

2019 FUTURITY/DERBY AND JUNIOR DIVISION



WPRA

WOMEN'S PROFESSIONAL RODEO ASSOCIATION

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FUTURITY/DERBY PROGRAM

The WPRA Futurity and Derby program is the beginning steps of turning barrel horse prospects into champion rodeo horses.

The program, which began in 2006, is for building better rodeo horses that will last through the years. The program gives members a place to take young horses and introduce them to the competition arena but in a more relaxed atmosphere.

The Futurities are open to horses 5-years-

old and younger that are competing for the first time, while the Derby program is for 6-and 7-year-old horses, as long as they did not compete in Futurities as a 4-year old. A horse that starts his competitive career as a 4-year-old has two years of eligibility, but as a 5- and 6-year-old.

The program has proven a great training ground for building rodeo horses of the future.

YOUNG TALENT

Top Talent Abounds in Futurity and Derby Division

By Kristen M. White

Whether experienced or fairly new to the scene, the WPRA derby and futurity winners navigated the challenges of young horses and collected their hardware after strong seasons all around.

It was in fact such a good season that there was a tie for the derby win. Hilary Van Gerpen and Margaret Jones shared the honors. Both women were excited about what the year – and the win – gave them, although the horses have different paths going forward.

A tight derby race

Van Gerpen won her share of the title aboard PC Judge Cash N Lace, the same horse that won her the futurity title last year. Owned by Sterling Equine Ventures in Sterling City, Texas, Cash N Lace was able to build on her successful futurity season, which isn't always the case.

"She's a really consistent horse," Van Gerpen, of Avon, South Dakota, said. "I think I caught a couple of barrels, but for the most part she was a very 'get you in the average all the time' kind of a horse. She just really stayed solid.

"Derby horses sometimes do really well or they can kind of have a rough derby year. I think she just stayed really strong all year."

Cash N Lace has earned more than \$45,000



For the second year Hilary Van Gerpen jockeys PC Judge Cash N Lace to a WPRA World Title. In 2018, the duo won the Futurity world title and in 2019 they shared the derby division world title. WPRA photo by James Phifer, Rodeobum.com

in her career, and it's now wrapping up. Sterling Equine Ventures plans to retire her "sound and happy" and move her into their breeding program.

Having a solid two years of competitive and successful barrel racing to her name, PC Judge Cash N Lace will be a strong addition to the breeding program. Van Gerpen said there are some great ideas on what to cross her with, so she's "looking forward to seeing

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Margaret Jones campaigned Classy and I Know It to a WPRA Derby World Title sharing the spotlight with Hilary Van Gerpen and PC Judge Cash N Lace. WPRA photo by James Phifer, Rodeobum.com

some of those babies.

"No one in their family really runs barrels, so they wanted to make her a bit of their focal point on their breeding program," Van Gerpen said. "This was their first futurity horse, and so I think it's pretty special to them that their first one ended up doing this well."

It's a special win for Van Gerpen, too, especially after winning the previous year together. She said although the horse is not technically hers, she's been around for so long that she knows she'll be sad when she leaves the barn.

"She's one of those horses you can count on that will just go out there and make a good run. She really is special."

Van Gerpen has been training horses since 2012, quickly picking up the ins and outs of futurities. She breeds a few of her own horses and has high hopes for them as well.

She's got four futurity horses lined up for next year, so there's no shortage of training to keep her busy. One of the horses is another of Sterling Equine Ventures, also a Judge Cash, and Van Gerpen said they have great goals

for the stallion.

"I definitely hope to prove him for them too," she said.

A second derby victor

Sharing in the derby victory was Jones and her horse Classy and I Know It. Purchased as a 2-year-old, Jones has been working with Classy through some challenges to get him where he is today.

"He's really sensitive and there was a big learning curve with him, but he always felt really good and very smart," she said. "He's an interesting cross of horses, but I'd take a bunch more of him!"

Jones said she enjoys training horses because it challenges her own horsemanship, and she strives to get better each year. From every horse she tries to learn something and see what she can do differently or better.

"Maybe there's the addiction of it, too!" the Farson, Wyoming, cowgirl laughed.

With two children entered in the National High School Rodeo Association, most of Jones' attention goes to their rodeo endeavors, so she only entered a couple of rodeos herself this summer. For now, she fits in events between her kids' schedules, and she said she was surprised mid-summer to see that she and Classy were doing remarkably well in the derby standings.

"We were doing all right and could pay our way a little bit, so I kept entering and hoping for the best," she said. "Then I figured I should enter a few more things that were approved and go to the WPRA Finals. I'd never been there and that was an exciting experience.

"I was a little star struck - you read about these names, and so many nice horses. And watching the cardholder race was really great. The whole thing was great."

When it was said and done, Van Gerpen and Jones finished the season each with 270 points. But unlike Cash N Lace, Classy will continue to run barrels.

"I've been letting my daughter (a high school freshman) ride him and we're going to see if that's a matchup. I've handed the reins

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Colleen Vondra raced her way to her second 2D WPRA Futurity World Title this time aboard SCF Lakewood Fame. WPRA photo by James Phifer, Rodeobum.com

over to her,” Jones said.

Two-time world champion Brittany Pozzi Tonozzi won the average title at the WPRA World Finals in the derby division aboard Ima Famous Babe that she will take with her to the upcoming Wrangler National Finals Rodeo.

1D futurity success

Karen Gleason, already known as a standout horse trainer, found great success with her horse Mobetta Fame this season, capturing the world championship. They won early and did well throughout the season, and they ended up needing the padding to maintain a hold on the title.

Gleason said one of her goals was to make the WPRA Finals, but just before, her father passed away and she wasn’t able to go. Her family endured a second tragedy when the owner of the ranch that she and her husband run cattle for had a deadly accident, so the end of the season was hectic and difficult.

“It was a whirlwind, so it was very fortunate when I heard the news that we’d hung in there and stayed in to win the futurity,” she said. “I guess it was meant to be.”

The early season was good and consistent, just “making the same run” and placing in a

lot of averages. Gleason said they went home and she put Mo to work on the ranch, noting that he’s easy to ride.

“His resume was outstanding this year. I can’t speak enough for how solid he is and how easy he is,” she said. “He’s done everything with ease and passed all my expectations. He’s doing some ranch stuff, done some pole work and he’s very solid. It’s exciting and fun to run a horse like this.

“This is, by far, the best futurity season I’ve ever had. I’ve had some horses do well, but the WPRA Futurity is another milestone that’s a lot of fun. This horse has taught me so much in the futurity world.”

Out of Daves Jet Ta Fame, Mo helped Gleason firmly put her name in the game as a breeder and trainer. She said every horse she’s riding right now is also out of Daves Jet Ta Fame, so she has “a whole stack of Dave babies” to work with.

Gleason and Mo finished the year with 360 points, staying ahead of Kassie Mowry of Dublin, Texas, who finished with 320 points on Epic Guy after taking third in the average at the WPRA World Finals.

2D futurity competition

Colleen Vondra knows her way around the futurity races. She captured the WPRA 2D futurity title in 2016, then won it again this year on SCF Lakewood Fame. The long-time rodeo competitor, a four-time Great Lakes Circuit Finalist, retired her main rodeo horse a few years ago and decided to get into the training side of the world for a change. She’s proven herself successful there.

“I thought it would be fun to try something new,” Vondra said of getting into futurity races. “I would like to get back to more rodeos – I’d taken a little hiatus because all the horses I had at the time were young and green, so I was able to make some money and do the futurities with them. Meanwhile, each year I’ve sold the horse that I ran. But this year, Lotto (as SCF Lakewood Fame is known around the barn) and the derby horse I had this year, I plan on keeping them both.”

She said Lotto is a goofball and a big

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horse, and because he knows his size he can take advantage of that and be a bit pushy. So learning how to handle him has been key. She said he’s much easier to manage in the saddle than anywhere else.

“I took him a little bit his 4-year-old year, but he just wasn’t mature enough to handle the pressure, so I held him out until his 5-year-old year,” Vondra said. “To be honest, I was hoping he’d be more in the 1D, but as I started going along he wasn’t yet handling the pressure.

“So my goal was just to make him solid this year, instead of trying to push him. He has the ability, the speed, all the parts – he just hasn’t

put it together yet in his brain. I don’t plan on selling him, and I know he’ll be a good horse, so when he was winning the 2D I figured we’d just make him solid and keep him running.”

Now, she said, the challenge is to get his confidence up to go just a bit faster. She believes Lotto will have the ability to take her the places she wants to eventually go. With two young children at home, Vondra also trains and boards horses and gives lessons, so when the time is right with all her other commitments, she hopes Lotto will be ready to go and help her find success in the arena.

WORLD CHAMPIONS

FUTURITY:

2019 – Karen Gleason/Mobetta Fame
2018 – Hilary Van Gerpen/PC Judge Cash N Lace
2017 – Sharin Hall/Dreaming of Foose
2016 – Sue Smith/Dash Centerfold
2015 – Tami Semas/Smooth N Famous
2014 – Cindy Baltezare/Famous Drifty Go
2013 – Lacey Kuschel/Western Goldmine
2012 – Sandra Hart/LM A Classy Design
2011 – Sandra Hart/Hart Ta Fame
2010 – Bo Hill/Phame
2009 – Jan Duquette/Magico Fire Water
2008 – Leslie Maynard/LRM Lightning Watch
2007 – Judy Melvin/MNMs Vanilla Sky
2006 – Kay Blandford/Talents Dark Angel

DERBY:

2019 – (tie) Hilary Van Gerpen/PC Judge Cash N Lace
Margaret Jones/Classy and I Know It
2018 – Kalie Anderson/Whatcha Look At
2017 – Hilary Van Gerpen/Three Tymes a Lady
2016 – Randee Hedrick/Colonels Cash Express
2015 – Lynnzie Lindstrom & Vauna Walker/Dan I Am Famous
2014 – Fonda Galbreath/Frosted Cookies
2013 – Ashley Baur/Love Man’s Darling
2012 – Ashley Baur/Love Man’s Darling
2011 – Rissie Parker/Letta Lash Do It
2010 – Kindell McKaniel/Parkers Secretary
2009 – Lisa Ruhnke – First Banana
2008 – Susie McConaghie – Super Hero (PT)
2007 – Lacy Billingsley – Shawne Dash

JUNIOR DIVISION

It remains one of the most indelible images of WPRA history. Blonde curls bobbing, bat clinched firmly between her teeth, a barely teen-aged Clayton, N.M., cowgirl roared into the history books of barrel racing. Charmayne James was just 14 when she and super horse Scamper won the first of a record 10 straight world championships. Along the way, she captured the hearts of rodeo fans across the nation.

The site of young girls guiding their top equine partners flawlessly through a barrel pattern disappeared in the mid-nineties when the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association initiated a mandatory age limit of 18 years of age for competitors at PRCA sanctioned rodeos. Due to the relationship between the two sanctioning bodies at the time, the WPRA followed suit and little girls no longer had a place in professional rodeo.

Beginning in 2007, the WPRA instituted the WPRA Junior Division for all girls aged 17 and under. The junior division introduces a

whole new group of members to the ranks of professional competition and allows mothers and daughters to compete for world points at some of the same events.

Juniors run in WPRA Junior sanctioned races as well as co-sanctioned divisional races and rodeos to earn points for the WPRA World Finals. Juniors can only earn points in WPRA Junior Division races, in co-sanctioned rodeos, and in the 1D of co-sanctioned divisional races. Juniors do not compete against WPRA members for points are not eligible to enter WPRA events or rodeos.

Among the big name races co-sanctioned for the WPRA juniors is the world renowned Josey Junior World Championship barrel race. Hosted by legends RE and Martha Josey, the 1980 WPRA World Champion, this race has played host to thousands of aspiring barrel racers through the years, many of whom have gone on to tremendous success in the ranks of the WPRA.

MAKING HEADLINES

Astounding Year in WPRA for McKenzie Morgan

By Josie Fladager

Seventeen year old McKenzie Morgan of Maryville, Tennessee is the 2019 WPRA Junior World champion. Aboard her beloved horse In Firewaters Honor, also known as “H,” Morgan won over twice as much money as her competitors and ran in fewer rodeos.

Morgan grew up barrel racing, starting in the National Barrel Horse Association (NBHA) at the age of five, and joined the WPRA Junior division in 2018. This year Morgan is excited about accomplishing this goal, saying “It’s something that I wanted to work for a while and it means a lot to have won the Junior World Championship.” She was also excited about the awards that came with the title. “It was super cool to win all those awards. I have never won so many and I think it is so cool

WPRA puts so much into giving us such nice prizes.”

Some people wait their entire lives for one special horse, but Morgan has found hers. H is special to Morgan for many reasons. He was bred and born in the Morgan’s breeding program. Now 13, H has come back from several major injuries and illnesses including a traffic wreck in 2015 on the way to The American Semifinals in Fort Worth, Texas, where the truck and trailer both flipped and he was stuck inside for two hours. He sustained large lacerations on his back legs. “He overcame this quicker than expected,” says Morgan when recalling the wreck and its aftermath. Then, at the NBHA World Finals in 2016, H coliced and underwent a surgery that only gave him a 5-percent chance of surviving. He then was placed in the ICU with salmonella and coladas.

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After an incredible recovery, Morgan and H came back to the NBHA World Finals in 2017 and 2018 and won the World Title both years. This was the first time the title had been won back-to-back in 19 years.

Morgan expressed her admiration for H saying, “I’m just super thankful to have a horse like him. He makes all my dreams come true. He’s overcome a lot of things that would have finished some horses career. God blessed me big when he gave me H!”



On her way to the WPRA Junior World Title this year, Morgan traveled to the All American Youth Barrel Race in Jackson, Mississippi. On June 14, they won the 1D out of 500 runners and broke the Mississippi Coliseum arena record with a wicked smooth run of a 13.746.

Just a few weeks later at the NBHA Triple Crown Super Series in Perry, Georgia, Morgan not only won the race earning over \$18,000 over the week, but broke the Reaves Arena record as well by over two tenths of a second, stopping the clock with a 14.294. Morgan stated excitedly, “It was definitely a thrilling experience. I have wanted the arena record in Perry for a long time!”

Morgan has now broken and set four arena records, all in different states. Along with the Mississippi Coliseum and the Reaves Arena,



McKenzie Morgan raced her way to the 2019 WPRA World Junior Champion title aboard In Firewaters Honor she simply calls H. Photos by James Phifer, Rodeobum.com

she currently holds the record at the Tri C Farms arena in Seymour, Tennessee. She set a new arena record at the Extraco Events Center in Waco, Texas at the Youth Extravaganza barrel race in 2016, but that record has since been broken a few times. During the 2019 Heart O’ Texas Fair & Rodeo Taylor Langdon set the new mark in a time of 15.57 seconds. Then during the 2019 WPRA World Finals two-time WPRA World Champion Brittany Pozzi Tonozzi set the new record, 15.564, to only see that mark be bested several racers later when former NFR qualifier Tillar Murray stopped the clock in 15.534.

Morgan did not compete at the WPRA Finals this year, as she had clinched the title before the Finals, and she wouldn’t be able to make both that and the NBHA World Show in Perry, Georgia.

To add to her already extensive and impressive resume, Morgan has run H at The American Semifinals four times (2016-2019). They plan to head back to Fort Worth, Texas again in February 2020 after qualifying at the No Bull Barrel Race in Lexington, Virginia in September.

JUNIOR DIVISION

Morgan's career has excelled so far and she has high expectations for the future. When she turns 18, she plans to purchase her WPRA permit and make a run for the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo in Las Vegas. "We have a lot of future goals but the NFR is our biggest goal."

Morgan has traveled all over the country running with H and knows she could not have

gotten there without the help of some amazing people.

"I couldn't do it without my parents and I have some amazing sponsors. I'm super thankful for all of them because they keep me going up and down the road. Without that we definitely would not have won the title. We have a really good team for sure."

WORLD CHAMPIONS

2019 – McKenzie Morgan, Maryville, TN

2018 – Patton Ann Lynch, Crawford, Texas

2017 – Laney Robinson, Mars Hill, N.C.

2016 – Laney Robinson, Mars Hill, N.C

2015 – Merrill Mundy, Parrish, Fla.

2014 – Jackie Ganter, Abilene, Texas

2013 – Kylar Terlip, Frontenac, Kan.

2012 – Brookelyn Owens, Muldrow, Okla.

2011 – Kylar Terlip, Frontenac, Kan.

2010 – Callie duPerier, Bandera, Texas

2009 – Lake Mehalic, Oro Valley, Ariz

2008 – Tara Timms, Leedy, Okla.

2007 – Madison Montchal, Atalisa, Iowa

2019 WPRA FUTURITY/DERBY POINTS

Unofficial standings as of October 27

FUTURITY

NAME	HORSE	POINTS
1. Karen Gleason	Mobetta Fame	360
2. Kassie Mowry	Epic Guy	320
3. Heidi Gunderson	RC Black In Famous	280
4. Hilary Van Gerpen	Danger On The Rocks	270
5. Margaret Jones	Shes Packin Dynamite	265
6. Heidi Gunderson	Sly Smokin Gun	240
7. Heidi Gunderson	RC Fame In Black	230
8. Jordan Kircher	Rob Em Smooth	155
9. Shari Taggart	CM Hecate	150
10. Bonnie Blain	Road Trippin	115
11. Heather Bauman	Harvey P Wild	110
	Darcee Shepherd	110
13. Molly Otto	RC PYC Back In Bay	100
14. Kassie Mowry	Famous Ladies Man	95
	Cheyenne Hattesen	95
	Hilary Van Gerpen	80

2D FUTURITY

NAME	HORSE	POINTS
1. Colleen Vondra	SCF Lakewood Fame	95
2. Kelsey Lutjen	KN Wood Be Chatty	80
3. Danielle Collier	ImapackinFrenchPistol	65
	Bonnie Blain	65
5. Cindy Baltezore	Ima Famous Design	60
6. Christina Curley	Bar B Boogies Secret	50
	Nicole Laurence	50
	Ryann Pedone	50
9. Margaret Jones	Shes Packin Dynamite	45
	Casi Guess	45
	Karen Gleason	45
12. Casey Mathis	VS Ikes Levi Lad	40
	Mary Jo Camera	40
	Tiffany Brevik	40
15. Cathey Vallerga	KC Ima Sparkin	35
	Darcee Shepherd	35
	Sharin Hall	35
	Katelyn Lide Scott	35
	Jodee Miller	35
	Brandee Wardell	35
	Brandee Wardell	35
	Kelly Tovar	35
	Shari Taggart	35
	CM Hecate	35

2019 WPRA FUTURITY/DERBY POINTS

DERBY

	NAME	HORSE	POINTS
1.	Hilary Van Gerpen	PC Judge CashNLace	270
	Margaret Jones	Classy And I Know It	270
3.	Heidi Gunderson	Takin On A Storm	230
4.	Karen Gleason	Red Bull Look	190
5.	Molly Otto	Sixappeal	130
	Hilary Van Gerpen	PC A Gallant Judge	130
7.	Brittany Pozzi Tonozzi	Ima Famous Babe	120
8.	Kelsey Lutjen	VFChasin Cans	115
9.	Darcee Shepherd	Two Rubles	100
10.	Jordan Kircher	DDD Scarlettrenchgrl	95
11.	Margaret Polonci	Aint Seen Me Yet	85
12.	Vicky Taylor	Miss Run on Fame	80
13.	Paige Jones	High Cotton Lane	70
	Michelle DeBoer	Troublenvrlooksogood	70
15.	Chelsea Gilman	Bully For Moonshine	65

2019 FINAL WPRA JUNIOR STANDINGS

Official Standings as of Oct. 26, 2019

1.	McKenzie Morgan	Maryville, Tenn.	\$40,518
2.	Patton Ann Lynch	Crawford, Texas	\$19,641
3.	Alexis Lynch	Crawford, Texas	\$15,722
4.	Emily Wilkins	Bath, N.Y.	\$15,260
5.	Ashlyn Goven	Rozet, Wyo.	\$8,865
6.	Paige Jones	Wayne, Okla.	\$8,623
7.	Ava Sanders	Vero Beach, Fla.	\$8,217
8.	Cami Henry	Deleon Springs, Fla.	\$7,595
9.	London Gorham	Cotulla, Texas	\$7,131
10.	Lenna Peterson	Watkins, Minn.	\$5,517
11.	Ryleigh Kaye Adams	Okeechobee, Fla.	\$5,272
12.	Taylor Zbytek	Clewiston, Fla.	\$5,059
13.	Hannah Mae Oakley	Dade City, Fla.	\$5,034
14.	Rylee Butler	Arcadia, Fla.	\$5,019
15.	Kali Holt	LaBelle, Fla.	\$4,518