

MSO Exploring Venues Changes For 2024 Season

Nov. 17, 2023—FYI! As part of our busy offseason, one thing we’re “exploring” is a change in some of MSO’s venues for the 2024 season. The locations of our 24 sports have remained fairly regular for the past 8-9 years. However, “exploring” doesn’t mean we will make those changes, but it also doesn’t mean we won’t. Or something like that.

Since 2015, we have moved pickleball from venerable old City of Bowie Gym to Truxton Park in Annapolis to the Montgomery TennisPlex in Boyds because of the incredible growth of the sport. And with over 500 participants in the past two seasons, we’re “exploring” options again for 2024.



Our pickleball tournament has been held at the Montgomery TennisPlex in Boyds for the past two years.

With next year being a qualifier for the 2025 Des Moines Games, we are pondering this question: Do we hold our pickleball tournament over 4-5 days to accommodate the number of players, or do we use two sites over a couple of days? Or do we spread things over two weekends?

We are constantly asking ourselves: How much more can this sport grow? Well, we'll be adding non-ambulatory pickleball next season, and with it being a qualifying year, we have to plan for 600 players.

Meanwhile, we have held our bowling tournament at Normandy Lanes in Ellicott City since the Lincoln administration, or so it seems. But the facility is now owned by corporate giant Bowlero. We're not receiving great vibes about our future there. We will be "exploring" newer and bigger bowling lanes this winter in case we are no longer welcome at Normandy Lanes.

Likewise, we have held our archery event at the scenic Genesee Valley Outdoor Learning Center in Parkton for a long time. It's mighty pretty there, and our archers have been going there for at least three decades. But we have an invitation to "explore" another venue, and we'll try to accommodate that invitation this offseason.

Our racquetball tournament has been held at the Severna Park Racquetball and Fitness Center in Millersville for around a dozen years. Participation has been wobbling in recent years, so we're "exploring" if a new location might help.

With disc golf becoming a National Games event in 2025, we're looking for a place to hold our tournament. We were attached to a Baltimore tournament at the great Druid Hill Park Disc Golf Course for four years until the pandemic year hit. We're "exploring" other options for reviving the event.

We have played our golf tournament at Laytonsville Golf Course in Gaithersburg since 2014. Is it time for a change? Some on our MSO Commission believe so. Our friends and partners at Howard County Recreation and Meadowbrook Athletic Complex are awesome. They have hosted our volleyball tournament for years, and we're not changing that location.

But the basketball tournament has traditionally moved around. Since 2018, we have held the volleyball and 3-on-3 basketball events at Meadowbrook on back-to-back weekend days. We have an offer to "explore" a site in Prince George's County that might help us tap into the Southern Maryland and Anne Arundel recreation leagues much better.

This is a big list. We're not accustomed to so much potential venue change from one season to the next. So we place the quotation marks around the word "explore" because these explorations are part wish list and part necessity. We'll see how many we visit. Stay tuned.