Annapolis Cup Expected to Draw 3,000 Spectators

The 32nd Annual Annapolis Cup – a lawn party and croquet match between St. John’s College and the U.S. Naval Academy – will take place Saturday, April 12 at 1 p.m.

Patricia Dempsey, St. John’s College’s Director of Communications and the 2014 Annapolis Cup spokeswoman, gave a phone interview from her Annapolis, Md. office. “We like to think of the croquet match as our way of giving back by opening our doors and hosting an event that is all about friendly competition and building community. It’s a great way for adult residents, as well as some of the older teenagers, to get involved with the institutions they live so close to.”

The event will take place on the St. John’s College campus Front Lawn located on College Avenue.

Traditionally, croquet spectators wear clothes reminiscent of the lawn parties of the 1920s. The festivities include a picnic, serenades by the St. John’s Freshman Chorus, and swing music provided by the Naval Academy’s Trident Brass Band. The crowd will include St. John’s College and U.S. Naval Academy alumni, families of the Johnnies and Midshipmen, and local residents looking for an old-fashioned community event in addition to visiting historic Annapolis.

While the St. John’s College Johnnies are in the lead with 25 match wins, the U.S. Naval Academy Midshipmen brought the Annapolis Cup back to Base in 2013 and are looking for another victory this year.

Since both schools inhabit downtown Annapolis, the annual rivalry match between the two different institutions gives Johnnies and Midshipmen the opportunity to establish common ground.

“I love the croquet match and this will be my third time going,” Midshipman 1st Class Daniel Novak said. “Annapolis is a small place and we’re constantly in a turf battle with the Johnnies. A little friendly competition is always nice. Everyone knows about the Naval Academy’s rivalry with West Point, but St. John’s College is right up there. I know myself as well as the rest of the 1st Class Midshipmen who will be graduating from the Academy this May would find it nice to leave with a win over the Johnnies. Getting to mingle with Annapolitans is always a good time as well.”

Entrance on to the event premises is free.

Gates open to the public at 10 a.m. Beer, champagne, wine and food tents will be operating from noon to 4 p.m.

Tent spaces are available for reservation on a first come, first served basis. Each space is ten feet by ten feet. The fee for a tent space is $30 for St. John’s College alumni and $60 for non-alumni.

No pets, grills, or outside alcohol are permitted on the St. John’s College campus grounds. Spectators wishing to purchase or consume alcohol will be given a wristband after showing valid proof of age identification.

Free weekend parking is available at the state garage located at the corner of St. John and Calvert Street. Paid parking is available at other city lots: Gotts Court Parking Garage (250 Northwest Street), Whitmore Garage (37 Clay Street), and Noah Hillman Parking Garage (125 Main Street).

Visit the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Conference and Visitors Bureau website for lodging accommodations.

The rain date is Sunday, April 13.