

For the first time in its 34-year history, the Medieval Times franchise will feature a woman as master of ceremonies

Long live the queen



Queen Jessica Schear-Tolles during the rehearsal for her big debut this week at Medieval Times in Lyndhurst. Medieval Times is launching a new story line in which, for the first time, the jousts will be presided over by a queen. PHOTOS BY MITSU YASUKAWA/NORTHJERSEY.COM

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It's good to be the queen.

It's especially good when you're a first queen. Elizabeth I, for instance. Or Mary I. Or even Queen Doña Maria Isabella — the first female monarch in the 34-year history of Medieval Times, who will be taking the throne on Thursday.

"I'm very, very excited to be playing her. She's a really rich character," says Jessica Schear-Tolles of Rutherford, one of six actors who have been tapped to to play the character at the 28-year-old Lyndhurst venue.

A damsel, yes, but never a damsel in distress, Schear-Tolles says.

"When she's challenged, she lays down her authority," says Schear-Tolles, who spends most of the two-hour show sitting majestically on the



Knights practice a scene during the rehearsal at Medieval Times in Lyndhurst ahead of the debut of the new queen.

throne, watching costumed knights on horseback thwack, crack and bludgeon each other.

"She's written to be a very fair queen, but she has authority behind her," says

Schear-Tolles.

For 34 years, the master of ceremonies at all the Medieval Times "dinner &

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