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CONTACT: Scott N. Atkinson  
(863) 874-5682  
satkinson@usawaterski.org

PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Pan American Water Ski Team Wins Eight Medals  
At XVIII Pan American Games

Regina Jaquess leads U.S. Team with three gold medals

POLK CITY, Fla. – Six U.S. Pan American Water Ski Team members combined to win eight medals, including five gold, in respective events at the XVIII Pan American Games, July 27-30, at Laguna Bujama in Lima, Peru. The U.S. Pan American Water Ski Team finished with five gold medals, two silver and one bronze during the four-day competition.

Members of the 2019 U.S. Pan American Water Ski Team were: Andrew Adkison (Chipley, Fla.), Taylor Garcia (Winter Garden, Fla.), Mary Morgan Howell (Dothan, Ala.), Regina Jaquess (Santa Rosa Beach, Fla.), Erika Lang (Gilbert, Ariz.) and Adam Pickos (Santa Rosa Beach, Fla.).

Jaquess, 35, led the way for the U.S. team, securing gold medals in women’s slalom, jumping and overall. Jaquess has now won 16 medals in Pan American Games competition, the most among U.S. water ski athletes since the sport became part of the Pan American Games’ program in 1995. In addition to this edition of the Pan American Games, Jaquess has competed in the 2015, 2011, 2007 and 2003 Pan American Games. She also owns Pan American Games’ records for women’s slalom (3 buoys at 41 feet off, 2019), jumping (173 feet, 2011) and overall (2,955.71 points, 2011), and she is the current women’s world slalom record holder (4-1/2 buoys at 41 feet off).

Jaquess won the gold medal in women’s overall, tallying 2,934.83 points with scores of 1-1/2 buoys at 41 feet off in slalom, 7,890 points in tricks and 169 feet in jumping. Canada’s Whitney McClintock (2,832.91 points) and Paige Rini (2,574.74 points) earned the silver and bronze medals, respectively.

Jaquess won the gold medal in women’s slalom by shattering her own Pan American Games record of 1-1/2 buoys at 41 feet off (set in 2011) with a score of 3 buoys at 41 feet off. She was the only
women’s finalist to clear the 39-1/2 off pass. McClintock and Rini earned the silver and bronze medals, scoring 5-1/2 buoys at 39-1/2 feet off and 3 buoys at 38 feet off, respectively. Lang placed sixth (2 buoys at 35 feet off).

Jaquess won the gold medal in women’s jumping, her fourth consecutive Pan American Games’ jumping title, with a distance of 171 feet. She clinched the gold on her first attempt – 167 feet – and then upped it to 171 feet on her second attempt. McClintock earned the silver (158 feet) and Chile’s Valentina Gonzalez picked up the bronze (157 feet).

Garcia, 21, competing in his first Pan American Games, won the gold medal in men’s jumping with a distance of 214 feet, just three tenths of a meter over Chile’s Felipe Miranda, who earned the silver (213 feet). Canada’s Dorien Llewellyn earned the bronze (207 feet). Garcia also placed fifth (3 buoys at 39-1/2 feet off) in slalom. He qualified for the overall finals, but withdrew from the event after aggravating a nagging hip injury during the slalom portion of the overall event.

Adkison, 37, who earned one of the last two spots in the finals of men’s wakeboarding via the Last Chance Qualifier, won the gold medal with a score of 79.33 points. Argentina’s Ulf Distch earned the silver (78.78 points) and Mexico’s Patricio Gonzalez (69.67 points) earned the bronze. Adkison was competing in his first Pan American Games since winning the gold medal at the 2011 Pan American Games.

Howell, 16, earned the silver medal in women’s wakeboarding, scoring 79.78 points. Argentina’s Eugenia De Armas won the gold with 82.67 points and Brazil’s Nep Mariana Ribeiro earned the bronze with 62.22 points. Women’s wakeboarding made its debut at the 2019 Pan American Games.

Lang, 23, competing in her second Pan American Games, earned the silver medal in women’s tricks, scoring 9,720 points. Peru’s Natalia Cuglievan, the defending champion, won the gold medal with a new Pan American Games’ record 9,910 points, eclipsing the mark of 9,240 points that Lang set in Sunday’s preliminary round. Rini earned the bronze medal with a score of 8,820 points. Jaquess placed fifth (7,790 points).

Pickos, 27, competing in his second Pan American Games and the defending men’s tricks champion, earned the bronze medal in men’s tricks, scoring 10,140 points. Mexico’s Patricio Font won the gold with 11,370 points and Llewellyn earned the silver with 10,430 points.

The Dominican Republic’s Robert Pigozzi won the gold medal in men’s slalom, establishing a new Pan American Games record of 2-1/2 buoys at 41 feet off. Canada’s Steven Neveu (2 buoys at 41
feet off) and Mexico’s Carlos Lamadrid (4 buoys at 39-1/2 feet off) earned the silver and bronze, respectively. Pigozzi’s winning score of 2-1/2 buoys at 41 feet off eclipsed the Pan American Games’ record of 2 buoys at 41 feet off shared by U.S. athletes Jon Travers (2011) and Nate Smith (2015).

Llewellyn won the gold medal in men’s overall (2,885.50 points), while Chile’s Rodrigo Miranda (2,620.86 points) and Argentina’s Tobias Giorgis (2,524.29 points) earned the silver and bronze, respectively.

For individual water ski event (slalom, tricks and jumping) results, visit http://www.iwwfed-ea.org/classic/19PER004/. For the separate water ski overall event results, visit http://www.iwwfed-ea.org/classic/19PER05/. For wakeboard results, visit http://www.iwwfed-ea.org/boatwake/19PER004/.

The Pan American Games take place every four years, in the year preceding the Olympic Games and is the third-largest multi-sport event in the world behind the Summer Olympic and Winter Olympic Games. The U.S. Pan American Water Ski Team has won the medal count at two Pan American Games (1999 and 2003). It tied with Canada for the high count in 1995, while Canada has won the high count in 2007, 2011, 2015 and 2019.

Jay Bennett (Zachary, La.) was the water ski coach, Cathy Williams (Orlando, Fla.) was the wakeboard coach, Scott Greenwood (Little Rock, Ark.) served as team leader, and Dr. Brad Harman (Alvarado, Texas) was the team physician. The American Water Ski Association’s International Activities Committee selected the water ski athletes (Garcia, Jaquess, Lang and Pickos) based on qualifying scores between May 2018 and May 2019. Adkison and Howell were selected by USA Wakeboard to represent the team as the wakeboard athletes following the 2018 Pan American Wakeboard Championships last November in Chapala, Jalisco, Mexico.

The American Water Ski Association and USA Wakeboard are two of nine sport discipline organizations of USA Water Ski & Wake Sports, which is affiliated with the International Waterski & Wakeboard Federation (world governing body) and is recognized by the United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee and Pan-American Sports Organization as the national governing body of organized water skiing and wakeboarding in the United States.

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