

# Joust because

Miller finds  
success on  
horseback

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The world of competitive jousting is different than many would expect.

There are no suits of armor. There is only one rider competing at a time, and no one is dislodged from their horse.

Still, Mikayla Miller has made the sport her own.

Miller, who rides under the name "Maid of New Castle" is the granddaughter of Linda and Chuck Morrison of New Castle and Don and Karen Baynham of Volant. Her parents, Rick and Barbara Miller (formerly Baynham) both grew up in the area, with Rick from Oil City and Barbara from Union Township.

When Miller started riding in 2007, she felt the name was fitting.

"It just made sense," Miller said. "My mom and grandparents are from there and it was just fitting."

Miller competes in what's called ring jousting. The event requires riders to take their horse down a straight track which runs under three arches. Suspended from these arches are metal harness rings wrapped with cord. As the rider goes through the arches they attempt to spear the metal rings on a lance. The rings vary in size from 1<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> inches in diameter down to 1/4 inch.

"It's not what most people expect when they hear the word 'jousting,'" Miller said. "I didn't know what to expect when I started but I worked my way up pretty quickly."

She quickly advanced from the novice level, to the amateur level and now the semi-pro level where she intends to stay for the time being.

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Mikayla Miller has made a name for herself in the little-known sport of ring jousting, becoming a state and national champion in 2016.

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## **JOUST: Miller finds success on horseback**

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For now, Miller, who lives in Maryland, is enjoying her time in the semi-pro division where she claimed both the state and national championship trophies in 2016. She also was honored in May with the “Touch of Class Award” which is given monthly to Maryland horses, individuals, teams, organizations or events that have received national or international recognition. The award is named after a Maryland-bred mare that won two gold medals in the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles for show jumping.

“It was an honor,” Miller said. “There have been a lot of great recipients of that award so it was cool for me to be added to that list.”

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