**For Immediate Release**

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**The U.S. Pizza Team Returns to the World Pizza Championship to Claim Gold**

*Fourteen American pizzaiolos will travel to Parma, Italy, to show off their culinary and acrobatic skills*

Oxford, MS., March 26, 2018 — Fourteen members of the United States Pizza Team (USPT) will make the trek across the pond to compete in the 27th World Pizza Championship April 9-11. With both seasoned veterans and wide-eyed first-time competitors attending, the USPT will participate in categories ranging from traditional pizza, pizza on the peel, gluten-free, pizza in the pan, pizza for two (made by two pizzaiolos together), largest dough-stretch, fastest pie maker and freestyle acrobatics.

“I am so excited to go and experience the competition and Italian pizza *in* Italy,” said first-timer Sean Dempsey of Dempsey’s Brew Pub in Watertown, S.D.

Additional members competing in this year’s championships are Gino Rago, Lenny Rago and Bruno Brunetti, Panino’s Pizza, Chicago, Ill.; Leonard Giordano, Mona Lisa Pizza, Staten Island, N.Y.; Michael LaMarca, Master Pizza, Cleveland, Ohio; Dan Uccello, Flo’s Pizzeria, Grand Rapids, Mich.; Bradley Corbin, Sloopy’s Sports Café, Lakeside, Ohio; Dave Sommers, Mad Mushroom, West Lafayette, Ind.; Michael Reyes-Casanova, Ynot Italian, Virginia Beach, Va.; Scott Volpe, Fiamme Pizza, Tucson, Ariz.; and Brian Hernandez and Daniel Perea, PMQ Pizza Magazine, Oxford, Miss.

“This is our Super Bowl,” said veteran U.S. Pizza Team member Jason Samosky of Samosky’s Homestyle Pizzeria in Valley City, Ohio. “Our team prepares all year for this competition, and every year we still come home having learned something new about our industry and pizza.”

The U.S. Pizza Team competes all year round in various trials across the country in anticipation of the World Pizza Championship. The USPT trials are designed to mimic the Italian event to better prepare the competitors. Winners of each trial in the United States win a trip to the World Pizza Championship.

PMQ Pizza Magazine, the business trade publication for the pizza restaurant industry, created the U.S. Pizza Team in 2000. The team is sponsored by Grain Craft, Ferrarelle, Real California Milk, Gordon Food Service, LaNova, Paradise Tomato Kitchens, American Baking Systems, Burkett Restaurant Equipment and Supplies, Bag Solutions, Fontanini Meats, Lillsun, Univex, Presto Foods, Pivetti and Lloyd Pans.

For more information about this event or the U.S. Pizza Team, contact Brian Hernandez at 662-234-5481 x 129, brian@pmq.com, or visit <http://uspizzateam.com/>.

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