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RELEASE

KK Run for Vegas JrNFR Barrel Race

When: December 11-15, 2018
Where: Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas
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Local barrel racer to compete at Junior National Finals Rodeo

Gracie Gambino of Red Springs will be one of 147 cowgirls competing at the KK Run for Vegas/JrNFR Barrel Race, set for Dec. 11-15 in Las Vegas. The event will be held in conjunction with the National Finals Rodeo, the sport's grand finale.

"This is the culmination of a lot of hard work by these kids, and they have all earned the right to compete in Las Vegas," said Kelly Kaminski, the event's organizer and a two-time world champion barrel racer in the Women's Professional Rodeo Association. "Each of these kids will be competing for over \$130,000 in cash and prizes and a chance to earn a qualifying spot in The American Semifinals next February in Fort Worth." Each competitor will run the cloverleaf pattern twice, and the top 20 girls with the fastest two-run cumulative times will advance to the championship round. The girl with the fastest average time also will win a CM Trailer.

"These are all kids 16 and under, and they come from all across the country, Mexico and Australia," said Kaminski, a five-time NFR qualifier who also was a two-time reserve world champion. "This is a great opportunity for these girls." The KK Run for Vegas/JrNFR Barrel Race is one of the most prestigious youth Western events in the country, and only the top qualifiers have earned the right to compete. "This is a very exciting time for every child, every family that will be part of it," Kaminski said. "As a former teacher, I've always wanted to be involved with kids, and this is a great way to tie rodeo and kids together in a championship format."

Gracie is a 16 Year Old East Texas Cowgirl that loves all things rodeo and horses. She participates in many different events within rodeos and other equestrian competitions. Gracie is extremely appreciative of everyone who has supported her along her journey. She has many teachers, coaches,

sponsors, and cheerleaders that have made it possible for her to live her dreams inside the arena.

Gracie works both ends of the arena and recently finished up the 2018 Women's Professional Rodeo Association (WPRA) season and competed in the World Finals in Waco, Texas. Competing against ladies of all ages, she left Waco ranked as the #3 All Around Cowgirl in the World, among household names such as Jackie Crawford, Kelsie Chace, Lari Dee Guy, and Whitney DeSalvo. She finished the year in the Top 5 Cowgirl Tie Down Ropers and the fast time of the World Finals in Round 4. She also earned money at the World Finals in the Barrel Racing, Team Roping (header), and Break Away Roping competitions.

Gracie has been raising money to help with travel expenses to get to Vegas thru t-shirt sales and a bake sale. Over Thanksgiving, her family teamed up to bake and sale over 60 pies and cakes, led by her grandmother (RoRo) to help with expenses. "I am extremely blessed to have the support of our community, family, and friends. It takes a village of people to make this dream happen," Gracie said.

Since February, more than 7,000 entrants from 38 states and four countries have attempted to qualify for the Junior NFR presented by YETI in Las Vegas. For more than 700 of these athletes, their dream will come true when they compete for gold buckles at the Las Vegas Convention Center. For fans and family members unable to attend in person, the Junior NFR will be available online at www.NFRexperience.com. The feed will include all rides and competitions over the ten days of action.

