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**Contact:** Warner Johnston | [wjohnston@empire.state.ny.us](mailto:wjohnston@empire.state.ny.us) | 1.800.260.7313

## **SYRACUSE CRUNCH TO HOST FIRST-EVER AHL OUTDOOR GAME IN 2010**

*Mirabito Outdoor Classic will inject approximately \$1 million into the local economy and attract visitors from across New York State and Canada*

Empire State Development today announced the Syracuse Crunch will host the first-ever American Hockey League (AHL) outdoor hockey game against the Binghamton Senators. The Mirabito Outdoor Classic will be played on February 20, 2010 at the New York State Fairgrounds and is expected to bring \$1 million to the area and draw about 20,000 fans from across New York and Northeastern Canada.

The game will be a celebration of hockey in New York State, a long standing tradition, and will recognize everyone from youth to professional players. In preparation for the event, the New York State Fair is providing in-kind services with labor and facilities totaling around \$40,000. Onondaga County is also providing in-kind services in the form of gravel for the ice rink and part-time labor from the County's facilities department. Empire State Development will provide \$75,000 for the event, which will be used to help offset the cost of the ice rink rental.

"Holding a first-time outdoor AHL game is a tremendous opportunity for Central New Yorkers, as this is a prime example of how best to capitalize on our regional strengths, such as our winter sports," said Empire State Development Chairman & CEO, designate, Dennis M. Mullen. "Not only this is an exciting event for families and sports fans alike to participate in, but this event creates an opportunity for Central New York's tourism industry. With an influx of hockey fans coming in from across New York State, and possibly Pennsylvania and Canada, the local economy—namely area hotels and restaurants—will stand to gain an estimated \$1 million. ESD is pleased it could play a part in helping make this event happen."

With the Mirabito Outdoor Classic, the Syracuse Crunch will attempt to break the all-time AHL attendance record of 20,672 set at the Greensboro Coliseum. Additionally, organizers hope to have in attendance several professional hockey players who were born and raised in New York State, as well as those who have past or presently played for one of the three New York State teams: the New York Islanders; the New York Rangers; and the Buffalo Sabres. This game will be televised regionally by Time Warner Sports.

"On behalf of our entire organization, we are tremendously excited about staging this once-in-a-lifetime event," said Syracuse Crunch CEO and President Howard Dolgon. "We are extremely appreciative to all those who have supported our efforts."

Several sponsors contributed to the Mirabito Outdoor Classic, including Mirabito Energy as the Title Sponsor. Presenting Sponsors for this event include: Time Warner Cable; Toyota; Dunkin' Donuts; Labatt Blue; Renaissance Syracuse Hotel; Syracuse Convention and Visitors Bureau; Coca-Cola; and Wynit.

Empire State Development is New York's chief economic development agency. ESD also oversees the marketing of "I LOVE NY," the State's iconic tourism brand. For more information, visit [www.nylovesbiz.com](http://www.nylovesbiz.com).

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