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High School Sports

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Lynnwood High's Edwards family hopes to bring school Class 4A girls basketball title

Sisters Jasmin and Jordyn Edwards, coached by father Everett, have the Royals ranked third in the state and seek the school's first state title in a "major" sport.

By Sandy Ringer

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LYNNWOOD — Walk into the living room, and SportsCenter is splashed across the big-screen TV.

That's almost a constant in the Everett Edwards household, which meets approval from everyone in the family except youngest daughter Jordyn.

"Sports is on too much," the 14-year-old complains, rolling her eyes.

She would rather watch more music videos or even the Disney Channel. But this is a sports family. More specifically, a basketball family.

Everett is the head girls coach at Lynnwood High School. Daughters Jasmin (a junior) and Jordyn (a freshman) are the team's top two scorers. Laurie is not only wife and mother, but the do-it-all team mom and helps run the feeder program. Older brother Anthony is taking a season off at Shoreline Community College and the youngest, Elijah, was the starting point guard on his eighth-grade team this winter.

The girls have grown up in gymnasiums, playing or watching or keeping score. Being on the court together this season has been special — in more ways than one. It has not only brought them closer together, but brought a renewed sense of athletic pride to the high school, where many teams have struggled over the years.

At 22-1, the third-ranked Royals are in the running for what would be Lynnwood's first state championship in a "major" team sport. They play Kentwood on Friday in the 4A regional round at Jackson High School and expect a large following.

"We have so many people supporting us — teachers, parents, students," said Jasmin, who goes by Jazzy. "It's a great feeling, a great environment."

A great change in fortunes.

"Lynnwood High School has a reputation as lovable losers in sports," said Everett, a Seattle Police detective in his sixth season as head coach. "It's been a really rough run for our football team and for a lot of our athletics. So it's nice to have a team that is able to compete at the highest level. The community and the students and teachers have all come together to support our girls."

Lynnwood ended a 42-game losing streak in football in 2004, but has still not won more than three games in any season since. The boys basketball team recently completed a third straight 2-18 campaign.

The school has won titles in boys and girls cross country and track, but none since 1994. When the girls beat Arlington last week in the Northwest 4A title game, they believe it gave Lynnwood its first district championship in any sport since the late 1990s.

The Lynnwood girls finished 4-17 the season before Everett took over. In 2009-10, they were surprise 3A state qualifiers. They went 20-5 Jasmin's freshman year, but lost in the regional round, and last season fell two wins shy of reaching the Tacoma Dome.

They have won 12 in a row since a midseason upset against Monroe, and the Edwards family would love nothing more than celebrating Jasmin's 17th birthday on March 2 by winning the state championship.

"We don't want it to end here," she said.

Ask the girls what it's like playing for their father and they admit they know little else, as he coached them at various AAU levels as well.

"He's been our coach for a long time now, since we were little, so I guess we're used to it," said Jordyn, nicknamed Jo Jo. "I think it's cool to have that one person that's always there to help you out on the team."

Jasmin said the familiarity with his coaching style is comforting.

"He knows when to push us and when to give us space," she said. "He always keeps a good balance, being a dad and a coach, which really helps."

Everett calls it "awesome" coaching his daughters and said they make it easy for him to put them on the court because of their athleticism. Jasmin, just over 5 feet 5, is a three-year starter who averages nearly 12 points, four assists and three steals per game. The 5-9 Jordan, who generally is first off the bench, is close behind at 10.4 points and also averages better than three steals.

The coach shows them no favoritism on the court.

"If anything, I feel he doesn't give them as much recognition just because they're his kids," said teammate Grace Douglas, who has known the family since kindergarten. "They have a good relationship."

They've made a winning combination on the basketball court, and won over a lot of fans along the way.