

Twins on the three-point line

John and Rob Wade reflect on a lifetime of basketball and brotherhood

KENNEDY WEATHERBY
staff reporter

The stakes were high for the freshman boys basketball team. Their opponents for the night: district rival, Austin High. After the Knights' devastating two-point loss at the buzzer to the Maroons earlier that season, the district championship was on the line. If the Knights could win the game, not only would they redeem themselves, but they would also secure a position as district champions. Luckily for the basketball team, the Wade twins stepped up to the line that night. As co-captains, Rob and John Wade led their team to a hard earned victory, and the freshman Knights claimed the co-district title.

Three years and 64 basketball games later, the Wade twins, Rob and John, have begun their fourth and final season as McCallum Knights, but their story with basketball starts much earlier than that.

Both Rob and John have been playing basketball for as long as they can remember. It started in their driveway, playing with their older brother. From there, the twins played for basketball associations in Austin, such as YMCA, WAYA and AAU, where values of sportsmanship and integrity are taught from an early age. They then went on to play at Lamar Middle School and then, of course, at McCallum.

"[Basketball] has taught me a lot of leadership and I'm grateful for that," John said. "I'd say that my AAU days have really helped me grow in the leadership department."

After winning district their freshman year, the twins started their sophomore year on different teams, with John on the JV team and Rob on varsity. They both credit that year for teaching them valuable lessons that helped shape them into the high level varsity players they are today.

"When I was on JV under Coach Shaw, I learned a lot about leadership, and I had to step into a role that I had never really experienced before," John said. "We were 0-5 to start that season, and Coach Shaw pulled me aside and said he was looking to me to pull us out of the slump, which I'm glad he did because I stepped up, and that's shaped my basketball experience."

Under the leadership of Coach Shaw and Coach Fuentes, who both work closely with the JV and the varsity team, the twins have developed and learned from many different perspectives.

"[Fuentes and Shaw] both have really good basketball IQs, so they are always trying to figure out ways that I can get better—just play better and help us win," Rob said. "I learned that you're not always going to be the most skilled or the best player on the floor, so you have to do all the little things right."

The twins were reunited on the varsity team their junior year, and it has, in their opinion, only made each of them better.

"[Playing with Rob] makes it a lot easier for me because I always know I can count on him," John said. "He just makes the team better, and that makes everybody on the floor better."

And they make him better. The dynamic duo also credits their coaches and teammates who have helped them develop into the players they are today. The Wade twins also credit their parents.

"Well, my dad is a super big basketball-head, so he's always encouraging me and trying to help me," Rob said. "And my mom is always a shoulder to



Senior Rob Wade attempts a shot during a varsity basketball game against Austin High on Nov. 20. McCallum ended up losing the game 62-52. Photo by Kennedy Weatherby.

lean on. If I have a bad loss or if I'm mad about something, she's always there."

Rob and John's dad, Stuart Wade, has also been a part of their basketball experience at McCallum. Along with being the former basketball booster club president, he has coached the twins and their teammates in the fall league that the Knights have participated in the past two years.

"It's been really rewarding to watch them develop, they never fail to impress me with their leadership and maturity," Stuart said. "It's been a real pleasure to be with that core group of seniors who have worked hard together since Lamar."

Now, the twins have made it to the most memorable season of their high school career:



Senior John Wade drives past a Marble Falls defender and surveys the court during an away game on Dec. 4. Photo by Kennedy Weatherby.



A young John Wade (left) and Rob Wade (right) pose with Christmas gifts: brand new basketballs. Photo by Stuart Wade.

teammates have put in to get to this point, and are prepared to bring their best.

"I'm most excited about the journey," Rob said. "Whatever the result is, I'm just going to be satisfied with the group of guys that we have been playing and practicing with all year."

As the twins round the corner to the end of their high school basketball career, they look back on how playing at McCallum has shaped their high school experience. From keeping them in check in the classroom to helping them meet some great people, John and Rob are grateful for the past three years in McCallum basketball.

Like many other seniors, college is already on the twin's minds. Rob is leaning toward continuing his basketball career in college. Although receiving several roster spot offers from a few different schools, Rob remains undecided. John, on the other hand, doesn't plan on playing basketball in college, but is looking to major in finance. After spending 18 years playing on various teams together, they realize that this will probably be the last time for a while that they will play together on the same team. That makes this season even more special, and they are not taking anything for granted.

"I'll miss the basketball team the most, because that's something that's just everyday," John said. "Sometimes you're just tired of coming in for basketball but I know that once the final buzzer is over and I can't come in for practice anymore, I'm gonna miss it."



The Wade twins play ball in their driveway with their older brother.



The Wade twins pose with their WAYA basketball team in 2017. They were 14 years old at the time.



The Wade twins celebrate after winning a game their freshman year. Photo by Pam Olsen.



The Wade twins play defense together their junior year. Photo by Annabel Winter.