



**THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB AND ROYAL CANIN ANNOUNCE INAUGURAL
NATIONAL ALL-BREED STAKES FOR PUPPIES AND JUNIORS**

Competition created to spotlight puppy and junior dogs in conformation

New York, NY (July 12, 2017)- The American Kennel Club (AKC®), the world’s largest purebred dog registry, and Royal Canin, a leading global pet food company specializing in breed-specific nutrition, are pleased to announce the launch of the inaugural **AKC Royal Canin National All-Breed Puppy and Junior Stakes**.

The National All-Breed Stakes is a competition created exclusively for puppy and junior purebred dogs ages 6-18 months. (Puppies 6-12 months/ Juniors 12-18 months). The event is open to all AKC-registered breeds including Miscellaneous Class breeds and provides an opportunity for breeders and exhibitors to showcase their breeding program. The inaugural Stakes will take place on Friday, December 15, 2017 in Orlando, Florida at the Orange County Convention Center, in conjunction with the AKC National Championship presented by Royal Canin held December 16-17, 2017.

“Puppies and junior dogs are the future stars of our sport,” said Dennis B. Sprung, President and CEO of the AKC. “The AKC National Championship is the largest platform, in the United States, that highlights the best dogs from around the world. We are excited to focus on the next generation of champion purebred dogs.”

“Each year the Show Committee strives to strengthen the National Championship, where the best dogs, and the best breeders are recognized by world-class judges,” said Jason Taylor, Assistant Show Chairman and National PRO Sales Director for Royal Canin. “We hope that this new Puppy and Junior Competition will be the next step in building the most important dog show of the year and give breeders and exhibitors yet another reason to make the National Championship a must-attend event.”

Judging for the Stakes will begin at the breed level and be divided into four age classes as follows: Puppy 6-9 months, Puppy 9-12 months, Junior 12-15 months and Junior 15-18 months. Each class will be divided by sex. The eight class winners will compete for Best of Breed and will

be designated the *AKC Royal Canin National (Breed) (Puppy/Junior) of the Year*. Best of Breed winners will go on to compete in their respective Group (i.e. Sporting, Working, etc); Miscellaneous Breeds will compete in their designated Group. Each Group winner will be designated the *AKC Royal Canin National (Group) (Puppy/Junior) of the Year*. First through fourth places will be awarded with monetary prizes ranging from \$25-\$1,000. Group winners compete to win Best in Stakes. This Best in Stakes winner will be crowned the *AKC Royal Canin National All-Breed (Puppy/Junior) of the Year*.

The premium list and entry information will be available on AKC.org in September. For more information, view our FAQ's [here](#).

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 22,000 competitions for AKC-registered purebred 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 and the AKC Museum of the Dog. For more information, visit www.akc.org.

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ABOUT ROYAL CANIN USA

Royal Canin USA is a leader in science-based cat and dog health nutrition. Founded by a veterinarian in 1968, Royal Canin has more than 40 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. Royal Canin is a subsidiary of Mars, Incorporated. To learn more about Royal Canin, visit www.royalcanin.com and "LIKE" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/royalcaninus.

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