



# THE REVOLUTION

By Krista Lucas

**W**estern sports are continuously growing and expanding, whether it is rodeo, cutting, working cow horse or barrel racing. The most recent association to form out of the barrel racing world is Revolution Barrel Racing.

These new races have gotten off to a great start and will continue to bring a new format to the sport.

In 2017, barrel racer Stephanie Gilliam Ritchey had an idea to build a group of barrel races with higher fees and bigger payouts.

The races strive to provide excellent service to every contestant. The crew in charge is some of the best in the industry, with the goal of providing a safe but competitive atmosphere. The RBR website is easy to follow, making entering any event stress-free.

RBR offers a membership to allow contestants to compete in qualifying races, which are held at nine tour stops around Texas and Oklahoma. The finale has \$25,000 added and will be November 15 thru 18 in Glen Rose, Texas.

The races also have an open section with a lower fee at each event, along with a youth race, and are all Women's Professional Rodeo Association approved.

This format is similar to the style team ropings have adapted to in recent years. Numbered ropings have higher entry fees, with a bigger payback, and many are more than one round.

RBR events are multiple days with multiple chances to win big money. Ritchey, of Pilot Point, started RBR when she saw a huge opportunity to create something new and different for the sport.

"I had competed in every kind



of barrel race known to man since I started 36 years ago at the age of four years old," Ritchey said. "A few years back, I started producing a few medium sized races that were successful."

"Then I started having my children, and it got put on the back burner. This has been on my mind for a few years. Now is the right timing, in my opinion, for me and the sport."

Several years ago during a trip to Las Vegas, she listened to her husband talking to a friend who was roping in the World Series Team Roping at the South Point Arena. Ritchey's first thought was to produce a race in Las Vegas, but it was not until two years later, after reading Facebook comments about what people were wanting from a producer that would be new and different, that Revolution Barrel Racing was formed.

"A whole year was planned

within a two month period," Ritchey said. "This is my version of luck." The feedback during this first year of competition has been extremely positive, and overall everything has run smoothly.

"We have had a few bumps in the road, as well as a few experiences we've learned a great deal from this year," Ritchey said. "One being the program to run our races on and print checks. I wanted something that would be totally for Revolution Barrel Racing and our format. We used several and finally found the right one for us just recently."

There are more new people attending every race, and Ritchey hopes to continue to grow RBR. She has already figured RBR should see a 20 to 30 percent growth over the next five years and plans to expand the races to a few other states in the future.

"Not only do we have a great

team of people working together to make Revolution a success, we have one of the most successful western timed event producers in history as our mentor," Ritchey said. "Planning for our 2019 Tour is already in full swing."

Katelyn McLeod, daughter of multiple Wrangler National Finals Rodeo qualifier Michelle McLeod, likes the idea of smaller but richer races. The Whitesboro cowgirl has been the announcer for RBR, as well as interviewing the winners.

The payout is what has caught my eye," McLeod said, "and it doesn't matter if you have a 1D horse or a 4D horse, the payout makes it worth your time."

The RBR remaining schedule includes events at Glen Rose and Conroe, Texas.

For the latest race results from Alvarado, Texas visit [www.revolutionraces.com](http://www.revolutionraces.com).