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Local equestrian rider passes on knowledge

November 21, 2023

BY JEFF NEAL
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Local equestrian rider Katelyn Boykin, a world champion, passed on her knowledge and love of ponies to the next generation of riders recently at a show at Tennessee Miller Coliseum.

She hopes to inspire girls to be the next champion rider.

"I feel so honored that the head of the show wanted me to come and demonstrate for the crowd and the girls that are there because I was one of them once looking up to that person, and I now get to be that," Boykin said.

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Ms. Cheap

Former Siegel student Katelyn Boykin, an equestrian rider, won the National Academy title in 2000, and the Worlds in 2023. SUBMITTED

She is a 2023 graduate of Siegel High School and attends Western Kentucky University where she is

a double major.

"I was 7-years old and my mom got a groupon for a lesson in Brentwood, and from that moment I was hooked," Boykin said. "I had jeans on and had no idea what I was doing. They probably should have told me to go home, but they stuck with me and I was rewarded, and I appreciated that."

She started out at ages 7-9 in Western style, which was more about glitz, glamour, dressing up, doing hair and makeup. However, she said she wanted something more.

She moved up into what was called Saddlebred, which is more quarter horses, and she says she loved the competition. The horses were bigger and had longer necks and there were different divisions. There is an age 13-under, 14-17 which is what she competed in, then an amateur for 18 and older.

"It was really a hobby for me outside of my other activities," Boykin said. "I always kept my horses at the barn or at the academy where I trained. I would text the facility to say I'm coming home so I could get on the horse, and it didn't matter what was going on in your life the horse didn't care. He was always there for you," Boykin said.

She has two ponies, one named Gideon. She told her mother she would have one someday but her mom didn't believe her. Her other one is named Zeus, which is the one she won the world championship with, and she says the two have different personalities.

"Gideon is more loving and caring and easy going while Zeus is all business and like a Mr. Diva," she said. "People couldn't believe that I had purchased the horse as Zeus was already a world champion, and it shocked everybody."

In 2020, she won a National Academy title, and in 2023 she won Worlds. She couldn't believe when they actually called her name and that she had finished in first place.

"I just want to let people know that no matter what level you are on that anybody is capable of reaching their dreams, Boykin said. "I never ever thought that I would win Worlds, and also I want them to know that I get discouraged and I have had bad days and off days in my equestrian career. But that is OK. You can achieve what you want."

"I thought we had a good chance, but everything has to come together on that day," Will Harris of Harris Riding Academy where Boykin trained said. "She was always very competitive and had a good horse that had won a world championship, but you still have to put in the practice. But like I told her, we are going to work just as hard next year and not rest on our laurels."

For more information on Harris Riding Academy, located on 6331 Franklin Road in Murfreesboro go to www.harrisridingacademy.com



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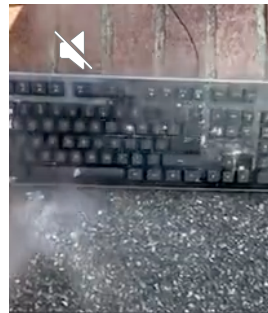
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