

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

STARS & STRIPES TEAM USA TO CHALLENGE FOR 36th AMERICA'S CUP

First All-American Entry in Over 15 Years to Compete for Auld Mug

LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA – December 12, 2018 – Long Beach Yacht Club announced today that its entry, Stars & Stripes Team USA, has formally been accepted by the Defender and Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron as the fifth Challenger of the 36th America's Cup.

Co-founded by professional American sailors Mike Buckley and Taylor Canfield, the team represents the first all-American team in over fifteen years to compete for the oldest trophy in international sport.

“Our goal is to win the America's Cup by building an inclusive and authentic, American team that reignites the passion for sailing in this country,” said Buckley, a 36-year-old native of New York City, NY.

“We have been working on this team for over a year now and I'm thrilled we can finally break the news that our Challenge has been accepted.”

Buckley and Canfield's vision, to define the next generation of American sailing, accelerated earlier this year after the two won the 2018 Congressional Cup, defeating veteran Kiwi, America's Cup skipper, Dean Barker.

Since then, the team has experienced an incredible wave of home-grown support for their mission, a goal Buckley explains that is woven into the renewal of one of the most recognizable brands in the America's Cup.

“Our name is a nod to Dennis Conner's 'Stars & Stripes' campaigns that defined all-American, America's Cup racing for decades. We are the next generation,” said Buckley.

“We feel honored to revive that legacy and met with Dennis in person where he affirmed both our use of the name as well as our goal to create an authentic and inclusive American team.”

Part of that goal will soon rest on the shoulders of Canfield, who at 29 years old is the most dominant American match racing helmsman in decades.

Canfield, who lives in Miami, FL, brings to Stars & Stripes Team USA a wealth of talent; the 2013 World Match Racing Champion and four-time winner of the Congressional Cup has been ranked the #1 match racer in the world for three of the past five years.

“I think this will be a defining moment for American sailing,” said Canfield.

“We have already begun assembling our sailing roster and will announce more details soon. It has been my professional goal to compete in the America’s Cup my whole life and I am confident we will be very competitive in Auckland.”

Long Beach Yacht Club Commodore, Bill Durant, echoed Canfield’s optimism.

“We’re proud to have been a part of Taylor’s professional career and believe his match racing pedigree will add to Stars & Stripes Team USA’s competitiveness in Auckland. We couldn’t be happier to partner with the team in their bid to bring the Cup back to America.”

With regards to team structure, Stars & Stripes Team USA has every intention to have a team roster that is all-American via a recruitment process that has already begun in earnest.

Furthermore, as part of the team’s commitment to build the next generation of American talent, the team will consult with a number of global industry experts to grow American expertise for future America’s Cup efforts.

Leading the design team will be two-time America’s Cup winner, JB Braun a Marblehead, MA native who brings with him 20+ years of Cup experience having most recently worked with Oracle Team USA in their 2013 and 2017 campaigns.

Wasting no time, Stars & Stripes Team USA has already started building their AC75 race yacht in Michigan, a build process that has been accelerated by a design and technology package purchased from Emirates Team New Zealand.

Beyond the design office, Stars & Stripes Team USA will also lean on the leadership and management experience of CEO Justin Shaffer.

Shaffer, a 36-year-old residing in San Francisco, CA, comes to the team from a career as a technology and media entrepreneur, most notably with Facebook and Major League Baseball Advanced Media.

Since switching his focus to professional sailing, he’s been active in several TP52 and maxi campaigns, and his combination of technology and passion for the sport brings unique perspective to the team.

Other notable heavyweights in the front office include COO Tod Reynolds, a native of Chicago and the managing director of the Louis Vuitton America’s Cup World Series Chicago event in 2016 and General Counsel Melinda Erkelens of San Francisco, an industry veteran who has participated in five America’s Cup campaigns, winning in 2010 with BMW Oracle Racing.

Shaffer highlighted the momentum that Stars & Stripes Team USA has already gained as a unique indicator of its future success and is confident the team can compete with the already established teams.

“Our funding to this point has come from a number of founding patrons from coast-to-coast who are passionate about our message and I think that’s indicative of our inclusive aim,” said Shaffer.

More details on Stars & Stripes Team USA and their all-American entry will be released at the team’s public launch event in Los Angeles, CA that will be live-streamed in early 2019.

###

Press Contact:

Matt Knighton
Communications Director
Stars & Stripes Team USA

E: matt.knighton@teamusa21.com

P: +1-512-750-7661

About Long Beach Yacht Club:

Established in 1929, Long Beach Yacht Club is located in Long Beach, CA on the Southeast Corner of Naples Island on Alamitos Bay. Along with its world-renowned annual regatta, the Congressional Cup, the Club offers educational resources and programs, social and public outreach programs, as well as youth programs and aquatic sports, year-round social events for members. A full calendar of social experiences for every season will create memorable family traditions.