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For Immediate Release October 6, 2008

WFG Sponsored USA Luge Hits the Ice 2008-09 Season Opens in Lake Placid, NY

LAKE PLACID, N.Y. --- The [World Financial Group](#) Sponsored U.S. National Luge Team took to the ice for the first time since April, marking the official start of the sliding season. Clear skies and temperatures at the freezing mark welcomed the athletes of USA Luge to the Olympic Sports Complex at Mt. Van Hoevenberg at 8 a.m. today, October 6.

“It always feels good to get back on the ice,” said 2002 Olympian Ashley Walden (Westborough, Mass.). “We’ve all put a lot of hard work in this summer, so we’re ready to get back into sliding after the long break.”

Sliding times for the opening day ranged between 45-46 seconds, almost a full second faster on average than last season’s opening day. The track crew at the Olympic Sports Complex did a significant amount of work on the track in the off-season, particularly in curve-12, and the team was happy with the changes.

“In Curve-12, I made a mistake I never would have been able to get away with in the past,” said Preston Griffall (Salt Lake City, UT.), a 2006 Olympic Team member. “I entered the corner in the wrong spot, much later than normal, but exited the corner without any problems.”

The 14-member senior team will continue to slide in Lake Placid before they head out to Park City, Utah, Oct. 28-Nov. 6, to continue their pre-season preparation. The squad hopes that the added ice time will help them get off to a fast start when the eight-race World Cup series opens Nov. 29 and 30 in Igls, Austria.

Media Advisory: Sliding continues on the Olympic Sports Complex track Tuesday, Oct. 7, through Friday, Oct. 10, from 7:30-9 a.m. The team is also slated to slide Saturday, Oct. 11, from 4-5:30 p.m. Weather could impact the sliding schedule. Members of the media who plan on attending should contact Gordy Sheer at 518-523-2071 ext. 102, or by cell at 518-637-1586.

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