Life under the Arizona Crown (January- March)

After being crowned on January 14th, I woke up early the next morning and drove my first 654 miles to Steamboat Colorado where I competed in the Cowboy Downhill. This was a perfect way to start of my year and show myself and those around me how much I had grown. I was once the little girl in the crowd chasing down the contestants for an autograph and now I was the one on the other side of the pen signing my own name. From Steamboat we took another short 156 mile trip to the Denver, home of the National Western Stock Show where I got to meet more of my fellow state queens and spend some time helping out with the different events at the rodeos.

I found myself in Las Cruces New Mexico not too soon after, working alongside more of my fellow queens on bettering our skills and knowledge at the Badlands Rodeo Queen Clinic. After leaving this clinic I felt much more prepared to represent my state of Arizona not only at the national competition but throughout the year as well.

Four quick days at home and I was off to the Yuma Jaycee Rodeo where I attended the first performance before leaving the following morning for the Wickenburg Parade. This was my first parade as Miss Rodeo Arizona, where I rode with Jimmy the Hat guy and Double H Hat Company a huge sponsor of Miss Rodeo Arizona. I left Wickenburg that afternoon, destination, Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport.

I landed in Kissimmee Florida on February 12th and hit the ground running. Starting a fun filled week off with a dinner with my host family and new best friend Miss Rodeo New Jersey. The rest of the week was filled with fairs, beaches, rodeos, wild hogs and lots of alligators before coming back home to Show Low Arizona for another four day break.

Casa Grande and Apache Junction called me their way for their Exceptional Rodeo and Lost Dutchman Days, after all the crazy schedule in Florida, I was very happy to be at familiar rodeo where I knew everyone and everyone knew me. I was so thankful for the W/A Contracting Company and Buster Web for supplying me with a great horse for the weekend.

March slowed down just a bit and let me spend two days at the Parada Del Sol rodeo in Scottsdale where I was once again blessed with a wonderful horse named Leroy who seemed to me quite famous among the rodeo committees. I was later informed by Leroy's owner Jim Duesenberry that Leroy in fact was pretty famous in that area after being part of the Hashknife Sheriff's Posse and helping during the pony express ride for many years prior to carrying rodeo queens every year at the Scottsdale rodeo. From Scottsdale on over to Globe for their last performance of the Copper Dust Stampede, where I finally sat proudly atop my very own horse Cida in my very own saddle. After riding so many strange horses it was nice to be one someone I knew. Cida and I ran a few flags and one beautiful hot lap before heading home after one very long weekend.

My first quarter of the year as the 2017 Miss Rodeo Arizona ended nicely with a night out on McDonald ranch helping raise money for the Care Fund at the Desert Skys Gala. The Care Fund is a fund that helps families with children who suffer from an illness, pay for basic living necessities like rent while their child is in hospital care. I was so happy that I was invited to this event and hope to attend in following years. I woke the next morning for the last performance of the Roots N' Boots rodeo where I helped present the Marines flag during a U.S Military tribute and later sold raffle tickets, Thus ending my first quarter as 2017 Miss Rodeo Arizona.

Jessi Muha