

## Mikayla bowled over by hat-trick

By: ADAM SMITH

SHE may be the youngest in her family to take to the bowls green, but 13-year-old **Mikayla Baker** is certainly making some giant strides in the sport.

Among her family of five -- Mikayla, mum Vicki, dad Shane and brothers Daniel and Josh -- she has justifiable claims to being the best in the household. Two weekends ago she competed in the state junior titles and won the singles, doubles and fours crowns.

Not a bad effort for her first attempt, including overcoming promising North-West bowler Candice Hobbs 21-7 in the singles semi-final, before taking the final 21-14. Baker then teamed with Tayla Munro in the pairs, before completing the "trifecta" as a member of the winning girls' fours combination along with Georgina Jones, Olivia Jones and Aquis Jones.

The Geilston Bay High School student had some expectations leading into the tournament, but said she was surprised by the clean sweep. "It was really good, I didn't expect to do so well," Mikayla said yesterday. "I really wanted to win the singles though. I would love to now make the Tasmanian team. To do that I need to bowl well in NSW [at the national junior titles in October]. "Then they select two girls and two boys in the Australian team for New Zealand."

Mikayla took up the sport when she was nine, and mum Vicki said that when her daughter stepped on to the green for her first pennant match as a 10-year-old, her skip was 80 years her senior. And while the whole family is proud of her achievements to date, Bowls Tasmania is taking notice as well. BT executive officer Maxine Viney is confident that if Mikayla continues to progress, she could follow in the footsteps of the state's leading female junior, Rebecca Quail.

"Mikayla has always had plenty of potential, and to have a family who take her where she needs to go is very helpful," Viney said. "The younger we can get them the better, though we seem to lose a few when they turn 18, until about they are about 30 or 40 again. "If she decides to stick with it, she could definitely be our next Rebecca Quail."

