



## **INTERNATIONAL CHEER UNION**

International Governing Body for World Cheerleading

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### **International Cheer Union Competition draws cheerleaders from 45 nations**

*Gold medals awarded in nine cheer and dance categories.*

**ORLANDO, Fla. (May 2009)** — Cheerleading, once a distinctively USA activity, has gone global. More than 85 National teams from more than 45 countries gathered at the Walt Disney World® Resort for the first ever world-wide International Cheer Union (ICU) cheerleading and dance team championship. Each nation's team was comprised of its most talented cheerleaders.

During the two-day event, held April 23-24, athletes from countries such as China, Jamaica, Germany, New Zealand and South Korea, demonstrated the growing prominence of cheerleading across the globe. The history-making event marked the largest collection of international cheerleading groups ever assembled for one competition. Nearly 2,000 competitors and more than 10,000 spectators participated in the two day event.

Team USA Cheer and Team USA Dance, which featured the best cheerleaders and dance team performers from all over the U.S., took home six gold medals. Teams from China and Canada also won gold for their remarkable performances in their respective divisions. Teams from Thailand, Columbia and Chile thrilled the crowd with world-class performances and enthusiasm to spare.

"We were blown away by the performances and just how far many of the international teams have come in a short time," said Karl Olson, Secretary General of the ICU. "But even more remarkable was the spirit of unity in the arena, as teams cheered for each other and embraced each other's culture. In a global village, cheerleading was the common bond."

Patterned on the Olympics, the event featured opening ceremonies with teams in national wear, a cultural village where teams exchanged pins and immersed themselves in each other's cultures and closing ceremonies during which medals were awarded and the national anthem of each winning country was played.

The International Cheer Union (ICU) proudly counts more than 65 member countries from all five continents. It is a non-profit governing entity for international cheerleading, with the goal



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of receiving membership applications from National Cheer Federations all around the world. ICU events are open to national or provisional cheer federations.

“These cheerleaders held their national flags high during the opening ceremony, and they proved to be true ambassadors for their countries,” said Jeff Webb, president of the ICU and the recognized leader in the development of modern cheerleading. “We’ve seen the passion that exists for cheerleading worldwide, and our goal is to help enrich the lives of even more athletes in more countries through this sport.”

As the ICU continues its pursuit towards formal recognition as the official world governing body for the sport of cheer, its growth and quick ascent are critical towards this goal. Requiring a minimum of 50 member countries to belong to GAISFs (General Assembly of International Sports Federations), the ICU has already surpassed that hurdle as its membership approaches seventy member federations.

“I attended the GAISFs SportAccord meetings in Denver this March, I am confident that the ICU’s goals are aligned with theirs,” says Jeff Webb. “I was pleased with the meetings I attended and am very optimistic for the future of the sport of cheerleading.”

### **About the ICU**

*The International Cheer Union (ICU) was formed as the non-profit international governing entity whose mission is to advance cheerleading on a global scale. With 65 member nations, the ICU represents the various geographical areas where cheerleading exists. The ICU promotes healthy competition, rule development and education for parents, coaches and students so that the sport can progress in a safe and organized way. The ICU is currently fulfilling membership requirements for the General Assembly of International Sports Federations (GAISFs) and its Executive Council participated in recent meetings with International Federation Presidents and members of GAISFs. More information can be found on [www.cheerunion.org](http://www.cheerunion.org). Photography is available upon request. Contact Sheila Noone at [icumediarequest@gmail.com](mailto:icumediarequest@gmail.com) for more information.*



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## **Full Results**

<p><b>Coed Premier Competition</b> Gold: USA Silver: Thailand Bronze: Colombia</p> <p><b>All Girl Premier</b> Gold: USA Silver: Finland Bronze: United Kingdom</p> <p><b>Freestyle Cheer Dance</b> Gold: USA Silver: Chinese/Taipei Bronze: Finland</p> <p><b>Coed Elite</b> Gold: Canada Silver: Chile Bronze: New Zealand</p> <p><b>All Girl Elite</b> Gold: Canada Silver: Colombia Bronze: Mexico</p>	<p><b>Cheer Dance Hip Hop</b> Gold: USA Silver: Thailand Bronze: China</p> <p><b>Cheer Dance Jazz</b> Gold: USA Silver: Ukraine Bronze: Chinese/Taipei</p> <p><b>Coed Partner Stunt</b> Gold: USA Silver: Colombia Bronze: Slovenia</p> <p><b>Group Partner Stunt</b> Gold: China Silver: Mexico Bronze: New Zealand</p>
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