

As the final for Miss South Yorkshire draws ever-closer, it's almost time to find out who will be the County's next representative. The 22 hopefuls have already taken part in a variety of activities including a gruelling boot camp and a day of bag packing, to raise money for the charity SAFE@LAST. They have also had to find sponsors, and perform their own unique talent.

Journalist Tom Revell caught up with some of the finalists to see how they're feeling, and what the competition means to them

Ellie Sanders is a 19 year old student studying Social Work at Sheffield Hallam University

How does it feel to have reached the stage of the competition you're at now?
Shocked but exciting and nerve wracking all at once.

What do you think you can bring to the role of Miss South Yorkshire?
Enthusiasm, hard work and a positive outlook on life.

Working with charities is an important part of the competition, are there any charities you feel are an especially good cause?

SAFE@LAST is important to me, it is close to my heart, as I have experience with looked after, vulnerable young people and I am studying social work to help make a difference to young peoples lives. National Children's Society is also an important charity to me as I have a sister who was born deaf.

I've heard all finalists must show a performance of their talent - what will your talent be?

Sign Language - As a young person, I grew up playing football for a local team. For my talent DVD I am signing about how football was important to me and how it can help young people gain confidence and respect.

Wow ! Sign language is hard, my brother is learning - well done!

And finally, what do you think the real meaning of beauty is?

Beauty is about how a person is on the outside, as well as the inside. Real Beauty is a caring, respectful person who aspires to make a difference.

19 year old Kirsten White is a Business Administration Assistant at Rotherham College

What made you want to enter the Miss South Yorkshire competition?

I saw a pop up on the web about a beauty pageant in Carolina USA, so I had a look and was interested and it made me think 'is there any near me?'. When I looked there was - The Miss South Yorkshire Contest and thought well why not give it a try, at the end of the day it's a bit of fun and I'm guaranteed to meet new people.

How does it feel to have reached the stage of the competition you're at now?

It feels amazing. To actually be a finalist in Miss South Yorkshire 2011 is such an achievement and I'm very proud to be in this with such wonderful women and raising money for SAFE@LAST.

Being Miss South Yorkshire means you're an ambassador for the region what would you tell people about South Yorkshire?

I would tell people about the history of South Yorkshire and all the beautiful national parks it has in its area and surroundings. Also advertise the places to go in South Yorkshire like in Barnsley there's Cannon Hall, Sheffield has the modern Winter Gardens as is FAB for shopping. Rotherham has the Magna Centre and is where Sean Bean started his acting career and Doncaster has the new refurbished shopping centre - French gate and holds the Grand St Leger at historic Doncaster Race Course. All have fantastic museums and galleries, it's a wonderful area to visit.

I've heard all finalists must show a performance of their talent - what will your talent be?

Well, From being a member of the 218 RAF Air Cadets I had learnt numerous out of the ordinary skills like shooting, marching, commandments but most of all FLYING. I decided to go to Sheffield Aero Club and Fly a Cessna 152.

And finally, what do you think the real meaning of beauty is?

The real meaning of beauty for me is being confident and believing in yourself. If you believe in yourself you will shine and feel beautiful inside and out. Everyone will see how you shine and stand out. Beauty isn't about being a size 8 with long blonde hair perfect skin and perfect teeth. so overall Confidence is the real meaning of beauty for me.

Gillian Moss Aged 20 from Rotherham is an Executive Assistant with the Council

What made you want to enter the Miss South Yorkshire competition?

It was just something I came across whilst browsing the web, and I thought I'd give it a shot - never in my wildest dreams did I think I would make the final!

What do you think you can bring to the role of Miss South Yorkshire?

I'm hoping to fetch a lot of fun and laughter! I don't want to take the role too seriously or be really competitive; I just want to enjoy the experience and make the most of it whilst I'm here!

Being Miss South Yorkshire means you're an ambassador for the region what would you tell people about South Yorkshire?

I would certainly try and promote the good side of South Yorkshire, as you hear so many bad things in the newspaper and on the news and not enough of the good! Little things such as the Nature Reserve which has been built up on Sheffield Road opposite where I work – it's had so little recognition. Also you don't realise how much communities come together and work together when something happens in your own area. A couple of tragic accidents which have occurred over the past few years have gone to prove and show this, local people and local pubs have come together to raise money and host fundraising events.

Working with charities is an important part of the competition, are there any charities you feel are an especially good cause?

Tough question! All charities have a good cause because you know people are going to benefit from what you can give, no matter how small or large the amount, a little can make a big difference. Not only raising money but just raising general awareness. I've never been involved with Charity work before but I've had so much fun and got such a great buzz from being able to help as part of Miss SY. SAFE@LAST has been a great charity this year to be involved with. However the Alzheimer's Society I feel is a great cause, as so many people suffer and I know how hard it is on the family, its something I can relate to more than some of the other charities, as my family have been through this with my Grandma.

I've heard all finalists must show a performance of their talent - what will your talent be?

Mashing Potatoes – I can whip up some good creamy mash J you will see this in my talent DVD!

Semone Newell a Student Nurse is aged 19 from Swinton

What made you want to enter the Miss South Yorkshire competition?

I wanted to enter the Miss South Yorkshire contest as I love a challenge and the competition is a great way to meet to new people and have fun!

How does it feel to have reached the stage of the competition you're at now?

It's unbelievable to have reached the final stage of the competition. I feel it's a huge opportunity and I'm delighted to have got this far.

Working with charities is an important part of the competition, are there any charities you feel are an especially good cause?

I have done some volunteer work at Try Line, a charity which is based at Rotherham Rugby Club. The organisation works with underachieving children. Seeing the children having so much fun while learning was an amazing experience to be a part of. This makes me feel proud to support an organisation that does such good work in South Yorkshire.

I've heard all finalists must show a performance of their talent - what will your talent be?

My talent is horse riding. I love the sport even though sometimes you have to get down and dirty when brushing and mucking out!

And finally, what do you think the real meaning of beauty is?

Beauty is not all about looks. Personally I feel the film 'Shallow Hal' explains beauty perfectly!

Thank you for taking part ladies - good luck in your bid to be the next Miss South Yorkshire. Tom Revell