

Jaime welcomes Dad's help with Lions

Written by Tom Fruehling
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It was just a couple of weeks before the Linn-Mar girls basketball season started when first-year head coach Jaime (Printy) Brandt introduced the team to her newest assistant.

"This is my dad," she said. "And that's probably going to be the last time you hear me call him that."

Since then, he's simply known as "Coach Printy," the same as her other assistant is "Coach Suther."

"And I call her 'Coach,'" says Jaime's dad Jeff of the unique daughter/father coaching relationship. "Oh, we slip occasionally. But it's her team. She runs the show. I'm just on board to help out in any way I can."

It isn't something that had been in the works for a long time.

Jaime does say, however, "I used to joke that if someday I ever became a head coach I'd hire Dad as my assistant."

"Why not? He's taught me everything I know."

She never dreamed the chance would come so soon.

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Having served last year along with longtime assistant Mike Suther on the staff of head veteran Coach Michael Brandt, her own mentor in an illustrious prep playing career, the 2009 Linn-Mar alum was tabbed last May to the top job when Brandt somewhat surprisingly resigned.

"I hadn't thought about it," she says. "I'm young (24) and have no experience. All I'd ever coached was at basketball camps. But I do know a lot about the game."

While her sophomore high school year was wiped out by the first of two serious knee injuries, Printy was a first-team all-stater for three years and scored 1,391 points. She was named the state's Gatorade Player of the Year in her final season.

Recruited by (among many others) Iowa's Lisa Bluder, who coincidentally grew up just a few doors down from the Printy family's home in Marion and was a star on her own at Linn-Mar, the dead-eye shooting guard was named Big 10 Freshman of the Year in 2010.

She was an honorable mention All-American the next year. Hindered by another torn ACL in her junior season, she still ranks third on the

Hawkeyes' all-time scoring list with 1,841 points and led her team to four NCCA tournaments.



Prospects of playing professional basketball after graduation in 2013 (with a degree in recreation and sports business) were dashed by her two major surgeries.

"My left knee was shot," she says.

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Printy instead took a job selling medical supplies, the very same equipment she knew from first-hand experience.

“It was a good job,” she says. “But it wasn’t my cup of tea. All along, I thought teaching and coaching would be my best fit.

“I have a passion for kids and I love being around kids. I really want to have an impact on their lives.”

She jumped at the chance to help out as an assistant at Linn-Mar last year.

And since marrying Danny Brandt (no relation to her former coach) in August, she has worked at her mother-in-law’s Kiddie Konnection Childcare in Iowa City.

So she now splits her time between pre-schoolers for part of the day and teenagers later on. And she’s taking online classes from Phoenix University to earn a master’s in elementary education so that she can teach.

Meanwhile, her dad Jeff, who turned 53 on Wednesday, says he sometimes regrets not following the same career path. A one-time basketball player at Cedar Rapids Washington and a 1983 graduate (in education) from Mount Mercy, he’s a project manager at Rockwell Collins.

“But I always thought I should be a coach,” he admits.

Not that he doesn’t have plenty of experience of his own. He started coaching his son Jordan, now 26, when he was a little kid in YMCA and then AAU basketball. Also a prep all-stater at Linn-Mar, Jordan went on to Indiana State and is an assistant on the Linn-Mar boys team.

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And for years Jeff coached Jaime's Cedar Rapids Panthers youth basketball teams that won a number of state championships and were loaded with future prep stars. So who better to join her on the bench in her rookie year?

"She knows so much more about the X's and O's of basketball than I do," he says. "My role is to just be a sounding board, to throw out some ideas and help keep the girls' attitudes up.

"We think the same. I just help her however I can. But Jaime's the coach, and I'm so proud her. She's not a yeller. But all the girls really respect her.

"She's always positive, and she's such a good role model."

For her part, the young coach says she's glad to have her dad at her side.

"I've been very fortunate to learn a lot from a lot of great coaches, from Coach Brandt and from Coach Bluder and all the assistant coaches.

"But my dad has taught me so much. We've always had a good strong relationship. I can go to him for advice on anything. And he's always been there to support me.

"Now to have him as my assistant, it's almost like a dream come true."