

# A Focus on Sports in Naples Attracts a Younger Demographic

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The **Paradise Coast Sports Complex**, Naples' premier sports and special-events venue, opened in December 2020 and has been ramping up operations and expanding since. The 180-acre venue features eight multi-use fields (for soccer, lacrosse, and football), a stadium, and six sand volleyball courts as athletic facilities. Event, entertainment, and recreational spaces at the complex include the Great Lawn and Great Lawn Amphitheater, the Factory outdoor fitness facility with the MoveStrong obstacle course, and the Cove beer and wine bar.

Phase III of development is currently underway. A ninth field and eleven diamond fields for baseball and softball are expected to open by 2025.



Hotels in the vicinity of the sports complex are realizing the benefit of its presence, particularly through average rate increases. Since Paradise Coast's 2020 opening, average rates have far surpassed historical levels, and local hotel operators have noted an increase in youth and adult sports teams booking multi-night stays. Furthermore, concerts and other community events have prompted overnight visitation from Florida residents outside of the immediate local market. These visitors also take advantage of the entertainment facilities of the complex.

Moreover, the area surrounding Paradise Coast Sports Complex (known as the **Golden Gate Innovation Zone**) is growing, as supporting businesses take advantage of county incentives and the popularity of the venue. A **Great Wolf Lodge**, a resort featuring an indoor waterpark and other family-friendly attractions, is currently under construction and is expected to open in October 2024. An **ECHO Suites Extended Stay by Wyndham** is expected to be constructed by 2026.

The anticipated expansion of the sports complex and addition of new hotel inventory coincides with the entrance of the newest League One club, **USL Naples**, to the **United Soccer League** in 2025. While bringing a soccer club to the area has been in the works for many years, the January 2024 announcement has come at a perfect time for Collier County, as its sports complex ramps up and gains recognition among both visitors and locals. This addition is expected to help draw younger generations of tourists and residents; a local professional sports team is an especially important feature for millennials and Gen Zers. With 32 regular-season games scheduled for 2025 between March and November (16 of which will be hosted at Paradise Coast Sports Complex), hotel operators are anticipating an uptick in visitation from younger travelers during an off-peak period in this market.

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## Summary

Formerly a haven for retirees and snowbird travelers, Naples has been revitalized as a popular destination for all generations. While the area's natural attractions, hotels, restaurants, and shopping districts will remain its most popular attractions, sports tournaments and events have become a new focus in Naples.

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### About **Hannah McManus**



Hannah, a Director with HVS Consulting & Valuation, leads the Saint Petersburg, Florida office. Hannah collaborates on and provides thoughtful insights for projects including hotel appraisals, market studies, portfolio valuations, and feasibility studies for proposed hotels, resorts, and mixed-use hospitality assets. A long-time resident of the West Coast Florida region, she offers expertise in leisure-driven and coastal Florida markets with a profound understanding of Florida assets. Hannah's experience extends beyond Florida across a variety of markets in the Southeast and New England, including engagements in the greater New York City market. Contact Hannah at (410) 967-8879 or [\[email protected\]](#).