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## **Lots of fun, new course at 29<sup>TH</sup> Xtream Rock Island Grand Prix**

ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS — The 29th running of the Xtream Rock Island Grand Prix Presented by The Hemp Doctor, the world's largest karting street race, this year will feature 19 races on the Saturday and Sunday of Labor Day weekend, August 31- Sept 1. Admission is free to this family-oriented event.

Racing is scheduled for 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. each day with morning practice and afternoon heat races on Saturday, followed by practice, opening ceremonies and Feature races Sunday. Joining the historic King of the Streets shifter race, one of the most iconic races in karting, will be King of the Rock races for 100cc engines and for the Briggs & Stratton 206cc 4-cycle engine as premier events paying \$1,000 to win. Three classes of Vintage karts from prior to 1985 are being featured again this year.

Joining the fun this year as the Presenting Sponsor is The Hemp Doctor from Mooresville, N.C. which provides a variety of legal hemp and CDB-based products. Besides sponsoring the race, The Hemp Doctor's Southern High Selter is sponsoring a free Saturday night concert at Schwiebert Riverfront Park in Rock Island from 4 to 10 p.m. The Grand Prix has a history of promoting suicide prevention following the death of local kart racer Travis DeVriendt with a race in his memory. This year, with the support of The Hemp Doctor, the race is making a \$1,000 donation in support of suicide education and prevention. Finally, The Hemp Doctor has also made a contribution to support the efforts of a film student at Augustana College who will be filming the event as part of an internship.

**NEW RACE COURSE:** Race fans and racers will notice big changes in the track and spectator areas due to the downtown road construction projects on streets used in the past. Several No Spectator Areas will be strictly enforced. A study by Datafy done for Visit Quad-Cities has shown as many as 17,000 spectators from a variety of states and municipal areas attended last year. Many important new sponsors have also joined the event this year.

The team of Jay Kidwell, sports director at WHBF-TV, and long-time racer Carter Pease, brings more excitement, information and energy to the race as track announcers. The double-team effort has proven very popular in the past and the entire downtown is wired for sound. Race fans can expect more information, more explanations, great interviews and lively banter from the pair. The racing will also be webcast on [ekartingnews.com](http://ekartingnews.com) and a wealth of information is available through the Online Event Guide at [racerockisland.info](http://racerockisland.info) as well as on social media.

Race teams have been entered from California to Bermuda; Canada to Texas and in between.

**STREET CLOSURES:** The race course this year runs around the city's new downtown parking lot, making it inaccessible to vehicles after 5 p.m. Friday. Besides previous construction closures, Fourth and Fifth Avenues will be closed from 15<sup>th</sup> Street to 19<sup>th</sup> Street; 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Streets will be closed from Third to Fifth Avenue and in addition to construction closures, 18<sup>th</sup> Street will be closed south including Fifth Avenue.

The city's new parking lot offers great opportunities for watching the races with manned security crossings at Fifth Ave. and 17<sup>th</sup> Street as well as on the west side at 16<sup>th</sup> Street and east side on 17<sup>th</sup> Street just south of Third Avenue.

Race fans are encouraged to park either in the large lot off of First Avenue; on the streets and neighborhoods south of the track at 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> streets; or to the east. DO NOT park in lots with Tow Away warnings posted.

## **FUN RETURNS IN DOWNTOWN ROCK ISLAND**

**CONCERT KICKOFF:** The fun starts Thursday evening when Fair Warning performs 7- 9 p.m. at Schwiebert Riverfront Park as part of the Thursday Night Groove Concert Series. There is no admission charge.

**ROCK THE BLUES:** Saturday night's Rock The Blues concert offers a great evening of free fun with the catch phrase "Come for the Races, Stay for The Party." The evening is sponsored by the Grand Prix and The Hemp Doctor's Southern High Seltzer as well as the Mississippi Valley Blues Society and the Rock Island Parks and Recreation Department. The parks department will have the grill going to sell food, Bent River Brewing Co. will be on hand to sell beer and The Hemp Doctor crew will be on hand to answer questions and introduce guests to their popular products.

While admission is free, organizers are asking guests to consider making a donation to the Blues Society. After being rained on the last 2 years, the MVBS had to cancel this year's Mississippi Valley Blues Fest and is raising funds to help celebrate their 40th year in 2025.

If free admission and a chance to mingle, meet and welcome racers from across the country isn't enough, the music will be outstanding. Opening from 4-7:30 p.m. is the Sean McKee Band

which recently won the Chicago Blues Challenge in Buddy's Guy's Legends in Chicago. They offer an electrifying fusion of blues, rock, jazz, funk and jam influences which creates a dynamic sound that defines their identity.

Following them as headliner from 8-10 p.m. is the Kilborn Alley Blues Band. Formed in 2000, Kilborn Alley has earned their headliner status with several tours of both the United States and Europe. The band has released 7 albums, starting with the self-titled "Kilborn Alley Blues Band" album in 2003 up to "Takin Time" in 2022. They have been nominated or won awards 10 times from the Blues Blast.

**CAR FANS WELCOME:** From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, the Grand Prix will host a Cruise-In on 16<sup>th</sup> Street north of Third Avenue and Third Avenue west of 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Cruise-In cars should enter from 15<sup>th</sup> Street or Second Avenue and must feature cruise-in type vehicles. It's a great diversion from racing for car fans.

**VENDOR TIME:** Food vendors will be located in the city parking lot, coordinated by Bayside Grille in Rock Island. There will be Bent River Brewing Co. beer stands daily in the infield as well as at the Saturday night concert in Schwiebert Park. The Hemp Doctor will also be welcoming race fans there.

**OPENING CEREMONIES:** Opening ceremonies at 10:30 am Sunday will feature Radar the Quad City Storm mascot and Derek Grant on bagpipes. The National Anthem will be sung by Sydney Richardson of East Moline. Local dignitaries and sponsors will offer welcoming remarks. It is followed by a kids' autograph session with racers.

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Rock Island is located in an area known as the Quad-Cities, equally divided between Illinois and Iowa, with a metropolitan population of 400,000. It is home to the Rock Island Arsenal military base and corporate headquarters for John Deere in Moline, Ill. It is served by the Quad-City International Airport and is at the intersection of Interstate highways 80, 74, 88 and 280.

The race has featured competitive teams from 39 states as well as 11 foreign teams and 13 foreign winners.

**Sponsors for the event include:** National Karting Alliance, Mediacom, The Hemp Doctor, Briggs & Stratton Racing, Simpson Motorsports, Bally's Quad-Cities Casino & Hotel, Margay Racing and Hoosier Kartsport, O'Reilly Auto Parts, MG Tires, Modern Woodmen Financial/ Joe Schurr agent, Group O, Moon Print Shop, Illinois Casualty Co., Neilson Trucking, Shaw Electric, Halligan McCabe DeVries Funeral Home, Hiland Toyota, Lincoln Electric, Speedway Fire & Rescue, RLV Tuned Exhaust, CBS TV4 / Fox 18 and CW, the local iHeart Radio stations: Big 106.5, Fox Sports QC, WOC and WLLR, QC Sports Net, Schurr Power Racing Engines and Tyler Schurr Racing, Sunbelt Rentals, Johannes Bus Service, C&W and Sons Trucking, Holiday Inn Rock Island, eKartingNews.com, Key Auto Mall Moline, Gas & Electric Credit Union, Rogan Scale, Triple E Sales, Duncalf Racing, Fastenal, Hughes Tire, RIGP Corner Workers and 61 Kartway.

**For more information on the race, please visit [racerockisland.info](http://racerockisland.info) or Facebook or Instagram pages.**

## **2024 Race Weekend Schedule**

### **THURSDAY, AUGUST 29**

7-9 p.m. Free concert at Schwiebert Riverfront Park featuring Fair Warning. Vendors on site.

### **FRIDAY, AUGUST 30**

2-9 p.m.: Competitor sign-in at Holiday Inn, Rock Island.

8-5 p.m.: All teams arriving before 5 p.m. should stage at the parking lot at Bally's Casino & Hotel, Rock Island. From there follow directions for pitting.

5 p.m.: Streets close in The District of Rock Island.

5 p.m. to next morning: Track construction

6-11 p.m.: Pits open.

### **SATURDAY, AUGUST 31**

7 a.m.: Pits open.

6:30-8 a.m.: Driver sign-in at Holiday Inn, Rock Island.

7 a.m.: Mandatory Driver's Meeting at Pre-Grid in the pits.

8 a.m.-12:30 p.m.: Practice rounds. Six-minute sessions.

10 a.m-4 p.m.: Grand Prix Marketplace vendors open.

1-5:30 p.m.: Heat races.

5:30 p.m.: Track closes at conclusion of racing.

4-10 p.m.: Free concert at Schwiebert Riverfront Park featuring the Sean McKee Band and Kilborn Alley Blues Band. Food and drinks available. Donations to Mississippi Valley Blues Society welcome.

### **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 1**

8 a.m.: Final practice rounds begin.

10 a.m-4 p.m.: Grand Prix Marketplace vendors open

10-4 p.m.: Car Cruise-In on Third Ave. and 16<sup>th</sup> Street

10:30 a.m.: Opening Ceremonies.

10:45 a.m.: Kid's Autograph Session. Start/Finish line.

11:15 a.m.-5:30 p.m.: Feature races.

6 p.m.: Track deconstruction begins

7 p.m.: Awards Ceremony, Holiday Inn, Rock Island

## **MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2**

9:30 a.m.: Annual Rock Island Labor Day Parade. 18th Avenue and 24th Street.

Note: All times tentative and subject to change.

