Nick Lachey Throws His "Leash" In The Ring For The 2019 Purina Pro Plan $1 Million Westminster Kennel Club Bracket Challenge

Fans Can Choose Their Top Dogs in Game of "Barketology" for a Chance to Win $1 Million

ST. LOUIS, Jan. 15, 2019 /PRNewswire/ -- Two nights, seven groups, more than 2,800 dogs and one big prize. The 143rd Annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show is coming, and for the fourth consecutive year, the Purina Pro Plan $1 Million Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show Bracket Challenge is giving dog lovers and sports fans a chance to win $1 Million by correctly predicting the seven Westminster group winners and "Best In Show." This year, Pro Plan partnered with 98 Degrees heartthrob, sports enthusiast and dog lover Nick Lachey as the official "Barketologist" to encourage fans at home to create their own bracket at www.proplanbracket.com. The 143rd Annual Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show, presented by Purina Pro Plan, will take place at Madison Square Garden in New York City on Monday, Feb. 11 and Tuesday, Feb. 12.

No stranger to the limelight, Lachey is also known for his love of Cincinnati sports teams and his dog Wookie, a Yorkshire terrier and Poodle mix. Now, Nick is putting these passions to the test in the game of "Barketology" and challenging fans to do the same. For their shot at $1 Million, fans must select one winner from the Hound, Toy, Herding, Sporting, Working, Non-Sporting, and Terrier groups, and from those winners, one overall breed they think will win "Best In Show." Then, tune in to watch the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show on FS1 on Feb. 11 and Feb. 12 at 7:30 p.m. ET to see how their picks stacked up. If their selections match the actual winners, they could win $1 Million, with the prize being split evenly among all verified winners.

"Our 11-year-old dog Wookie may not be a champion in the ring, but he's a champion at home with the family," said Nick Lachey. "Since there is no Yorkie-Poo breed in the competition, Wookie and I are going to cheer on the Siberian Husky to win 'Best In Show.' I grew up with one named Igloo and they are amazing dogs."

Purina Pro Plan has a rich history in the sport of purebred dogs and has been the food of choice for elite dogs to excel through nutrition that performs[1]. The brand is also hoping to extend its winning legacy; 11 of the last 12 "Best In Show" winners have been fueled by Purina Pro Plan*.

"The Purina Pro Plan $1 Million Bracket Challenge continues to be a fun, easy way for fans at home to have a stake in the competition as the Westminster dog show plays out live in New York City," said Gianna DeiSanti, Brand Director with Purina Pro Plan. "Everyone has their favorite breeds, and competing in Barketology adds an extra level of excitement to this prestigious event."

Fans can submit their own bracket until Monday, Feb. 11 at 5 p.m. ET, prior to the first broadcast of the show. Then, tune in on Feb. 11 and 12 at 7:30 p.m. ET on FS1 for live Westminster coverage, and follow @ProPlan on Twitter and Instagram and use #WKCDogShow to join the conversation. For more information and rules, including a Dog Show 101 tutorial, visit www.proplanbracket.com.

About Bracket Challenge: NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. A PURCHASE WILL NOT INCREASE YOUR

CHANCES OF WINNING. LEGAL RESIDENTS OF THE 50 UNITED STATES (D.C.), 18 YEARS AND OLDER. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. Promotion consists of a Contest and a Sweepstakes; enter both by 2/11/19 at 5:00pm ET. For Official Rules, Sweepstakes odds disclosures, prize descriptions and all details, visit proplanbracket.com. Sponsor: Nestlé Purina® PetCare Company, 1 Checkerboard Square, St. Louis, MO 63164

About Purina Pro Plan:

Purina Pro Plan is the food of choice for 11 of the past 12 Westminster Best in Show winners. Our goal is to give your dog the nutrition to be his absolute best, helping him to be energetic and resilient, while maintaining an ideal body condition, healthy skin, and a stunning coat. Because being the best he can be means something different for every dog, our wide range of dry and wet foods, sold exclusively at pet specialty and online retailers, can be found in four specialized platforms formulated for a dog's unique nutritional needs. For more information, visit www.proplan.com or follow @ProPlan on Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook. The brand is manufactured by Nestlé Purina PetCare, which promotes responsible pet care, humane education, community involvement, and the positive bond between people and their pets. A premiere global manufacturer of pet products, Nestlé Purina PetCare is part of Swiss-based Nestlé S.A., a global leader in nutrition, health, and wellness.*

About The Westminster Kennel Club – *The Westminster Kennel Club is America's oldest organization dedicated to the sport of purebred dogs. Established in 1877, Westminster's influence has been felt for more than a century through its famous all-breed, benched dog show held every year in New York City. Today 204 breeds and varieties of dogs compete in Best of Breed judging at Piers 92/94 with the winners advancing to Group and Best in Show competitions at Madison Square Garden. America's dog show has expanded into Westminster Week which includes the Masters Agility Championship at Westminster and the Masters Obedience Championship at Westminster, both held at Pier 94. More than 3,000 dogs entered from around the world compete in these events, making Westminster Week like no other. Westminster. There's only one. (R) Follow us @WKCDOGS or visit: westminsterkennelclub.org.*

**The handler or owners of these champions may have received Purina Pro Plan dog food as Purina ambassadors.*

[1] AKC Top Dogs All Breed Competition through 12/31/2017

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