SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
FEBRUARY 2/3, 2018

This past weekend, 110 of the most elite climbers in the country returned to Salt Lake City, UT for the 2018 USA Climbing: Bouldering Open National Championship. The event started with 70 men and 40 women in the Qualifying Round. Over the course of two days, the top 6 athletes in each gender competed in the Final Round, vying for their share of a $10,000 prize purse and a place on the US National Team in the discipline of bouldering. Reigning National Champions, Alex Puccio and Nathaniel Coleman, looked to defend their titles against a very strong field of competitors.

Puccio, seeking her 11th National Championship title, headed into Finals a tenth of a point behind Ashima Shiraishi, who flawlessly topped all Semifinal boulders. Winning would be no easy task for either of them. They faced an experienced field, including Brooke Raboutou, Claire Buhrfeind, Margo Hayes, and Meagan Martin – all with the skill needed to win. Puccio appeared to be on her way to another title after quickly topping problem #1 & #2. Raboutou and Shiraishi closed the gap on Puccio after they both topped problems #2 & #3.


It would come down to the final boulder problem of the night for both genders. After flashing the first three problems, Coleman would secure his third straight National Championship title if he could top problem #4 without falling. Coleman didn’t waste any time. He quickly made it to the top of the wall and was on his way to another title and a perfect score of 100. Sean Bailey would finish in second with a final score of 99.6 with Drew Ruana close behind in third with a score of 98.6.
Shiraishi and Raboutou headed into the final women’s problem just a few points behind Puccio. If either were able to top problem #4, they stood a good chance of taking the title away from Puccio. Raboutou was the first of the three onto the wall. She only managed to make it to the 10-point hold before time would expire. Next out would be Puccio. She made her way up to the 10-point hold but fell short of the 15-point hold on her first attempt. With only a minute to go before her time expired, she managed to figure out the proper move and secure the 15 points. Shiraishi was the last climber out for the women and would need to top the boulder to win. She relied on her sport climbing endurance to stay up on the wall while she figured out how to move to the 15-point hold but was unable to accomplish the feat as time expired.

Puccio would finish with a final score of 79.6 and would secure her 11th National Championship title. Shiraishi’s impressive performance secured her 2nd place on the podium and a score of 70. Brooke Raboutou rounded out the podium with a score of 69.8.

TOP FINALISTS
2018 Bouldering Open National Championship

1. ALEX PUCCIO
2. ASHIMA SHIRAISHI
3. BROOKE RABOUTOU

1. NATHANIEL COLEMAN
2. SEAN BAILEY
3. DREW RUANA

VIEW FULL RESULTS
LIVESTREAM REPLAYS
Livestream provided by: LT11.TV USA Climbing
(click to replay the round)

PHOTO GALLERIES
Photos by: Greg Mionske Photography

VIEW QUALIFICATION ROUND PHOTO ALBUM
VIEW SEMIFINAL ROUND PHOTO ALBUM
VIEW FINAL ROUND PHOTO ALBUM
2018 Open National Championship

The Bouldering Season for adult competitors included a series of four National Cup Series events. Following the National Cup Series events, competitors accumulated points towards their National ranking at the premier event of the Bouldering Season, the Bouldering Open National Championship. Open Competitors received points at the Bouldering Open National Championship. A $10,000 prize purse was awarded to the top ranked competitors at the conclusion of the 2018 Bouldering Open National Championship.

See who was crowned the Bouldering Season winners and read about their journey to Bouldering Nationals in the the National Cup Series recaps, below!

TOP FINALISTS
2018 Bouldering Season

1. ALEX PUCCIO
2. BROOKE RABOUTOU
3. KYRA CONDIE
4. MARGO HAYES
5. MAYA MADERE
6. ASHIMA SHIRAISHI
7. MEAGAN MARTIN
8. SIERRA BLAIR-COYLE

1. NATHANIEL COLEMAN
2. CARLO TRAVERSI
3. MATT FULTZ
4. NICHOLAS MILBURN
5. SEAN BAILEY
6. BENJAMIN HANNA
7. KEENAN TAKAHASHI
8. DREW RUANA
It was a great fight between Alex Puccio (1st), Brooke Raboutou (2nd), and Kyra Condie (3rd) at the Yank-N-Yard. Alex pulled through, topping the last problem after a few attempts, but keeping the tension high throughout. Nathaniel Coleman and Kai Lightner were tied for 1st going into Finals but Nathaniel ended up taking the win, and it was Austin Geiman and Ben Hanna grabbing the remaining podium spots, moving up, very impressively, to 2nd and 3rd, from 7th and 8th in the Qualification.

In her first Cup Series comp, Margo Hayes took the gold! The Battle of the Bay turned out to be quite the fight between Alex Puccio, Brooke Raboutou and Margo Hays. Tension was high as Brooke held the lead until Margo took over, finishing all four problems. Alex was stumped by the slab, but came out last to flash the 4th problem and take second. Nathaniel Coleman sustained his dominant start to the season, taking 1st yet again, being the only climber to top 2 problems in a hard round. Carlo Traversi had a rough start on the 1st boulder, but flashed the 2nd and fell high on the last two to take silver. Matt Fultz, just making it into Finals having qualified in 8th, stepped it up in Finals to take 3rd.
Austin Geiman turned out in force for The Violet Crown and it came down to the last problem for both the winners, Nathaniel Coleman and Alex Puccio. On the final boulder, Alex needed at least 15 points to win and on her first attempt she was as close as it gets but fell. Her next try was the highlight of the night, the audience screaming as she powered her way back up, stuck the 15 Zone and kept fighting to latch the finish. Being the only competitor to flash two problems and a third second try, Ashima Shiraishi easily proved in her first Cup Series showing that she has what it takes to win. Taking 3rd place just as at the first comp of the season, Kyra Condie also put in an exciting performance and will jump up in the National Ranking.

And WOW did Nathaniel put on his own special show for the awesome crowd at Crux. After almost all those before him had come ever so close but fallen back-to-back on the last moves of the second and third problems, Nathaniel topped BOTH after multiple attempts. But, he hadn't finished the first, so Keenan Takahashi held the lead as Nathaniel went into the final problem. Needing the first risky jump for enough points to secure the title, first try he spun around wildly but held it and then kept pushing for the top. After two falls swinging off the final jug and the crowd giving all their energy in support he had to call it a night with just a few seconds remaining. Each with an impressive singular top of the first and fourth boulders, Keenan Takahashi and Carlo Traversi took 2nd and 3rd for the Men.

Unstoppable: the word that pretty much sums it up. It came down to the final boulder again for this event and Nathaniel Coleman pulled off the win. Southern crusher and well known youth competitor, Zach Galla, came out first and made a big statement, finishing the first three boulders in a handful of tries and being only a couple holds from finishing the last. Nicholas Milburn was next and flashed the first two, couldn’t do the third, but then finished the final problem, taking the lead on points. Tension was high as everyone else came out and battled. Nicholas held on to 1st throughout, until Nathaniel had his chance on the fourth and final boulder and walked away with a clean sweep...four golds in a row! The women’s round was just as intense with the top four qualifiers, Alex Puccio, Margo Hayes, Kyra Condie and Brooke Raboutou, fighting on every problem. The third and fourth problems were tough. Margo was closest on the third and Kyra made an impressive top of the fourth, both securing podium positions. And just like Nathaniel, Alex had to make it happen on the fourth problem. After one fall on the tricky jump to start, she powered her way through pinches and took 1st place, beating Kyra by just one attempt.
THANK YOU!

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NATIONAL ROUTESETTERS

Dave Wetmore (Chief)
Garrett Gregor
Brad Weavor
Ian McIntosh
Joel Zerr
Joey Janansen

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