



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**GF SPORTS AND AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB TO TAKE  
AMERICA'S LARGEST DOG BREED SHOWCASE, *AKC MEET THE BREEDS*®, ON TOUR  
*Following 11<sup>th</sup> Successful Year in New York City, Event to Travel Nationwide in 2020*  
*Initial Tour Dates Added in Philadelphia on June 6-7 and Nashville on September 26-27***

**NEW YORK, January 30, 2020** – GF Sports, a live events and sports media entertainment company, and The American Kennel Club (AKC), the leading purebred dog registry and governing body of canine sports in the United States, announced today a joint venture to take AKC Meet the Breeds®, America's largest dog breed educational showcase, on tour beginning this year.

The 11<sup>th</sup> annual AKC Meet the Breeds® in New York City was held earlier this month, in conjunction with AKC National Breed Club volunteers, and saw thousands of people filling Jacob K. Javits Center during the two-day educational showcase. With this new agreement between GF Sports and AKC, in 2020 three additional new cities will host the two-day AKC Meet the Breeds® event. Showcases have already been booked in Philadelphia on June 6 - 7 at The Greater Philadelphia Expo Center and Nashville on September 26 - 27 at Music City Center. Ticket on-sale information for Philadelphia and Nashville will be released in the coming months, visit [akc.org/meetthebreeds](http://akc.org/meetthebreeds) for up to date information on all AKC Meet the Breeds® events. GF Sports senior executive Shawn Tilger is overseeing booking for AKC Meet the Breeds®.

From Afghan Hounds to the Yorkshire Terriers and everything in between, AKC Meet the Breeds® gives pet lovers the unique opportunity to meet and play with more than 160 different dog breeds in booths individually decorated to depict each breed's country of origin, historical purpose/function, and attributes as a family pet, all while learning about responsible pet ownership and which breeds may be right for them. Now, in its 11<sup>th</sup> year, it has become a part of the fabric of New York City, welcoming thousands of pet lovers each year.

“The American Kennel Club has built an incredibly fun, engaging and educational event for animal lovers and families with AKC Meet the Breeds®. After 11 successful years in New York City, we are thrilled to be working with AKC to provide our expertise in touring, event production and sales to help take this event on the road to fans across the United States,” said Gary Fuhrman, Managing Partner at GF Capital and Board Member of GF Sports. “This is an exciting time of growth for GF Sports and we are very happy to be adding AKC Meet the Breeds® to our growing collection of premier live sports and entertainment properties and events.”

“This venture marks an exciting new chapter for the AKC Meet The Breeds®,” said Dennis Sprung, President and CEO of the American Kennel Club. “We are excited to work with GF Sports to bring this educational extravaganza to different cities and continuing to educate people about finding the right breed to fit their lifestyle, as well as ways to be responsible about pet ownership. We thank our National Breed clubs, their knowledgeable volunteers and quality dogs.”

The relationship with AKC helps further diversify GF Sports portfolio of live sports and entertainment properties and events. With a focus on elevating experiences, GF Sports' executive team has expansive experience overseeing industry leading brands and properties and utilizes that expertise in supporting and growing the company's portfolio businesses. In December 2018, the National Lacrosse League awarded the New York franchise to GF Sports; the New York Riptide is currently playing its inaugural season. GF Sports also has

ownership stake in ATP World Tour tournaments the New York Open and BB&T Atlanta Open, and the Wolf Pack Ninja properties, which produces ninja events globally.

For 135 years, the American Kennel Club has been the country's leading authority on all things dogs, acting as the premier resource for dog lovers, from the fancier to the everyday owner. Along with its affiliated organizations, AKC encourages dogs as family companions; advances canine health and well-being; advocates for dog owner rights; and educates the public about responsible dog ownership.

#### About GF Sports

GF Sports is a live events and sports media entertainment company created by New York-based private equity firm GF Capital Management & Advisors, LLC. Formed in July 2015, GF Sports owns two of the ATP World Tour's longest running American tournaments, the New York Open and the BB&T Atlanta Open, as well as the New York National Lacrosse League team the New York Riptide. In addition, GF Sports is partnered with the American Kennel Club (AKC), the leading registry and governing body of canine events in the United States, to further develop and expand the AKC Meet the Breeds® event platform. GF Sports also incubates new and emerging sport concepts utilizing its global expertise and network to help develop niche sports. Such concepts include Wolf Pack Ninjas, which operates ninja-focused events globally. Veteran sport, media and entertainment executive Hank Ratner is a co-investor with GF Capital across the company's various sports properties.

GF Capital makes control-oriented, growth capital investments in branded consumer product and media companies, and its investments have included a number of sports and live entertainment companies. These include Repucom, a global leader in sports measurement, evaluation and intelligence, which was sold to Nielsen in 2016 and Blue Man Group, the world-renowned entertainment company which was sold to Cirque du Soleil in 2017.

For additional information, please visit [www.gfcap.com](http://www.gfcap.com).

#### About 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](http://www.akc.org). Become a fan of the American Kennel Club on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @AKCDogLovers.

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**For booking inquiries please contact GF Sports at 212-433-1234.**