

# Wedding season

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Shortly after the Pattons' first date, which took place during dance season, the team was headed to Dance Nationals. Taylor let Mitchell know she would be leaving for a week: "I didn't want him to go date someone else, because I remember I really liked him!" Their second date was at Mitchell's place, eating pizza and watching basketball after a dance practice.

That's right. *Basketball*. It turns out that Mitchell is just as sporty as Taylor. He's a basketball enthusiast, having played basketball in high school at South Knox and also in college for Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI).

Taylor relays that sports are an important part of the couple's connection. "It's nice," she explains. "He's just as passionate about something as I am... I do commit a lot of time to dance, and so does my mom... He's been accepting of that since day one and has taken it on, so that's been really nice. He understands."

In fact, Mitchell met Taylor's parents at a Forest Park Rangers basketball game. And not

just any game. He met them at the 2018 State Championship!

"I warned him, 'You have to understand you're meeting the entire town of Ferdinand,'" Taylor laughs. "This isn't just you meeting my parents. Everyone's gonna be there — my friends, my parents' friends, *everybody*."

She remembers: "He was just like, 'A basketball game? Yes, I would love to go.'"

Perhaps that weekend was a pivotal moment in a relationship that Taylor says "kept going in the right direction" and "just always felt right." After all, the very night before the State game, Mitchell introduced Taylor to his parents, Donald Jr. and Deborah Patton of Evansville, over dinner.

Yes, family is very important to both.

Knowing their relationship was long-term they eventually decided to move in together and invited their families over for a house-warming party.

That's when it happened.

"He got down on one knee ... it was very sweet," Taylor recalls.

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Above: Mother of the Bride Denise Heilers assists with Taylor's gown as she prepares to walk down the aisle with her father, Patrick Heilers to exchange vows with her awaiting groom.



Left: Taylor's bridesmaids enjoyed a gift of matching pajamas from the bride, while groomsmen were gifted socks displaying their favorite sports teams. All members of the wedding party also received matching personalized tumblers.