



Edwardsville Tigers girls basketball team says goodbye to departing seniors

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Jasmine Bishop, Criste'on Waters, Mackenzie Silvey and team manager Margaret Curtis were honored in a special ceremony prior to the start of Thursday's game against the Alton Redbirds.

Tears were shed as their fearless leader and coach Lori Blade, along with her staff and the athletes' families, handed them flowers and joined together on center court for a photo opportunity.

"They have been a good group," Blade said. "Criste'on and Mackenzie have been good leaders and good varsity kids for all four years and Jasmine came in, worked hard and fit in well.

When it was her turn to come to center court, Mackenzie Silvey became overwhelmed with emotion and cried as she embraced Blade, her mother and her father.

"It's definitely hard, but I know Coach Blade will always be there for me when I need her in college," Silvey said after the game.

For Criste'on Waters, the hard work that she put on display at her home court will be embedded in her memory forever.

"I've spent four years of my blood, sweat and tears here," Waters said. "I've built a bond with everyone and it's kind of like I have to leave that all here."

Bishop's love and respect for her teammates goes beyond anything that could happen on the court in the coming weeks.

"This team means everything to me," Bishop said. "To be on the court with the people I respect is great."

In the fall, both Waters and Silvey will be heading to Southern Illinois University – Carbondale to play for the Salukis. Bishop has decided to attend Webster University in St. Louis.

Before they head off to college, however, the three seniors must endure the rigorous postseason schedule, which kicks off next week at the Collinsville Regional.

"I know we have more games coming and hopefully the week after, so that's what we have to focus on now," Silvey said. "Hopefully, we'll have fans come out and support us."

After falling last season in the super sectional, Waters believes she and her team has unfinished business to attend to in the state competition.

"We know we have to go ," Waters said. "We have to prove a point."