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Twenty-Eight Players Compete to "Pass Go" and Collect $20,580 at 2009 MONOPOLY U.S. National Championship in Washington, D.C.

Reigning Champion Matt McNally of Las Vegas Attempts to Retain Title

EAST LONGMEADOW, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Apr. 14, 2009-- While procrastinators rush to deliver their taxes to “Uncle Sam,” 28 of the best MONOPOLY players from around the country are gathering in Washington, D.C. for the 2009 MONOPOLY U.S. National Championship. Following three rounds of competitive game play in the Main Hall of the city’s historic Union Station, the 2009 U.S. Champion will be announced. More than MONOPOLY money is at stake during this two-day tournament – the National Champion will receive $20,580 (the equivalent of the “bank” in a standard MONOPOLY game) and the honor of representing the U.S.A. at the MONOPOLY World Championships in Las Vegas in October 2009.

The 28 finalists hail from 16 states (eight from California) and 24 cities, and are arriving at the tournament tables with varying MONOPOLY backgrounds and experiences. From online and cell phone MONOPOLY gamers to casual board game players to tournament experts, all finalists have a fair shot at winning the 2009 MONOPOLY U.S. National Championship. Six players are returning to the Nationals for another chance at the title: reigning U.S. Champion Matt McNally of Las Vegas, Nev., 1999 U.S. National Champion Matt Gissel of Colchester, Vt., past contenders Ken Koury of Woodland Hills, Calif., Jeff Cornett of Sanford, Fla., and father and son competitors from Olathe, Kan., Virendra and Ankur Jain. This leaves 22 first-time National tournament players who are eager to claim the title.

“This year’s MONOPOLY U.S. National Championship players include some of the most experienced and passionate players in the country,” said Matt Collins, Vice President of U.S. Marketing for Hasbro Games. “We hope that among these 28 players we will find a National Champion to reclaim the World title that has not belonged to the United States since 1974.”

For the first time in tournament history, players will be playing with the MONOPOLY speed die, the new die now included in the traditional MONOPOLY game, to increase the pace of game play. The players will continue the tradition of competing on the classic MONOPOLY game board based on the streets of Atlantic City, from Mediterranean Avenue to Boardwalk.

In order to qualify for the Championship, MONOPOLY enthusiasts took an online qualifying quiz that tested their knowledge of the game and playing strategy. Seventy-five players were then invited to participate in two semi-final online MONOPOLY *Here & Now:* The World Edition qualifying play sessions on the casual games site pogo.com. These rounds determined the 28 players that will compete in the National Championship.

The first MONOPOLY World Championships took place in Washington, D.C., in 1973. Since then, 12 MONOPOLY tycoons have earned the title of World Champion. World Champions have come from 10 countries, including Spain, Italy, Japan, Ireland, United Kingdom and the United States. The last Champion, Antonio Zafra of Spain, earned the title in 2004 at the World Championships in Tokyo.

The 2009 MONOPOLY World Championships will take place on October 20 to 22, 2009 in the entertainment and deal making capital of the world, Las Vegas, Nev. The best MONOPOLY players from more than 40 countries, including the 2009 U.S. Champion, will gather at Caesar’s Palace Hotel to try their hands at winning the international title. Tournament organizers are planning live streaming on www.monopoly.com to capture all the fast paced tournament action where players are often bankrupt in less than 30 minutes! More information about the MONOPOLY World Championships will be released in upcoming months.

In 2009, Hasbro will release a new edition of the MONOPOLY game that will keep aspiring tycoons on their toes. MONOPOLY *Family Game Night*: Championship Edition introduces tournament rules and scoring to the home, inviting families to run their own nail-biting competitions. The game includes a customizable MONOPOLY trophy for the at-home champion. The Championship Edition will be available in Fall 2009 for an approximate retail price of $19.99.

Through a strategic alliance with Electronic Arts (EA), fans can also train and play MONOPOLY on an array of digital platforms including the Wii™, Xbox 360™, PlayStation®2, PlayStation®3, Pogo.com, iPhone™, iPod touch, as well as a variety of mobile phones.

About MONOPOLY

Since 1935, more than 250 million copies of MONOPOLY have been sold in 103 countries and 37 languages. More than 200 different editions of the game have been published, but the most popular continues to be the classic "Number Nine." Affectionately known by its original product number, "Number Nine" is based on the streets of Atlantic City and is nearly identical to Charles Darrow's original submission to Parker Brothers. The MONOPOLY name and logo, the distinctive design of the game board, the four corner squares, the MR. MONOPOLY name and the character, as well as each of the distinctive elements of the board and playing pieces are trademarks of Hasbro for its property trading game and game equipment. © 2009 Hasbro, All Rights Reserved.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

Starting April 15, event photos can be downloaded at newsinfusion.com/monopoly

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