

Sister act: Ali, Ivy Watts driven by sisterly competition
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Ali and Ivy Watts use their sisterly bond to push each other on the softball field. Friends on and off the field, these sisters work together, challenge each other and play the game they love without strife or even sibling rivalry.

Ali, a senior, and her younger sister Ivy, a freshman, are both significant assets to Tupelo's softball team and say that playing together only brings positive results.

"I love playing with Ivy," Ali said. "We're best friends on and off the field."

Ali, a left-fielder, has been playing softball for a total of 13 years. Being the only senior on the team this year, she is a leader for not only her younger sister but for the rest of the girls on the team as well. Ali said with her younger sister looking up to her, she feels more pressure to be a good role model.

"It's harder to be a role model for her than for the rest of the team," Ali explained.

Teammate Kendall Brooks, a junior, said Ali may be the best senior she's ever played with.

"She's done a really good job of keeping the team up," Brooks said. "She sends us texts to motivate us."

Brooks also said Ali plans times for the team to get together to hang out and said that this keeps a tight-knit, family-like atmosphere. Ivy agreed her sister is a great role model and senior leader for the team.

"Ali is a very great player and I look up to her," Ivy explained. "She's a great leader and knows how to talk to the younger girls and guide them and show them what to do."

"I probably look up to her more than she looks up to me," Ali said with a laugh.

Ivy plays shortstop and has been playing the game since she was 4 years old. She said she plans to continue her softball career in college.

The sisters' teammates and coaches agree that Ali and Ivy playing together is beneficial for everyone. Head coach Dana Rhea said the sisters make a good duo.

"You can tell there's a lot of love in that family," Rhea said. "Those two are really tight together."

Rhea said that the way Ali and Ivy look out for each other and the team makes them good teammates.

“They play really well together,” Rhea added. “They push each other to be better, and it’s exciting as a coach when you have people that encourage and motivate teammates around them to be better. With them being sisters, it’s really cool to see them push each other.”

Brooks said that, based on the way Ali and Ivy act around each other on the team, no one would even know they were sisters.

“They’re completely different,” Brooks said. “They don’t fight on the field or let it affect how they play.”

Assistant coach Tabitha Beard agreed that the sisters work well together.

“Healthy, sisterly competition drives them,” Beard said.