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Immediate Release

Melby wins \$59,712 at the Wrangler National Finals Rodeo, first time

Three gold buckles coming back to Backus, Minnesota

Ten rounds of work result in three gold buckles, Minnesotan shines bright

December 10, 2011 Las Vegas, NV. - Jane Melby of Backus, MN won the final go-round of the 2011 Wrangler National Finals Rodeo (WNFR) tonight in front of 17,720 fans at the Thomas & Mack Arena on the campus of UNLV. She ran 13.71 seconds to claim the performance win on her horse RC Black in Black "Beauty." Her WNFR earnings totaled \$59,712.

Melby exclaimed, "That's a blessing itself to win that kind of money. Where else could you go to run for it, not only win it." Melby came into the WNFR with \$63,283 and nearly doubled her yearend earnings this week.

On Saturday December 3, 2011 Melby turned in a run of 13.83 seconds to claim the coveted third go-round championship buckle and prize money. In the middle of the finals during halftime she switched horses giving Beauty a break and rest. She rode her daughter's colt in his debut at the WNFR during the fifth and sixth performances. A veteran barrel racer for years Melby showed courage riding a colt in the electric atmosphere of the WNFR. "That was his sixth rodeo," she mentioned after her barrel racing run.

While fellow Minnesotans were building snowmen, Melby was making her own in Round 8. She came back and won her second go-round on Beauty. Making the night memorable was having her brothers Todd and Troy in attendance. Melby stated, "This is the first time my brother Todd has seen me compete."

In a partnership sport between rider and equine athlete, Melby credits her horse Beauty. "She's been outstanding, I did the right thing by giving her those two nights off in round 5 and 6, and she came back strong. When you've got that much money on the line, you hate to run the second-string horse, but you also have to do what's best for everybody involved."

Gold Buckles are won by three quick turns in her sport known for the "cloverleaf" pattern. "I'd say qualifying for the NFR was a big honor, but winning the (first) round is just doubling it," exclaimed Melby. The tenth go-round buckle is the most precious considering it is the round that makes champions.

This is the first time in history a Minnesota cowgirl has competed at the WNFR dubbed the Super bowl of Professional Rodeo .

Melby was one of fifteen women from across the United States and Canada competing for the title of World Champion Barrel Racer in the Women's Professional Rodeo Association. The Thomas & Mack Arena on the campus of UNLV hosted the 53rd Wrangler National Finals Rodeo December 1- 10, 2011.

The total payoff for the 2011 Wrangler NFR is six million dollars. Per go-round , per event pays a total of \$57,692.31 with it broken down by 1st place \$17,884.62, 2nd place \$14,134.62, 3rd place \$10,673.08, 4th place \$7,500, 5th place \$4,615.38 and 6th place \$2,884.62. Seven events make up the nightly rodeo performance. The average pays out 173,076.92 per event.

Lindsay Sears of Nanton, Alberta won her second World Barrel Racing title tonight. She won in 2008 and was reserve champion twice in the past few years.

Media Notes:

Interview footage and WNFR Media Room photos with Jane Melby are uploaded on facebook Kirchmann Media Group

Arena action photos credit in print and online to photographer Alex Compton