



Gymnast McKenna Kelley, daughter of 1984 Summer Olympics star Mary Lou Retton, joins Team Americas for inaugural Aurora Games

Former collegiate gymnastics standout Danusia Francis will compete for Team World in all-women's event being held August 20-25 at Times Union Center in Albany, NY

ALBANY, N.Y.; August 1, 2019 - Gymnast McKenna Kelley, daughter of 1984 Summer Olympics gold medalist Mary Lou Retton, and former University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) gymnastics star Danusia Francis are the latest world-class athletes to commit to the Aurora Games, a six-sport, six-day all-women's sports and entertainment festival being held August 20-25 at the Times Union Center in Albany, NY.

Kelley will join former UCLA star and viral sensation Katelyn Ohashi on the Team Americas gymnastics squad. The British-born Francis, who currently competes for Jamaica in international competition, will represent Team World. The additions of Kelley, Francis and other athletes to the gymnastics competition were announced today by Aurora Games Executive Producer Jerry Solomon.

The gymnastics event, presented by Dunkin', will take place at the Times Union Center in Albany on Wednesday, August 21 at 7 p.m.

"The Aurora Games is bringing together some of today's brightest young stars in women's sports," said Solomon. "Gymnasts are some of the top athletes in the world, and Katelyn, McKenna, Danusia and their teammates will amaze the Times Union Center crowd with their dynamic displays of athleticism performed under a format unique to the Aurora Games."

The format for the gymnastics competition will feature five separate events including power tumbling, balance beam, parkour, aesthetic gymnastics, and artistic floor exercises.

Valorie Kondos Field, the longtime UCLA gymnastics coach who recently announced her retirement after nearly three decades, will oversee gymnastics as well as choreograph a group number that will conclude the evening's competition.

"The Aurora Games gymnastics event will be a rigorous competition but also serves as a fabulous showcase that will allow fans to look into the future of the sport," Kondos Field said. "We are creating an event that will transcend the sport and I'm really excited to be a part of this amazing competition that will highlight some of the best gymnastics talent in the world."

Kelley, a Houston, Texas resident who graduated from Louisiana State University (LSU) in May, helped lead her alma mater to a second-place finish at the 2019 National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) championships. A two-time All-American at LSU, Kelley was named to the All-Southeast Conference (SEC) team in 2017 as the SEC floor exercise champion.

At the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, her mother Mary Lou Retton became the first American woman to take home a gold medal in the individual all-around in gymnastics. Retton also won two silver medals and two bronze medals in gymnastics during the 1984 Games.

Francis competes internationally for Jamaica, where her father was born. A reserve on the 2012 Great Britain Olympic team, Francis was named All-American six times during her four-year career at UCLA and shared the NCAA balance beam championship in 2016 during her senior year. She competed last week for Jamaica at the Pan American Games in Lima, Peru, finishing seventh both in the all-around and the balance beam.

The Team World roster also includes Marta Pihan-Kulesza, of Poland, and Tatiana Nabieva, of Russia, in balance beam and floor exercise; Megan Kealy and Megan Surman, both of Great Britain, in power tumbling; Silke Sollfrank, of Germany, and Aleksandra Shevchenko, of Russia, in parkour; and seven members of Ukraine's Team AGG Alcor Mizar in aesthetic gymnastics: Taisiia Fedorova, Elina Fomina, Oleksandra Karpova, Daria Kasko, Khrystyna Laptii, Sofia Raroh and Alina Salmanova.

Joining Ohashi and Kelley on Team Americas for the balance beam and floor exercise events will be Alicia Boren, of Franklin Lakes, NJ. Boren capped off her four-year career at the University of Florida as co-champion in floor exercise at the 2019 NCAA championships.

During her four years at UCLA, Ohashi achieved 11 perfect 10s, earned All-American honors 10 times, and helped lead UCLA to the NCAA team championship in 2018, when she was co-national champion in floor exercise.

Video of the Seattle, WA native's floor routine during a collegiate competition in January 2019 went viral, amassing nearly 120 million views and catapulting Ohashi to global stardom. Ohashi's performance, which earned her a perfect 10.0 score, won her the Best Play and the Best Viral Sports Moment at the 2019 ESPY Awards. Ohashi's appearance at the Aurora Games will be the final competition of her gymnastics career.

The rest of the Team Americas roster includes Hope Bravo and Eliza Floisand, both of the U.S., in power tumbling; Steffany Navarro, of Colombia, and Camila Stefaniu Ribeiro, of Brazil, in parkour; and eight members of Emerald City Academy of Rhythmic Gymnastics (San Diego, CA) in aesthetic gymnastics: Marissa Bruce, Fernanda Fabian, Fernanda Gutierrez, Elisia Leung, Kaitlyn Ngo, Vianna Ngo, Ella Quini and Angela Wang.

Coach Valorie Kondos Field ended her 29-year career after leading UCLA to a third-place finish in the 2019 NCAA championships. She finished her UCLA career with victories in 528 meets and won seven national championships, including the 2018 title. A 1987 graduate of UCLA, Kondos Field is a member of the university's Athletics Hall of Fame.

Approximately 150 world-class athletes, including Olympic medalists and national champions from around the globe, are set to compete in the Aurora Games at the Times Union Center in downtown Albany. In addition to gymnastics, the event will feature competition in women's tennis, basketball, figure skating, ice hockey and beach volleyball.

Three-time Olympic gold medalist Jackie Joyner-Kersey and five-time Olympic gold medalist Nadia Comaneci will serve as honorary team captains. Joyner-Kersey, an American track and field icon, will lead the athletes representing Team Americas. Comaneci, the legendary Romanian gymnast, will guide those competing for Team World.

The athletes will compete for the Babe Didrikson Zaharias Trophy, the official trophy of the Aurora Games. Didrikson Zaharias was named the "Greatest Female Athlete of the First Half of the 20th Century" by the Associated Press for her achievements in multiple sports, including golf, basketball, baseball and track and field.

Individual session tickets for the Aurora Games are on-sale now at www.Ticketmaster.com. Tickets range in price from \$15 to \$129 and include access to the Aurora Games Fan Zone featuring music, athlete meet and greets, food and entertainment. Children may qualify for half-price tickets based on seating selection.

Group sales can be reserved by contacting Carrie Berger at (617) 688-6128.

For sponsorship information, contact Karen Scott Happer at karen@champagnetenis.com.

The official hotel of the Aurora Games is Hilton Albany, located approximately .2 miles from the Times Union Center at 40 Lodge Street in downtown Albany. Aurora Games guests can save on overnight stays by using code 5AGCB when securing reservations by phone at 1-866-691-1183 or online at <https://bit.ly/2U2n1mC>.

For up-to-date information about the Aurora Games, visit AuroraGamesFestival.com or follow the Games on Twitter [@AuroraGamesFest](https://twitter.com/AuroraGamesFest).

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ABOUT THE AURORA GAMES

Aurora Games Festival, LLC owns and operates the Aurora Games and holds all of the rights and intellectual property associated with the Games. The Aurora Games were conceived of and created by Jerry Solomon. Mr. Solomon has been one of America's top sports marketing executives for more than 30 years. The Aurora Games, named in honor of the Roman goddess of

the dawn, will be held every two years beginning with the inaugural edition at the Times Union Center in Albany, NY, August 20-25, 2019. Designed to celebrate the best in women's sports, entertainment and culture, the Aurora Games will welcome all-star athletes, as well as coaches and trainers, representing more than 15 countries to downtown Albany to compete in an international competition of teams comprised of the Americas vs. the World. The six-day event will include team and individual competitions in basketball, tennis, figure skating, gymnastics, ice hockey and beach volleyball. Fans will also enjoy musical performances, food tastings, sports clinics, autograph sessions and seminars in the Aurora Games Fan Zone at the Albany Capital Center. For up-to-date information about the Aurora Games, visit AuroraGamesFestival.com or follow the Games on Twitter [@AuroraGamesFest](https://twitter.com/AuroraGamesFest).