



SKKY Allstars Cheer Academy

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In August of 2016 the SKKY Allstars Senior 5 team, appropriately named Reign, began their climb. The coaches Christina Kingkiner, Kayla Pierce, and Lala Sabir had selected their athletes, choreographed their routine, and charted the roadmap for the upcoming season. They were registered for ten competitions between January and April. Like all cheer teams, they had aspirations of first place trophies, grand champion banners, and national champion jackets, but they also had a dream - making it to The Summit. The Summit is one of the most prestigious end-of-the-year championships in the sport and it takes place at the Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Florida. This live event hosts teams from the United States and various other countries including, Norway, Australia, and Japan to name a few. A team must earn a bid, or invitation to The Summit to attend. Only the highest scoring teams at the most reputable events are awarded bids to The Summit and getting one of these is a high honor. Every spring cheerleaders all over the world are chasing Summit bids and this year Reign joined in the pursuit.

The Reign cheerleaders knew from the start what a demanding, intense commitment being part of this team would be. You don't get a shot to go up against the best of the best without months of blood, sweat, and tears. Encountering setbacks such as injuries would be inevitable, and they would have to battle through. Each and every one of the 15 athletes accepted the challenge and over the past few months this team has become the epitome of hard work, determination, and perseverance. Competing at many local competitions and traveling to Atlantic City, Trenton, Baltimore, and National Harbor the team has ridden the highs together at the best of times, picked each other up in the worst of times, and pushed each other through the most difficult. Their tireless efforts and several flawless performances have earned them extremely impressive accomplishments including 4 First Places, 2 National Championships, 1 Grand Championship, and 1 Full Paid Bid to US Finals in Rhode Island. Coaches and parents could not be more proud of the accolades and honors that Reign has won so far this season. But as March rolled around they were still fighting hard for their dream of a Summit bid. Many Monday nights the athletes sat on the edge of their seats anxiously awaiting the "video bid reveal" to see if they were chosen to receive a bid from the previous weekend's competition. Looking into their eyes each of those Monday evenings you could see a shade of disappointment quickly overcome by an increasingly fierce appetite to not give up until they had achieved their ultimate goal. Time and time again

they dusted themselves off, got back up, and pushed even harder. Because what you do when no one is watching is what separates a champion from everyone else.

The second weekend in March, the team took a road trip to an illustrious Nationals competition in Hartford, Connecticut. Reign did not just show up to get everything they wanted, they showed up to give everything they had. They hit their routine both days, and were scored with zero deductions. Reign came in first place over five distinguished teams and had the highest Level 5 score out of 23 other Level 5 teams, and headed for home with national champion t-shirts and trophies. A few days later SKKY Reign Senior 5 was offered an At-Large Summit Bid and asked to represent Spirit Festival as the "highest scoring Summit bid eligible Level 5 team from the event." That very day, 15 amazing athletes finally felt the indescribable joy, pride, and happiness that comes from achieving a dream, a dream that they worked so long and hard for. Words cannot express how proud our coaches, families, and the SKKY community are of all that Reign has become, all that they stand for, and the magical journey they have traveled. This team inspired one another day after day, and in turn inspired all of us to do our best to reach higher goals and achieve the true virtue to happiness. From team road trips, to sleep overs, to shoe bedazzling, to fundraisers, to laughter and tears, to grueling practices, to fantastic performances...they are the closest group of athletes and coaches that many have ever seen; they are a family. And this most deserving family is going to Walt Disney World!

We wish SKKY Reign all the best at The Summit! Go to Florida and give it everything you got, leaving it all on the mat as you have all season long. And when you get there, take a moment to take a deep breath, take it all in, and savor this impressive accomplishment that you achieved. Enjoy yourselves and make memories with your Reign family to carry with you forever. Each and every one of you is a tremendously talented athlete, and it has been an honor and a privilege to share in your climb to The Summit! Now let's go bring your REIGN to Disney!!!