Racing Against the Odds: *Antle dreams of checkered flags*

By: Caitlyn Johnson

While most teenagers her age are just learning to drive, sophomore Myiah Antle has been putting pedal to the metal since she was three years old.

Antle has had a passion for drag racing since she was old enough to know what a car was. After spending nearly every weekend at Kearney Raceway Park with her race-loving family, she decided to follow in her older sister's footsteps and jump in her own car before she even hit double digits.

"Looking at my sister makes me proud because I never thought how much she would accomplish in those moments," Antle states. "My sister's drag racing made me realize that I could also get behind the wheel. Now it's my goal to be faster than she ever was."

For Antle, it's the challenge of not only being brave enough to buckle into a car speeding down the road at 150 miles per hour, but of constantly tweaking the car to be as fast as possible. Drag racing involves a lot of on-the-spot problem-solving, but the payouts can be worth the work.

"The race day always starts with time trials, which serve as a warm-up. This allows you to tune your car and get it ready for the actual competition. The temperature of the track and the wind make a big difference and have to be accounted for," says Antle. "Racing gets pretty expensive, even on race days. If you get out in the first round, you can buy back in, which means that you pay money to stay in the competition, usually $50. At the end of the night, there should be two cars left, and you race for what they call King Of The Hill. If you win, you get all the money that the previous players gave when they wanted to buy back in."

There are many different types of cars: Juniors, Pro Stock, Super Pros, and Super Comps. Antle started racing in juniors, where she topped out at 50mph, but now that she's older, she'll be entering the pro stocks, where she'll be topping out closer to 150mph.

Despite the relative safety of racing at top speeds, precautions are necessary. Antle wears fire-retardant gear to protect her.

"I've never crashed, but I have side-swiped the racing guard; it was pretty scary," Antle admits. "Accidents are rare, but on days that are super hot or cold, they're way more likely to occur."

Despite the risk she takes, Antle is passionate about her sport.

"My first race, I was nervous at first, but once I got into the car and I made my first pass, I knew I fell in love with it," said Antle.

The racing strip was her happy place from the time she was a toddler until the COVID-19 pandemic hit and closed down raceways across the world.

"I was absolutely devastated when I couldn't go back to the race track," Antle remembers. "Everything was shut down, and I thought I would never be able to race again."

As the raceways began to open back up, Antle found herself trying to decide if drag racing was something she still had the time and passion to pursue.

"It was so hard getting back into the sport I love doing so much, as much fun as I had doing it before, I am still getting back into the routine," Antle admits.

Over the last few years, Antle has strictly been a spectator, but now that she's officially earned her license, she's ready to strap back in and hit the gas at a higher level of competition.

Antle is working to find the perfect race car she can modify under the supervision of a close family friend, Allen Trickle.

"We are still figuring out a car, but we are thinking of getting a Challenger, and we plan to make it a tad bit faster," winks Antle.

While she'll have to give the car a few test runs at the track in Kearney, she hopes to be back to racing by Spring.

"I am so excited to get back into racing again," Antle says. "When I get into the car, it makes me feel like home again."

Top: Antle ears a PR and a victory while racing against one of her best friends in Kearney when she was nine.
Bottom: Antle's family, Dad Dustin, Mom Mandy, and sister Macie, are waiting between races at Kearney Raceway Park.