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From Competition to Collaboration at the Rodeo

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Nov. 7, 2018) — When the lights come up and the crowd cheers in Freedom Hall it's an experience unlike anything else on the Great Lake Circuit Rodeo. After a long year of competition, no rodeo rider would want to miss it.

Alex Baratka arrived in Louisville with a horse recovering from injury and she hoped it would recuperate in time to compete. As the competition inched closer, she realized the horse wasn't healing fast enough.

That's when Jordan Miller, a barrel racer from Mauston, WI, stepped up. She heard Baratka's horse was wouldn't be ready to compete and she graciously offered to loan her horse for the competition.

"When I put myself in her shoes, the answer was clear and I offered her my main horse. I knew if the two of them got along she would have a great chance to defend her spot at the finals, which is a once in a lifetime opportunity," said Miller. In 2016 Miller competed in the RAM National Circuit Finals Rodeo.

Even though Miller says her horse can be particular based on who he's working with, she thought he would perform well for Baratka. "I have not let many people ride him, four to be exact and he only got along with one of them, so I hoped that I was helping her and not loaning her a horse that didn't work."

Not only did Miller's horse work, but Baratka advanced to the RAM National Circuit Finals Rodeo in her rookie year. Even though rodeo is an individual sport, the competitors are part of a unique community and often cheer for each other. Miller is proud of her horse for performing at such a high level, especially for a competitor.

This year Miller is back to compete at the North American Championship Rodeo, which will be her fourth trip to Freedom Hall. She said the event is the perfect ending to a year of hard work.

The North American Championship Rodeo rides into Freedom Hall Nov. 8-10 at 7:30 p.m. each night. The rodeo is held during the North American International Livestock Exposition, with contestants vying for over \$80,000 in prizes and the title of Regional Champion for the Great Lakes Circuit Rodeo. Winners will go on to the RAM National Circuit Finals Rodeo in Kissimmee, Florida for the Pro Rodeo Cowboys Association.

Tickets for the North American Championship Rodeo start at \$10 each night and are available on [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com). For more information, including a schedule of events, visit www.livestockexpo.org.

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