Looking back on rodeo royalty over the last 100 years, we’ve seen many changes – clothing, hairstyles, hat shapes – but since the beginning, they have served as the best form of advertising for the Ellensburg Rodeo. The purpose of this program is to provide unique opportunities for young women, as well as to ensure the success of the rodeo through this marketing method.

These prestigious positions have been sought after by hundreds of candidates since the creation of the Ellensburg Rodeo Royal Court and on January 27th, we will crown the 2024 Royalty. While the tradition of the pageant lives on, many improvements and adaptations have been made over the past few decades.

In 2024, the Ellensburg Rodeo officially announced that they would be selecting one representative, instead of a court made up of two to three young women. In keeping with the standard set with countless other top PRCA rodeos around the nation, the 2024 Ellensburg Rodeo Queen will be the sole representative of the event.

To compete for this title, a young woman must be between the ages of 18-24, be a resident of Kittitas County for at least one year and furnish and ride a suitable horse for parade and rodeos. She must showcase her skills in horsemanship, public speaking, rodeo knowledge, and more at the annual pageant held in conjunction with the Ellensburg Rodeo Royal Court Banquet.

The pageant has multiple judged categories: Written test, personal and horsemanship interviews, a media interview, horsemanship, and speech, including modeling and impromptu questions.  The pageant is judged by three individuals who do not reside in the area, and have expertise ranging from horsemanship, public speaking, rodeo, and business.

In the last decade the number of young women who are interested in this opportunity has undoubtedly decreased, as it has with numerous other rodeo organizations around the country. The Ellensburg Rodeo offers one of the most comprehensive prize packages to their representative as an incentive to compete and a thank you to those who serve.

The young lady will be provided with a $3,000 educational scholarship during her year of unique travels and adventures representing the Ellensburg Rodeo. Additionally, her wardrobe is provided and all travel expenses are paid – a rarity when comparing this program with others in our area or across the nation.

As with any tradition that has survived more than 100 years, changes are made to ensure this prestigious program lives on. The Ellensburg Rodeo will continue to advance its pageant, prizes, and opportunities so that we may place a crown on the next generation of Ellensburg Rodeo Queens.

*For more information and ticket prices to the Ellensburg Rodeo Royal Court Banquet, to be held on January 27th, 2024 at The Central Washington University Student Union Ballroom, please contact the Rodeo Office at 509-962-7831.*