



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CHARLESTON DIRTY BIRDS

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## MEC BASEBALL TOURNAMENT MOVES TO GOMART BALLPARK

*GoMart Ballpark to Host 2023 MEC Championship Tournament May 10-May 14*

**CHARLESTON, WV (February 16, 2023)** – The Mountain East Conference announced today an agreement with the City of Charleston, the Charleston Convention and Visitors Bureau, and the Charleston Dirty Birds that *will bring the MEC Baseball Championship to GoMart Ballpark beginning in 2023*. The agreement extends through 2027.

### **The 2023 MEC Baseball Championship will be held May 10-14.**

“The City of Charleston, its CVB, and the Dirty Birds have been terrific partners throughout the bid process and we look forward to collaborating with them as we bring this championship experience to an entirely new level,” stated Commissioner **Reid Amos**.

“The brand-new turf surface, state-of-the-art video board, extensive chair back stadium seating for fans along with sponsor entertainment opportunities, including suites at GoMart Ballpark all contribute to our ability to make this a first-class experience for all involved; most importantly, for our student-athletes. We are excited to know that we will be concluding our championship season here every year for at least the next five years.”

The installation of the new artificial turf surface was a key element in Charleston’s bid to host the event.

“Charleston’s \$8M investment in turfing fields has provided our young people with fields on which to play and train, and allowed us to be competitive in attracting tournaments which will drive economic development. Today’s announcement speaks to the dynamic partnership between the Charleston CVB and the Charleston Dirty Birds, combined with strong support from the University of Charleston and West Virginia State University,” said Mayor **Amy Shuler Goodwin**. “We are thrilled to host the MEC Baseball Tournament here in Charleston and look forward to welcoming athletes and their families to the Capital City.”

“When Mayor Goodwin approved this new turf for GoMart Ballpark, we promised we would work to bring more special events to this facility, and as a direct result, attract more visitors to Charleston and more economic benefit for our community,” said Dirty Birds owner and CEO **Andy Shea**. “Opening Week for our team will be epic this year as the Dirty Birds’ Opening Night will be Tuesday, May 9 followed by five days of tripleheaders combining Dirty Birds games with the best of the MEC from Wednesday through Sunday.”



*About The MEC:* The Mountain East Conference features 12 NCAA Division II institutions in three states and sponsors 23 championship sports. MEC teams have won six NCAA team national championships, have had eight teams play for an NCAA title, and won 37 regional championships. Student-athletes also excel in the classroom with over 2,400 earning academic recognition in 2021-22. The MEC has also produced nine Elite 90 award winners, recognizing the student-athlete with the highest cumulative grade-point average who has reached the competition at the final site for each of the NCAA's 90 men's and women's championships across its three divisions. The Mountain East Conference is headquartered in Bridgeport, W.Va.

*About GoMart Ballpark:* GoMart Ballpark is the home of the Charleston Dirty Birds (Atlantic League of Professional Baseball) and is the only ballpark/stadium in West Virginia that hosts a professional baseball team. It opened in 2005 and is owned by the city of Charleston.

The playing surface was converted from a natural playing surface to artificial turf in 2022 as part of the City of Charleston's extensive turf projects and additionally has a state-of-the-art video board, production control room, and video-streaming system.

The seating bowl and suite levels accommodate more than 5,000 fans and have several special hospitality areas including ten luxury suites. Three concession stands along with several satellite serving stations provide more options in food and beverages than any other baseball facility in West Virginia.

The *Charleston Dirty Birds* are a member of the *Atlantic League of Professional Baseball*. Celebrating its 25th Anniversary season in 2023, the Atlantic League is *Major League Baseball's* first Professional Partner League, a player gateway to the major leagues, and a leader in baseball innovation. ALPB has sent over 1,200 players to MLB organizations while drawing more than 45 million fans to its family-friendly ballparks throughout its 25-year history. Please visit [www.AtlanticLeague.com](http://www.AtlanticLeague.com)