm,

Evening Session: 4:30 pm, 6:15 pm, 8:00 pm, 9:45 pm

**Friday, March 16 - Second Round**

Day Session: 9:00 am, 10:45 am, 12:30 pm, 2:15 pm,

Evening Session: 4:30 pm, 6:15 pm, 8:00 pm, 9:45 pm

**Saturday, March 17 - Quarterfinals**

2:00 pm, 4:00 pm, 6:00 pm, 8:00 pm

**Sunday, March 18 – No Games**

**Monday, March 19 - Semifinals**

6:00 pm and 8:00 pm - Semifinalist awards following each game

**Tuesday, March 20 – Championship Night**

6:30 pm

***What to Expect***

The tournament includes 32 teams competing in 31 games for the championship title, in six days! Teams will start arriving March 11<sup>th</sup>. Winning teams will stay through March 21<sup>st</sup>, with a majority staying until Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, win or lose.

For restaurant owners, it may mean having more wait staff on hand in preparation for an increased lunch and dinner crowd or offering an NAIA only dining special for teams, fans and family members.

For retail store owners, it may mean offering to ship directly to a customer's home address, or offering in-store NAIA discounts for teams, officials and fans. Be prepared with adequate inventory with Montana made items and staff your businesses accordingly and get out the word on social media.

### ***How to Participate***

The Visit Billings team has put together a toolkit to assist you in gearing up for this event. The biggest win we can take from this tournament is that the teams and fans feel welcomed from the time they hit the tarmac and our city streets.

We have collateral items like posters and buttons for frontline staff. The online toolkit includes a downloadable NAIA Tournament logo and the Visit Billings Logo, as well as a printable post for your storefront window.

We are here to assist you in any way we can. We encourage you to reach out if there is anything we can do to help you in welcoming and facilitating these guests, or if you want to adopt a team to personally make sure they are greeted with Billings' hospitality.

### ***How can I go to the games?***

More details at: [www.NAIATournament.com](http://www.NAIATournament.com).

Tickets are currently on sale at that website and via MetraPark's Ticket Office

You won't want to miss the ACTION!

### **Visit Billings**

Contact: Alyssa Voeltz

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406-245-4111

[www.VisitBillings.com/NAIA](http://www.VisitBillings.com/NAIA)

### **Connect**

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