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**Enjoy the View at Gold Cup**

Monday, May 8, 2000

**Were the Races good to you... and your love life? [Discuss.](#)**

And they're off! While the horses are gettin' jumpy in their stalls, the revelers are gettin' jiggy in the fields. Once famed for the traditional crowds of high-brow horse-racing fans, the [Virginia Gold Cup](#) is becoming a younger and more relaxed affair as Washington's twentysomethings descend on the [Great Meadow](#) for a day of meeting, greeting and tailgating. Talk about a great way to make new friends . . . a beautiful spring day, plenty of food and booze to choose from, and groups of college alumni gathered together for the sole purpose of playing in the sun. Whether you're a gambler by nature or wary of risking your hard-earned dollar on silly horses, take a gamble on this affable event, and you may just make some lasting memories.



The horses aren't the only ones getting action at Gold Cup. (Danny Johnston/AP Photo)

Gates open at 10 a.m., and opening ceremonies begin at 1 p.m. You must buy tickets ahead of time as they are not available at the gate. Call 800/69-RACES or 540/347-1215 for more information. Car passes are \$60 each. This event is on rain or shine, and in keeping with tradition, proper dress is expected (see the official [Web site](#) for details).

Local clubs and alumni groups are planning group trips to the Meadow. If you choose to make your own travel arrangements, most groups provide "tent-only" tickets for those seeking a sociable spot to watch the races:

**Party DC** – Buses leave at 10 a.m. from [Main Street USA](#) in Annandale, [Bottom Line](#) in D.C., and [Zig's](#) in Alexandria, and will leave the Gold Cup promptly at 5 p.m. The all-inclusive bus-trip package includes luxury buses to and from Gold Cup, three north-rail chalet tents, a catered lunch, open bar all day at Gold Cup (beer, wine, soda, juice, liquor), and pre- and post-race parties at all three bars, including live music. All-inclusive bus trip tickets start at \$79; walk-up tickets start at \$59. Call tickets.com at 703/218-6500 or stop by any of the bars.

**Washington Sport and Social Club** – Limited space is available for WSSC members (\$85) and non-members (\$95). Buses leave Washington at 9 a.m. from the Rosslyn Metro station and will depart Gold Cup at 3 p.m. Tickets include admission, beer, Jack Daniel's, mixed drinks, bus transportation and a catered buffet). Advance reservations are required; call 202/537-7353.

**Learning Escapes** – Meet at a private nearby location and car-caravan to The Plains. For available singles only. Tailgate starts at 12:45 p.m. The \$89 ticket includes admission, a north-rail location, parking, a luncheon buffet, and a selection of specialty beers and wine. Space is limited and tickets are expected to sell out.

**Sterling Group** – Partial proceeds benefit [Friends United for Need](#) (FUN). The \$85 ticket includes admission, luxury-bus transportation to and from the race, continental breakfast on the buses, catered buffet lunch, and open bar (beer, wine, Bloody Mary bar, and top-shelf cocktails). Buses leave from the [Crystal City Sports Pub](#) and tickets include entry to the exclusive post-race party at the pub. Call 703/734-9296 for more details.

**"University Row" Alumni Bus Trips** – Tickets include round-trip coach-bus transportation, a tent spot along the north rail, buffet lunch and snacks throughout the day, and a full open bar. Tickets also include a University Row Happy Hour for William & Mary, University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, James Madison, and other alumni groups at [Clarendon Grill](#) when the buses return.

JMU: Buses leave Clarendon Grill at 10 a.m. and return at 6 p.m. The \$75 ticket includes bus transportation and catered meals. Contact Rich Shea at 703/532-7117.

William & Mary: Buses leave Clarendon Grill at 10 a.m. and return at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$75 for dues-paying members of the D.C. area alumni chapter; \$85 for guests and friends. William & Mary tent-only tickets are available for \$35 and \$45. Contact Annie Mitchell '96 at 703/534-0181.

U-Va. and Virginia Tech: Tickets are \$65 or \$35 for a tent-only pass. A chartered bus will leave from the Virginia Tech/U-Va. Northern Virginia Center at 10:30 a.m. from the West Falls Church Metro station. Tickets include beer, wine, soda, catered meals, and a private restroom facility. Contact Denise Taylor (Virginia Tech) at 703/751-7046, or Tara Wheeler (U-Va.) at 703/527-1340 for more information.

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