

T H E M A D / M I L D E X P R E S S

Featuring the first ever fully rated "Bus Bird" tournament!

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I T I N E R A R Y

Wednesday, August 13, 2014:

Optional Trip to Niagara Falls

Thursday, August 14, 2014:

9 AM: Board bus in Buffalo, NY (at the tournament hotel for the 2014 NSC).

En Route: 4 Round* "Bus Bird" tournament – limited to 2 divisions of 5 players each max (5 TWL, 5 CSW) registrations accepted on a first come, first served basis.**

The bus will be stopping for lunch, and likely for at least one other short break.

Approximately 5 PM: Bus will arrive in Delaware, at the hotel for the 2014 Madness & Mildness tournaments.

The bus will feature free Wi-Fi and we will be showing *Word Wars* and/or *Scrabbylon*.

What is the Mad/Mild Express? As long as there are at least 30 interested people, I will be chartering a bus to transport people directly from the 2014 National SCRABBLE® Championship in Buffalo, New York, to the 2014 Madness/Mildness tournament in Delaware. The 2014 NSC will end on Wednesday, August 13th, and the Madness/Mildness tournament will be held Friday, August 15th through Sunday, August 17th, with a 6 PM early bird on Thursday, August 14th. See tournament flyer for additional details regarding the 2014 Madness/Mildness tournament. The bus will also include an optional trip to Niagara Falls on Wednesday, August 13th (bus will depart after NSC Awards Ceremony).

Does riding the Mad/Mild Express make sense for me? This bus is ideal for those players (including international players) that were planning to fly to the 2014 NSC, and would like to get some more bang for their buck by playing in another multi-day tournament before flying home. It might also make sense for people coming to the NSC from the Philadelphia area and points south, even if you won't be flying. My recommendation for people flying would be to book two separate one way tickets, or if it is cheaper to buy a round trip ticket, you can book what the airlines call an "open jaw" round-trip ticket – i.e. the trip starts and ends in the same place, but you arrive at and depart from different airports (i.e. fly into Buffalo, NY and out of Philadelphia, PA). Some airlines allow you to do this through their website, others may require that you call their reservations department (especially if you are trying to use frequent flyer miles). Even if you're not flying to the NSC, you still may want to sign

up for the bus: you can park your car for free at the hotel for the Madness/Mildness tournament, they can provide free shuttle transportation to the Newark, DE Amtrak station, and you can take the train up to Buffalo for the NSC and your car will be waiting for you when you return from the NSC. If anyone would want to stay over one night before traveling up to Buffalo, the tournament room rate will be honored.

How much does it cost? That depends on how many people sign up for the bus. The total cost of chartering the bus will be around \$3,000, and the maximum capacity is 56 passengers. If there are only 30 passengers, the cost per person would be \$100, but with a full bus, I'll be able to reduce the cost significantly. Either way though, this option would be cheaper than most alternatives (i.e. you won't have to pay for transportation between the hotels and an airport, bus or train station, as this is door to door service). Niagara Falls transportation will be free for those that sign up for the bus to DE.

When do I have to sign up? If you are interested, I need you to let me know ASAP, as I would like to provide a definitive answer as to whether I'll be able to run the bus as early in 2014 as possible so that those who will be booking their flights far in advance will be able to plan accordingly. **One incentive to sign up early is that I'll be accepting reservations for the bus bird tournament on a first come, first served basis, so if you want to be guaranteed a spot in that tournament, please sign up early.**

Sign up procedure: If you are potentially interested, please contact Dan Horowitz ASAP. Once I have at least 30 people, I'll contact those that have signed up and ask them to send in their payments so that I'll be able to guarantee everyone that the bus will be available. Since I'll be reducing the price as more people sign up, I'll refund the difference in the rate to those that paid earlier once the final number of passengers has been determined.

Flip this flyer over for additional details, more info on the Bus Bird and the registration form.

* Because we only have space on the bus for 4 games to be played at once, schedule wise, there will be 5 rounds, but each player will have a BYE and will thus only be playing 4 rated games.

** Initially, only one division will be open until I verify that participants have consented to travel size equipment – see page 2.

Bus Bird Format, Entry Fees & Prizes: The bus company will be able to provide 2 tables with 2 seats on each side of each table, which will allow us to have enough space for 4 games to be played simultaneously – if we use travel size equipment (see below). In order to try to accommodate as many players as possible, I would like to have 2 divisions of 5 players each, which will mean that the tournament will be paired as a 5 round complete round robin (with each player playing 4 rounds and having a BYE). Since there will likely be some international players on the bus, I plan to have one TWL division and one CSW division. The entry fee will be \$30 + \$2 for the NASPA participation fee (\$32 total). Prizes will be \$100 for first place, \$50 for second place in each division.

Bus Bird Equipment & Playing Conditions: We will be in extremely close quarters, and the tables on the bus will too small to accommodate 2 standard size boards side by side. We would, however, be able to fit 2 boards at each table if we were to use “travel size” equipment such as the SCRABBLE® Folio Edition (see picture or google it). Since these boards are considered “inferior equipment” under NASPA’s Official Tournament Rules, I cannot mandate the use of this equipment, but it can be used if players consent to using this equipment instead of standard size boards, tiles and racks. **If everyone consents to using travel size equipment, that would enable me to accommodate 10 players/2 divisions (1 TWL, 1 CSW), and I would therefore appreciate your willingness to do so. Otherwise, I’ll only be able to offer one division (which would be TWL). Please indicate your willingness to consent to playing on this equipment by checking the appropriate box on the registration form.** If you have one of these sets (or something similar), please let me know that you’ll be bringing it so I can make sure that I’ll have at least 4 of these on hand. Please do bring your clocks (smaller size timers will be preferred). You may also want to bring a clipboard for your score sheets. Before signing up to play in the Bus Bird, please be aware that you’d be playing under much nosier conditions than usual – i.e. the non-playing passengers on the bus will be talking, and during the ride we’ll be showing *Word Wars* and/or *Scrabblylon* on the TVs. Players will be allowed to use earplugs and/or noise cancelling headphones (so long as the headphones are not connected to any audio), but if you think the playing conditions would be too distracting, this may not be the event for you.



Refund policy: I’ll be waiting until I have 30 committed (and paid) passengers before committing to running the bus, as I want to make sure that I don’t end up being responsible for making up the difference in the event I don’t get enough interested people. For that reason, I may not be able to offer refunds once I’ve announced that the bus will definitely be running if that would drop us below 30. That being said, if you paid for a spot on the bus and end up not being able to use it, you can feel free to sell your spot on the bus to someone else (if you do that, let me know!). I won’t be able to offer refunds on the bus after 8/1/14 unless there’s someone on the wait list that wants your spot. I will be able to offer refunds for the Bus Bird tournament fee, as we will likely have a wait list.

Getting to the airport after Madness/Mildness: I will be chartering the bus through Delaware Express, which offers shuttle service to Philadelphia International Airport. Delaware Express offers a 20% discount to parties of two or more, so if you are going to need shuttle service but aren’t travelling with anyone, please let me know so that I can see if I can find someone to pair you up with. Reservations can be made at www.delexpress.com.

Ideas for those wishing to extend their trip: Those of you looking to do some sightseeing after the Madness/Mildness tournament should be aware that the tournament will be located within a short drive of Amtrak’s Wilmington, DE train station, and from there you’ll be able to travel to Philadelphia (20 minutes), Baltimore, MD (45 minutes), Washington D.C. (90 minutes), and New York City (less than 2 hours). So, you may want to consider buying a rail pass (see www.Amtrak.com for more details), and doing some more travelling before returning home (and if so, it may make sense to fly home from one of the New York City or Washington D.C. area airports). If you want to do some sightseeing before the NSC, consider flying into Toronto a few days early then stopping at Niagara Falls on your way down to Buffalo.

Mad/Mild Express & Bus Bird Registration Form

Name(s): _____

E-mail: _____ Cell Phone***: _____

Mad/Mild Express: # of passengers (@\$100/person) _____ Interested in Niagara Falls Trip? Yes No

Bus Bird: TWL (\$32) CSW (\$32) Willing to play either lexicon Not interested in the Bus Bird.

I hereby consent to playing on travel size equipment (Bus Bird Participants only).

NASPA Member ID: _____ Rating: _____ Total enclosed: \$ _____

Make checks payable to: Daniel Horowitz, 223 Waverly Rd., Wilmington, DE 19803

*** If you won’t have a cell phone with you, make sure you tell me how I can reach you if necessary.