

Although the deal is NOT finalized, I have learned that Summerfest is negotiating with the Rolling Stones to play the Marcus Amphitheatre Tuesday June 23. If the concert comes off, Summerfest would open one day earlier than its scheduled June 24 start date. Music industry sources who asked not to be identified tell me that Summerfest is planning to open the Amphitheatre area and a portion of the adjacent grounds on the south end of Miller Festival Park but that the area would be open only to holders of tickets for the Stones concert. The Rolling Stones organization has not confirmed any of this and a rumored formal announcement Thursday is likely to be delayed.

Sources stress this is NOT a done deal, but is likely to happen.

The concert would be arguably the biggest event in the history of Summerfest. The Stones, who toured the United States extensively in 2013, are evidently planning a smaller American tour this year. The show at the Amphitheatre may be the only one on the tour that is not in a large sports stadium. The Amphitheatre capacity is approximately 25,000 including lawn seating. Rumors have swirled for some time the Stones would be playing Miller Park, but those stories are untrue.

Summerfest's scheduled run this year is June 24-July 5. The limited opening on Tuesday June 23 for the Rolling Stones show would be a Summerfest first. Sources say ticket prices will likely be higher than for any previous Marcus Amphitheatre show. The limited nature of the Stones tour and the potential that it could be one of their last will make the 2015 tour enormously popular. Summerfest officials are refusing to confirm my report.

Mark Belling
2:30 pm
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