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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**NEW REA AMENITIES TO DEBUT AT 2021-22 HOCKEY SEASON OPENER**

*Newly Upgraded Features to Enhance Fan Experience Debut Saturday*

**GRAND FORKS, ND, September 28** – The University of North Dakota (UND) men’s hockey season begins this weekend with UND’s home opener versus Bemidji State on Saturday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> at Ralph Engelstad Arena. Puck drop is scheduled for 6:07 pm. Tickets are available at [ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com) and the REA box office. Ticket prices for Saturday’s home opener are as follows: adult tickets start at \$20 and youth (2-12) tickets are just \$15 each.

Saturday evening’s exhibition game against Bemidji State marks the start of Ralph Engelstad Arena’s 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season and the venue is excited to announce new initiatives built around fan experience, convenience and safety. Here is a brief summary of all that is new at the Ralph for the upcoming hockey season:

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration – Ralph Engelstad Arena will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary throughout the hockey season with the October 7-8 series vs Niagara as the official recognition weekend. This series includes a special pre-game ceremony with the Engelstad family and “One More Shift” with UND hockey alumni and Grand Forks Mayor Brandon Bochenski.

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Season 50/50 \$20k Saturdays – in conjunction with its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary season, Ralph Engelstad Arena is offering a chance to split a \$20,000 minimum jackpot each home Saturday game! Visit a 50/50 kiosk inside REA to purchase your tickets.

New Start Times – we’ve heard you hockey fans! For the 2021-22 season, Friday evening start times are at 7:07pm and Saturday evenings are at 6:07pm. The only exception is the 1/1/22 New Year’s Day Saturday game vs the U.S. National Development U-18 game at 2:37pm.

Digital Tickets – offer a convenient and secure way to store and transfer tickets. You can access your digital tickets through your My North Dakota account or the Fighting Hawks app and then simply scan your phone for entry. During the first few home games, REA will have a “help desk” in the main, SW and NW entrances to answer questions. For more information on digital tickets, visit [fightinghawks.com/tickets](https://fightinghawks.com/tickets) or call/visit the REA box office.

Alcohol Policy – continuing from last season, for those 21 and older, hard alcohol may be purchased and consumed throughout the arena. Hard alcohol can be purchased at the Hugo’s Lounge, Captain’s Quarters, and both club lounge locations. Alcohol may also be consumed in the student section by those 21 and older.

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COVID-19 Updates – at the present time, REA health and safety policy includes full attendance with no restrictions. Masks are optional and we encourage fans to thoroughly wash hands and use hand sanitizer. Visit [theralph.com/contact/newsroom](http://theralph.com/contact/newsroom) and follow us on social media for any policy updates.

Arena Cleanliness & Sanitation – REA is working diligently to keep the venue clean and safe. Over the past year, REA has added Victory Electrostatic Backpack sprayers, which add a positive charge to liquid disinfectants to allow for better coverage of surfaces, Spartan BCN-15 Disinfectant- EPA registered Disinfectant for use against COVID-19 and related viruses, and i-Mop scrubbers to work in tight spaces.

Concourse Banners – new banners showcasing NCAA D1 college hockey teams and conferences are now on display on the lower level concourse. The upper level concourse features amateur hockey leagues throughout the country and world where UND hockey players have previously developed their game.

Concourse Displays – introducing a few new displays highlighting UND Hockey. The UND Men's Hockey National Championship display has moved from the lobby to outside section 113. It features the eight NCAA National Championship trophies and replica banners. A new Hobey Baker display is adjacent to a new UND Olympians display outside section 105. This display features the Tony Hrkac and Ryan Duncan Hobey Baker awards, plus Olympic jerseys from Zach Parise, Jonathan Toews, and Jocelyne & Monique Lamoureux.

UND Student Shuttles – student shuttle bus to run from Wilkerson Dining Center to REA SW student entrance. Visit [theralph.com/guest-services/parking](http://theralph.com/guest-services/parking) for schedule.

UND Parking Ramp Shuttle – there will be no shuttle this season for the UND Columbia parking ramp.

Entering the Game – fans are encouraged to arrive early, have their digital tickets ready, travel lightly, and leave all non-essential items at home or in your vehicle.

Bags and Purses – fans are encouraged to leave all bags and purses at home in an attempt to speed up the venue entry process. The more fans who enter without a purse or bag, the quicker and smoother the entry process will be for everyone.

Concession Food & Drink – a variety of items have been added to the menu including a build your own hot cocoa bar (including adult options/section 107), egg rolls at Imperial (section 114), s'mores in a bag (nacho's cart/lower concourse), new BBQ sausage option at Dogs & Que (section 103), French toast bites at Midway Treats (section 110), plus loaded fries and gluten-free bun options at Slap Shot Grill (section 109).

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UND Student Concessions Discount – in an effort to recognize the important role that UND students play with the UND hockey program, UND students can purchase from a select menu of concession items at a discount this season at the Dog House (section 309) and Wishbone (section 106) concessions. UND students will simply show their valid UND student ID card at concession stands to receive the discount.

Box Office TV Displays – six new LED TV's have been added above the box office windows and a TV at the SW entrance. The box office TV's will help fans identify box office windows (i.e. will call, ticket purchasing), ticket prices and upcoming games and events.

Sioux Shop – features new cabinets and wall displays, that now carry ALL UND athletic team t-shirts in-store and online and many online exclusives including the Dakotah Legacy Collection. You can also shop for exclusive 2021 U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame Game apparel at <https://u.levelwear.com/pages/und-hall-of-fame-game>.

New Goal Light System – new LED goal lights and TV timeout lights inserted into shielding stanchions will be a great addition to the game presentation plan.

UND North Dakota Gameday App: download the app to play a variety of interactive games with some fantastic prizes, including: Check In to Win, Guess The Goal Scorer, Trivia Challenge and Player of the Game. The app also includes line charts, scores, schedule, game notes and special offers.

For more information on any of the improvements or new initiatives for the upcoming season at the Ralph, please feel free to contact Jody Hodgson at (701) 777-6633 or [jodyh@theralph.com](mailto:jodyh@theralph.com).

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**For More Information:**

Jody Hodgson  
General Manager  
Ralph Engelstad Arena  
[jodyh@theralph.com](mailto:jodyh@theralph.com)  
701.777.4167