



2019 American Cup field features mixture of Olympic and World medalists, rising stars

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., Jan. 10, 2019 – The field for the 2019 American Cup that includes a balance of Olympic and World medalists and rising stars provides fans with a snapshot of gymnasts to watch in the 18-month lead-up to the 2020 Olympic Games. Representing the United States at the 2019 American Cup, scheduled for March 2 at 11:30 a.m. ET at the Greensboro (N.C.) Coliseum Complex, are 2018 World team gold-medalist Grace McCallum of Isanti, Minn./Twin City Twisters; two-time World bronze-medalist Sam Mikulak of Colorado Springs, Colo./U.S. Olympic Training Center; World bronze-medalist and defending American Cup champion Yul Moldauer of Arvada, Colo./University of Oklahoma; and 2018 U.S. junior all-around champion Leanne Wong of Overland Park, Kansas/GAGE, who is making her debut as a senior.

The American Cup, the USA's most prestigious international invitational and part of the International Gymnastics Federation's all-around World Cup series, will also feature two-time Olympian and World silver-medalist Ellie Black of Canada; 2017 European Championships all-around bronze-medalist James Hall of Great Britain; 2018 World all-around silver medalist Mai Murakami of Japan; two-time Olympic silver-medalist Marcel Nguyen of Germany; and five-time World gold-medalist Kenzo Shirai of Japan. Rounding out the men's and women's fields are 2016 Olympians Christian Baumann of Switzerland, Bart Deurloo of the Netherlands, and Petro Pakhniuk of the Ukraine; two-time Olympian Kim Bui of Germany; 2014 Youth Olympic Games two-time silver-medalist Ma Yue of China; and rising stars Lee Yunseo of Korea, Lu Yufei of China, Celia Serber of France, and Sanna Veerman of the Netherlands.



The 2019 American Cup field by country is listed below.

Men

China: Ma Yue

Great Britain: James Hall

Germany: Marcel Nguyen

Japan: Kenzo Shirai

Netherlands: Bart Deurloo

Switzerland: Christian Baumann

Ukraine: Petro Pakhniuk

USA: Samuel Mikulak, Colorado Springs, Colo./U.S. Olympic Training Center

USA: Yul Moldauer, Arvada, Colo./University of Oklahoma

Women

Canada: Elisabeth "Ellie" Black

China: Lu Yufei

France: Celia Serber

Germany: Kim Bui

Japan: Mai Murakami

Korea: Lee Yunseo

Netherlands: Sanna Veerman

USA: Leanne Wong, Overland Park, Kansas/GAGE

USA: Grace Mc Callum, Isanti, Minn./Twin City Twisters

The 2019 American Cup is the anchor event for gymnastics' Triple Cup weekend held at the Greensboro (N.C.) Coliseum Complex. The Nastia Liukin Cup is set for March 1 at 7 p.m., with the men's Elite Team Cup at 6 p.m. on March 2.

All four U.S. gymnasts enjoyed a strong 2018.

McCallum helped Team USA to the team gold at her first World Championships, where she also finished seventh in the floor exercise prelims. She won the all-around at both the 2018 Pacific Rim Championships and the Senior Pan American Championships, along with Senior Pan Am team and uneven bars gold and vault bronze medals and the Pac Rim team gold and vault silver medals. McCallum was third in the all-around at the World Team Selection Camp, following a fourth-place finish at the U.S. Championships. Wong, a first-year senior level gymnast, won the U.S. junior all-around and floor exercise titles, as well as the silver medal for vault and uneven bars. She also assisted the USA win the team gold at the Junior Pan American Championships, where she was the silver medalist on vault, uneven bars and balance beam and the all-around bronze medalist.

“This year’s American Cup is the perfect opportunity for Grace and Leanne to gain additional international experience against several of the world’s best,” said Tom Forster, the women’s high-performance team coordinator for USA Gymnastics. “Qualifying for the 2020 Olympics last year allows us to use 2019 to work with our athletes and their coaches to identify international opportunities that best fit their training plans for success at the 2019 World Championships and, ultimately, the 2020 Olympic Games. Our goal is to work cooperatively with our national team athletes and coaches for the overall success for them personally and the country.”

On the men’s side, Mikulak, the 2014 American Cup champion, won the 2018 World horizontal bar bronze medal, as well as competed in the all-around (5th), floor exercise (7th), pommel horse (4th) and parallel bars (4th) finals. The two-time Olympian earned his fifth U.S. all-around title, becoming the first to do so since 2000, as well picked up U.S. titles for floor exercise, parallel bars and high bar. At the 2018 Pac Rim Championships, he claimed gold medals for the team, all-around, still rings and horizontal bar. He also picked up the bronze at the all-around World Cup in Tokyo. In addition to nabbing his second consecutive American Cup title, Moldauer was the 2018 U.S. all-around, floor exercise and vault silver medalist and still rings and parallel bars bronze medalist. At the NCAA Championships, Moldauer helped Oklahoma to the team title, as well as won the all-around, floor exercise, vault and parallel bars titles and the pommel horse and still rings silver medals. The 2017 World floor exercise bronze medalist, he joined Mikulak in aiding the U.S. men in a fourth-place finish at the World Championships. Moldauer also competed in last year’s World floor exercise and all-around finals, finishing fourth and 12th, respectively.

“2019 is an important year for the U.S. men,” said Brett McClure, the men’s high-performance director for USA Gymnastics. “Both Sam and Yul have used the American Cup as the kick-off for their international competitive plan, and this year is no different. The men’s field in Greensboro will be very competitive, and this will provide an opportunity to prepare for the coming year that includes qualifying for Tokyo and gaining quality experience for both our veterans and younger team members.”

Event information

In addition to [all-session ticket packages](#) that range in price from \$89-\$149, single session tickets are available for all three events: [American Cup](#), \$59-\$79; [Nastia Liukin Cup](#), \$39 general admission; and [Elite Team Cup](#), \$29 general admission. Ticket prices, which are plus applicable fees, vary according to seat location. All-session ticket packages include tickets to all three of the weekend's events. To purchase tickets, call Ticketmaster's charge-by-phone line at 800-745-3000, or visit [ticketmaster.com](#) or the Greensboro Coliseum Complex Box Office. Group tickets may be purchased by calling 336.373.7433. Discounted tickets are available through gymnastics clubs participating in the gym club ticket program. For more information, go to [americancup.com](#).

The American Cup showcases many of the world's best male and female gymnasts in a one-day, all-around competition, and invitations to compete are based on team performances at the 2018 World Gymnastics Championships.

Held in conjunction with the American Cup, the Nastia Liukin Cup features many of the country's top Junior Olympic female gymnasts and is held at 7 p.m. on the night prior to the American Cup. Named after the 2008 Olympic gold medalist and one of the USA's most popular gymnasts, the Nastia Liukin Cup showcases gymnasts who qualify through the Nastia Liukin Cup Series. The Cup series includes many of the country's top invitationals held from January through February. The Elite Team Cup, a team event with many of the USA's top junior men, wraps up the Triple Cup weekend's events on Saturday evening at 6 p.m. ET. All event start times are subject to change.

The Greensboro Coliseum Complex is also hosting the 2019 Greensboro Gymnastics Invitational Feb. 27-March 3, turning the city into "gymnastics central." One junior and one senior gymnast will advance to the Nastia Liukin Cup from the 2019 Greensboro Gymnastics Invitational, the final qualifying event for the Nastia Liukin Cup. This is the second time the Greensboro Gymnastics Invitational, hosted by Flip Force Gymnastics, has been part of the Nastia Liukin Cup Series. In addition, designated women's sessions for the invitational's finals will use the equipment and podium brought in for the American Cup.

The impressive list of former American Cup champions also includes Simone Biles, Bart Conner, Tim Daggett, Gabby Douglas, Paul Hamm, Jonathan Horton, Shawn Johnson, Nastia Liukin, Carly Patterson, Danell Leyva, Shannon Miller, Mary Lou Retton, Kurt Thomas, Peter Vidmar, Jordyn Wieber and Kim Zmeskal-Burdette. Past sites for the American Cup include: New York, N.Y. (1976-80, 1982-84, 2004, 2008, 2012); Ft. Worth, Texas (1981, 1996-98); Indianapolis, Ind. (1985); Fairfax, Va. (1986-90, 2003); Orlando, Fla. (1991-94, 2000-02); Seattle, Wash. (1995); St. Petersburg, Fla. (1999); Uniondale, N.Y. (2005); Philadelphia, Pa. (2006); Jacksonville, Fla. (2007, 2011); Hoffman Estates, Ill. (2009, 2018); Worcester, Mass. (2010, 2013); Greensboro, N.C. (2014); Arlington, Texas (2015); and Newark (2016-17).

The Nastia Liukin Cup made its debut in 2010. Past sites include 2018, Hoffman Estates, Ill.; 2016 and 2017, Newark, N.J.; 2015, Arlington, Texas; 2014, Greensboro, N.C.; 2013 and 2010, Worcester, Mass.;

2012, New York City; and 2011, Jacksonville, Fla. The Elite Team Cup debuted in 2016 in Newark, N.J., returned to Newark in 2017, and was in Hoffman Estates in 2018.

Background information

- **Nastia Liukin.** At the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, Liukin's total of five medals tied the U.S. gymnastics record for most medals in one Olympic Games. Liukin's Olympic medals are: gold – all-around; silver – team, balance beam and uneven bars; and bronze – floor exercise. Liukin was the third of five U.S. women to win the Olympic all-around crown. She also won nine World medals in her career. Liukin has graced many magazine covers and appeared on various shows, including "Gossip Girl," "Make It or Break It," and the feature film, "Stick It." Liukin was a contestant in the 2015 spring edition of "Dancing with the Stars" and was the grand marshal for the 2015 Indianapolis 500. She currently serves as a gymnastics analyst for NBC Sports and is a founder of Grander, a global community for the next generation of female athletes that provides access to the people who inspire, resources to help achieve dreams, and communities of like-minded people with similar ambitions. Liukin was coached by her father, Valeri, who has four Olympic medals from 1988 including two gold.
- **Greensboro Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.** The Greensboro Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is an independent, non-profit governmental authority whose mission is to aggressively market Greensboro's assets, maximizing economic impact while providing excellent visitor service. Guilford County ranks third in the state in travel and tourism expenditures, with over \$1.2 billion generated in 2015 and more than 13,000 people employed in travel-related jobs. For more information: www.visitgreensboronc.com.
- **Greensboro Coliseum Complex.** The Greensboro Coliseum Complex is a multi-building facility designed to serve the citizens of Greensboro and the surrounding area through a broad range of activities, including athletic events, cultural arts, concerts, theater, educational activities, fairs, exhibits, and public and private events of all kinds including conventions, convocations and trade and consumer shows. The Greensboro Coliseum Complex is one of the most actively booked facilities in the country hosting more than 1,100 events on an annual basis. With its incredible versatility, the Complex has gained worldwide acclaim from promoters, producers, event planners and patrons. For more information; www.greensborocoliseum.com.
- **Sports & Properties, Inc.** SPI is a sports marketing and sports development firm concentrating in four primary areas of business: major sponsorships, including naming rights; sports tourism; sports & entertainment facilities; and major events. SPI recent projects include the Raleigh-Durham market's Major League Soccer Application, the USA Masters Games, greater Hickory, NC, sports tourism, St. Pete Pier naming rights, and the Seminole County Sports Complex. Event projects include the National Collegiate Table Tennis Championships, U.S. Figure Skating Championships, and the American Cup. SPI clients include Capitol Broadcasting Company, the City of St. Petersburg, FL, the North Carolina Football Club, and the Greensboro Coliseum Complex, among others. For more information on SPI, visit sportsproperties.com.

- **Greensboro Gymnastics Invitational (GGI)** - Celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2019, the Greensboro Gymnastics Invitational, hosted by Flip Force Gymnastics, is one of the largest gymnastics events on the East Coast. The event includes competition in men's and women's gymnastics, and power tumbling and trampoline. In 2018, GGI hosted over 3,000 athletes and was a Nastia Liukin Cup senior and junior qualifying event. 2018 was also the inaugural year of the GGI State Men's Team Competition. Held annually at the Greensboro Coliseum Complex in February, GGI is directed by Chris Young (Flip Force Gymnastics), Esau Huang (Flip Force Gymnastics), and Sarah Myers (Flip Force Kidsport Gymnastics). GGI is a sponsor of Big Brothers Big Sisters, raising \$25,000 for the local chapter. For more information, go to www.greensborogyminvite.com.
- **International Gymnastics Federation.** The International Gymnastics Federation is the governing body for gymnastics worldwide. It is the oldest established international federation of an Olympic sport and has participated in the Olympic Games since its revival in 1896. The FIG governs eight sports: gymnastics for all, men's and women's artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, trampoline (including double mini-trampoline and tumbling), aerobics, acrobatics, and Parkour. It counts 148 national member federations and has its headquarters in the Olympic capital of Lausanne, Switzerland.
- **USA Gymnastics.** Based in Indianapolis, USA Gymnastics is the national governing body for gymnastics in the United States. The organization is committed to creating a culture that encourages and supports its athletes and focuses on the safety and well-being of the athletes. USA Gymnastics has already taken specific, concrete steps to strengthen its safe sport policies and procedures. The organization's disciplines include men's and women's artistic gymnastics, rhythmic gymnastics, trampoline and tumbling, acrobatic gymnastics and gymnastics for all (formerly known as group gymnastics). For more complete information, log on to usagym.org.