

World's Top Dogs Take the Stage

by Bend Weekly News Sources

On Dec. 2 and 3, more than 150 breeds of the world's most competitive and coiffed canines will compete for the "National Champion" title at the sixth annual AKC/Eukanuba National Championship in Long Beach, California.

The event, which features thousands of dogs from around the world, is broadcast live by Animal Planet and the Discovery Channel, starting at 8 p.m. EST both nights. Hosted by Bob Goen and Leanza Cornett, this is the first time it will be broadcast in December, previously being shown in January.

The event returns to the Long Beach Convention Center after two years in Tampa, Fla. The facility houses the three events during the weekend: AKC/Eukanuba National Championship, the inaugural AKC Agility Invitational and the AKC National Obedience Invitational.

Almost 2,700 dogs from every AKC-recognized breed and variety competed last year, including competitors from all 50 states and 20 countries.

"We are excited that this one-of-a-kind canine extravaganza is returning to Long Beach," said AKC spokeswoman Gina DiNardo Lash. "This city and facility are ideal for hosting thousands of dogs and tens of thousands of dog lovers. We know that millions will be watching around the country, cheering on their favorite breed."

The AKC/Eukanuba National Championship offers the only sizable monetary award in dog shows, with cash and prizes totaling more than \$225,000. The National Champion wins \$50,000.

The previous "Best In Show" winner, CH Nanuke's Snoklassic No Boundaries, an Alaskan Malamute better known as "Costello," earned more than \$80,000 when he was crowned National Champion, Best Bred-By-Exhibitor in Show and Viewer's Choice all on the same night.

All AKC parent club national specialty "Best of Breed" winners once again join the ranks of top dogs invited to the National Championship. Invitations are issued to dogs ranking in the top 25 of their breed. Any dog receiving an all-breed "Best in Show" at an AKC show held during the qualifying period also receives an invitation.

In addition, the top-ranked dog in each AKC-registered breed is invited from those countries around the world with registries that issue pedigrees acceptable for AKC registration. The system used to select the top dog in each breed is determined by each country's national kennel clubs. Dogs from Asia, Europe and South America are expected to compete.

Rebroadcasts of the event will run on Animal Planet Dec. 10, 14 and 16. For more information, visit www.topdogshow.com.

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