



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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Photos Available Upon Request

20 Dogs and Owners to Represent USA in Italy This Month On United States Dog Agility Association IFCS World Championship Team

Plano, Texas—April 2018—Twenty dog agility competitors from around the country will travel with their pets to Milan, Italy, to represent the United States at the 2018 IFCS World Agility Championships. The event takes place April 25 to 29 and is hosted by the International Federation of Cynological Sports (IFCS) with the help of their Italian affiliate Federazione Italiana Sport Cinofili (FISC).

Representing 14 states, Team USA competitors include:

- California: Laura Pryse, Morgan Hill
- Colorado: Mary Dougherty, Colorado Springs
- Connecticut: Monique Plinck, Deep River
- Florida: Karen Holik, North Port; Kris Seiter, Naples; Chris Tucci, Naples
- Georgia: Richard Eggie, Columbus
- Maryland: Chip Gerfen, Takoma Park; Cynthia Horner, Ellicott City
- Michigan: Melanie Rock, West Bloomfield; Kathy Wells, Southfield
- Missouri: Alice Reinkemeyer, Waynesville
- Nebraska: Ami Sheffield, Omaha
- North Carolina: Pamela Reid, Climax
- Oregon: Jordan Biggs, Eugene
- Pennsylvania: Perry DeWitt, Philadelphia; Linda Womer, Gilbertsville
- Texas: Sangie Brooks, Garland
- Washington: Karen Beattie-Massey, Issaquah; Desiree Snellman, Sumner

Accompanying the team to Italy will be coach Tracy Sklenar, of Callaway, Va.; assistant coach Andy Mueller, of Rochester, Minn.; manager Diann Gastley, of Frederick, Md.; and massage therapist Ken Bain of Luling, Texas.

The competitors who represent Team USA are amateur athletes but train and perform like professionals. They also participate in fundraising activities throughout the year, raising private donations and sponsorships to reduce the personal travel costs of team members. A portion of their travel is covered by the United States Association of Cynological Sports (USACS), a 501(c)(3) public charity supporting amateur sport. Information on USACS can be found at www.donate2dogsports.org.

The Sport of Agility

The USDAA boasts more than 10,000 active competitors worldwide. Guided only by voice and hand signals from their human partners, the canines race against the clock, flying over hurdles and through

hanging tires, weaving around poles, scuttling through tunnels and bounding off the see-saw. Obstacles are set according to the dog's height and experience level, allowing dogs of all breeds and sizes to compete.

“This is truly a sport for all ages and abilities – both humans and canines,” said USDAA President Kenneth Tatsch. “Our competitors range from children to seniors, with young, middle-aged and older dogs, working together to demonstrate skill and discipline - and having fun.”

Dog agility as a sport traces its roots to Great Britain in the 1970s. It found its way to the United States a decade later with the creation of the United States Dog Agility Association in 1986. The USDAA has continued to advance the fast-growing sport internationally, this year hosting regional championships in Japan, Canada, Mexico, and Spain, in addition to the U.S.

The United States Dog Agility Association is the world's largest, independent canine sports authority, dedicated to promoting the sport of dog agility as a recreational, family sport that fosters responsible pet ownership. For more information on the sport or recreational agility exercise, visit USDAA.com.

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