

# Broomsticks and Snitches: USI to host Quidditch tourney

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The University of Southern Indiana's Quidditch team is hosting a tournament on Saturday, April 4 at the Broadway Recreational Complex. Quidditch is a coed contact sport played by over 300 teams around the world. USI's team is an official member of U.S. Quidditch (USQ), the association responsible for governing the sport and industry.

Five teams have already confirmed participation in the tournament including Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and Indiana University, both of which are also official USQ members. USQ classifies teams regionally and USI is in the Midwest region. Matches played between registered teams are recorded and count toward official statistical totals. Matches played with unregistered teams are considered friendly matches. Seven other teams have expressed interest in participating.

Quidditch is based on the fictional competitive flying sport in the *Harry Potter* series of novels and movies, and emerged as an actual land-based game in 2007, first at Middlebury College in Vermont, then spreading to other college campuses around the United States. Quidditch can best be described as a mix of elements from rugby, dodgeball and tag. A Quidditch team is made up of seven athletes who play with brooms between their legs at all times as they attempt to score goals by advancing a ball down the field. The president of the USI team, Keller Stevens, said as a whole, school teams are working hard to distance themselves from the *Harry Potter* references because they often conjure up negative images. "When people hear 'Quidditch' they often think of *Harry Potter* and they tend to think this is nerdy and unathletic. But, anyone who watches a match will see it is not a joke, it is a real sport. We play hard and we bruise just like any other sport."

The USI Quidditch team became an official club sport on campus last year, a major step forward for the team, which now enjoys University funding that allows them to participate in more matches and maintain a membership with the USQ Association. They won a tournament at Southern Illinois University in 2014.

Quidditch is now a multi-million dollar industry. There is an official Quidditch League in the United States and Europeans now have their own league. There are many manufacturers dedicated to making the equipment, such as uniforms and the requisite "broom" that each player must hold during the match. Quidditch also has a version of the World Cup, where national teams compete against each other for world titles.

Spectators are invited to support the USI team and attend the matches on April 4 which begin at 9 a.m. and continue to 5:30 p.m. For more information, contact club president Keller Stevens at [krstevens@eagles](mailto:krstevens@eagles).