



News Release

For Immediate Release

2024 AKC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP **JUDGING PANEL NOW AVAILABLE**

NEW YORK, NY (February 21, 2024) – The American Kennel Club® (AKC®) is pleased to announce the judging panel for the **2024 AKC National Championship Presented by Royal Canin** to be held at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Florida on Saturday, December 14 and Sunday, December 15, 2024.

The 2024 event will showcase the top canine athletes and will also include popular attractions such as the Best Bred-by-Exhibitor competition, the AKC National Owner-Handled Series Finals, and the AKC Royal Canin National All-Breed Puppy and Junior Stakes. The show will once again take place alongside the AKC Agility Invitational and the Obedience Classic, with junior events in Conformation, Agility, Obedience and Rally, as well as special attraction North America Diving Dogs (NADD) Santa Splash.

Leading the charge as Best in Show judge for the 2024 National Championship is **Mr. Terry Stacy** of Durham, NC and **Elizabeth “Beth” Sweigart** of Bowmansville, PA will judge Best Bred-by-Exhibitor in Show. The judges for the National Owner-Handled Series Finals and the AKC Royal Canin National All-Breed Puppy and Junior Stakes will be announced at a later date.

“This year’s show boasts an impressive lineup of judges, with Terry and Beth leading the charge,” said Show Chairman Dennis B. Sprung. “Now in its 24th year, the AKC National Championship continues to showcase the best of the best and is sure to be an exhilarating competition for breeders, exhibitors and judges.”

Judges for the seven variety groups and the Miscellaneous Classes at the AKC National Championship are:

SPORTING – Mr. Clay Coady – Paradise Valley, AZ

HOUND – Pamela Lambie – Phoenix, AZ

WORKING – Ms. Rita J. Biddle, Esq. – Eagle, MI

TERRIER – Pamela Bruce – Welland, ON

TOY – Mr. Robin Stansell – Clayton, NC

NON-SPORTING – Mr. Charles Olvis – Lake Wales, FL

HERDING – Mr. Thomas Coen – Great Barrington, MA

MISCELLANEOUS CLASSES – Mr. Clay Coady – Paradise Valley, AZ

BEST JUNIOR HANDLER – Patricia Proctor – Yarmouth Port, MA

JUNIOR PRELIMS – Rachel Robertson and Morgan Miller

Judges for the seven Bred-by-Exhibitor variety groups are:

SPORTING – Bonnie Threlfall – Cary, NC

HOUND – Mr. Dennis B. Sprung. – New York, NY

WORKING – Mrs. Sheila DiNardo – Valley Glen, CA

TERRIER – Mr. Elliott Weiss – Novelty, OH

TOY – Dana Cline – Albany, GA

NON-SPORTING – Pamela Bruce – Welland, ON

HERDING – Mr. Frank Kane – Cleveland, UKG

BREED JUDGING FOR THE AKC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP:

SPORTING GROUP	BREED ASSIGNMENTS
Mrs. Debbie Melgreen	Barbet, Brittany, Lagotto Romagnolo, Nederlandse Kooikerhondje, Retriever (Chesapeake Bay), Retriever (Curly-Coat)
Cindy Lane	Bracco Italiano, Spaniel (Boykin), Spaniel (Cocker – all varieties), Spaniel (Field), Spaniel (Welsh Springer), Spinone Italiano, Wirehaired Pointing Griffon
Mrs. Vicki Seiler-Cushman	Pointer, Weimaraner
Mr. Frank Kane	Pointer (German Shorthaired), Pointer (German Wirehaired), Spaniel (Clumber), Vizsla, Wirehaired Vizsla
Mrs. Joan Savage	Retriever (Flat-Coated), Retriever (Nova Scotia Duck Tolling), Setter (English), Setter (Gordon), Setter (Irish), Setter (Irish Red & White), Spaniel (American Water), Spaniel (English Cocker), Spaniel (Irish Water), Spaniel (Sussex)
Pamela Bruce	Retriever (Golden)
Claire White-Peterson	Retriever (Labrador)
Ms. Dianne Kroll	Spaniel (English Springer)
HOUND GROUP	BREED ASSIGNMENTS
Bonnie Threlfall	Afghan Hounds, Basenji, Borzoi, English Foxhound, Grand Basset Griffon Vendeen, Rhodesian Ridgeback, Saluki, Scottish Deerhound
Mr. David Miller	American English Coonhound, American Foxhound, Black and Tan Coonhound, Bloodhound, Bluetick Coonhound, Portuguese Podengo Pequeno, Sloughi, Treeing Walker Coonhound, Whippet
Jamie Hubbard	Basset Hound, Beagle (both varieties), Cirneco dell'Etna, Greyhound, Norwegian Elkhound, Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen, Plott Hound, Redbone Coonhound

Ms. Dianne Kroll	Dachshund (all varieties)
Dr. Eric Liebes	Azawakh, Harrier, Ibizan Hound, Irish Wolfhound, Otterhound, Pharaoh Hound
WORKING GROUP	BREED ASSIGNMENTS
Pamela Bruce	Akita, Anatolian Shepherd Dog, Bernese Mountain Dog, Boerboel, Bullmastiff, Cane Corso, Chinook
Dana Cline	Alaskan Malamute, Black Russian Terrier, Dogue de Bordeaux, Greater Swiss Mountain Dog, Leonberger, Newfoundland, Portuguese Water Dog, Tibetan Mastiff
Mr. Clay Coady	Boxer, Doberman Pinscher, Giant Schnauzer, Great Dane
Mrs. Vicki Seiler-Cushman	Dogo Argentino, Komondor, Kuvasz, Mastiff, Neapolitan Mastiff, Rottweiler, Samoyed, Siberian Husky
Dr. Eric Liebes	German Pinscher, St. Bernard, Standard Schnauzer
Mr. Norman Kenney	Great Pyrenees
TERRIER GROUP	BREED ASSIGNMENTS
Mrs. Rosalind Kramer	Airedale Terrier, Irish Terrier, Kerry Blue Terrier, Lakeland Terrier, Rat Terrier, Russell Terrier, Scottish Terrier, Skye Terrier
Mrs. Lydia Hutchinson	American Hairless Terrier, Australian Terrier, Cesky Terrier, Glen of Imaal Terrier, Miniature Schnauzer, Parson Russell Terrier, Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, Welsh Terrier
Mr. Desmond Murphy	American Staffordshire Terrier, Bedlington Terrier, Border Terrier, Bull Terrier (both varieties), Dandie Dinmont Terrier, Fox Terrier (Smooth), Fox Terrier (Wire), Miniature Bull Terrier
Mr. Frank Kane	Cairn Terrier, Manchester Terrier (Standard), Norfolk Terrier, Norwich Terrier, Sealyham Terrier, Staffordshire Bull Terrier, West Highland White Terrier
TOY GROUP	BREED ASSIGNMENTS
Mrs. Lydia Hutchinson	Affenpinscher, Biewer Terrier, Italian Greyhound, Miniature Pinscher, Pekingese, Pug
Mr. Edd Bivin	Brussels Griffon, Chinese Crested, English Toy Spaniel (all varieties), Havanese
Mrs. Vicki Seiler-Cushman	Cavalier King Charles Spaniel
Linda George	Chihuahua (both varieties), Papillon
Gina Wieser	Japanese Chin, Maltese, Pomeranian, Shih Tzu, Toy Fox Terrier

Mr. Frank Kane	Manchester Terrier (Toy)
Elliott Weiss	Poodle (Toy)
Cindy Lane	Russian Toy, Silky Terrier
Mr. Charles Olvis	Yorkshire Terrier
NON-SPORTING GROUP	BREED ASSIGNMENTS
Mr. Richard Todd Jackson	American Eskimo Dog, Chow Chow, Finnish Spitz, Norwegian Lundehund, Shiba Inu, Tibetan Spaniel, Tibetan Terrier, Xoloitzcuintli
Mrs. Eva Berg	Bichon Frise, Bulldog, Coton de Tulear, Dalmatian, Lhasa Apso, Löwchen, Schipperke
Elliott Weiss	Boston Terrier, Chinese Shar-Pei, Keeshond, Poodle (Miniature & Standard)
Mrs. Sheila DiNardo	French Bulldog
HERDING GROUP	BREED ASSIGNMENTS
Mr. Charles Olvis	Australian Cattle Dog, Beauceron, Bergamasco, Berger Picard, Border Collie, Bouvier des Flandres, Entlebucher Mountain Dog, Polish Lowland Sheepdog
Mrs. Glenda Stephenson	Australian Shepherd
Mr. Norman Kenney	Bearded Collie, Briard, Canaan Dog, Finnish Lapphund, German Shepherd Dog, Miniature American Shepherd, Norwegian Buhund, Spanish Water Dog
Ms. Linda Robey	Belgian Lakenois, Belgian Malinois, Belgian Sheepdog, Belgian Tervuren, Cardigan Welsh Corgi, Icelandic Sheepdog, Lancashire Heeler, Mudi, Swedish Vallhund
Nioma Stoner Coen	Collie (both varieties), Pembroke Welsh Corgi
Dr. Eric Liebes	Old English Sheepdog, Puli, Pumi, Pyrenean Shepherd, Shetland Sheepdog

*Panel subject to final approval.

About Best in Show judge Terry Stacy:

W. Terry Stacy purchased a Cocker Spaniel in 1952 and began showing as a Junior Handler. He bred his first Cocker Champion in 1955 which led to numerous other Champions. After an education at Marietta College, he became Kennel Manager for the Downsbraugh Kennels of Mr. and Mrs. William Brainard where he worked with Smooth Fox Terriers, Welsh Terriers, Greyhounds and Labrador Retrievers. A successful career of 15 years as a professional handler followed. He finished titles on breeds in each of the 6 Groups then recognized by the American Kennel Club as well as winning many Best in Show and Group awards.

In 1978, Terry began a career as a Dog Show Superintendent for MBF Dog Shows. Three years later he was hired by the American Kennel Club where he worked another 15-year career as Vice President of Dog Events and later was elected Senior Vice

President until he retired in 1995.

Mr. Stacy resides in Durham, NC with his wife Jackie who judges All Breeds. As a judge of five Groups, Mr. Stacy has judged shows throughout the world.

About Best Bred-By-Exhibitor judge Elizabeth “Beth” Sweigart:

Ms. Elizabeth "Beth" Sweigart of Bowmansville, Pennsylvania was born on Long Island, NY and has been involved with dogs all her life. First, with the Labrador Retrievers that her father used for duck hunting on Great South Bay, and later, after marriage, she started breeding and showing Labs under the Yarrow prefix in the 1960s. She started breeding Norwich and Norfolk terriers in the 1970s and Affenpinschers in the 1990s. Ms. Sweigart has bred National Specialty, Best in Show winners, and top-ranked dogs.

Since retiring as a professional handler in 2006, Ms. Sweigart has been an AKC approved judge for the Sporting, Terrier and Toy groups as well as some breeds in the Working and Herding groups.

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ABOUT THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

Founded in 1884, the American Kennel Club is a not-for-profit organization which maintains the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world and oversees the sport of purebred dogs in the United States. The AKC is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Along with its more than 5,000 licensed and member clubs and its affiliated organizations, the AKC advocates for the purebred dog as a family companion, advances canine health and well-being, works to protect the rights of all dog owners and promotes responsible dog ownership. More than 26,000 competitions for AKC-registered purebred and mixed breed dogs are held under AKC rules and regulations each year including conformation, agility, obedience, rally, tracking, herding, lure coursing, coonhound events, hunt tests, field and earthdog tests.

Affiliate AKC organizations include the AKC Humane Fund, AKC Canine Health Foundation, AKC Reunite, the AKC Museum of the Dog, and the AKC Purebred Preservation Bank. For more information, visit www.akc.org.

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About Royal Canin USA

Royal Canin USA, a subsidiary of Mars, Incorporated is a leader in science-based cat and dog health nutrition. Founded by a veterinarian in 1968, Royal Canin has more than 50 years of experience in delivering individualized nutritional solutions. In collaboration with an expert team of nutritionists, breeders, and veterinarians from around the world, Royal Canin places cats and dogs at the central point of the innovation process. The Royal Canin product line offers a range of diets based on size, age, breed, lifestyle, and therapeutic requirements. Royal Canin diets are available at veterinary hospitals and pet specialty stores nationwide. To learn more about Royal Canin, visit www.royalcanin.com and follow us on Instagram at @royalcaninus.

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