

COMMUNITY

BASKETBALL KEEPS JADA JENNER MOTIVATED TO OVERCOME OSTEOSARCOMA

MISSISSAUGA TEEN STAYING INVOLVED IN THE GAME

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Jada Jenner had a great time at Camp Oochigeas, a camp dedicated to children who've been diagnosed with cancer, over the summer. However, because she had her leg amputated after she was diagnosed with osteosarcoma last year, she had trouble playing basketball, and that bothered her.

"It's not the same just throwing the ball, I wanted to be able to run and do all of those other things," said Jenner, a 14-year-old from Mississauga.

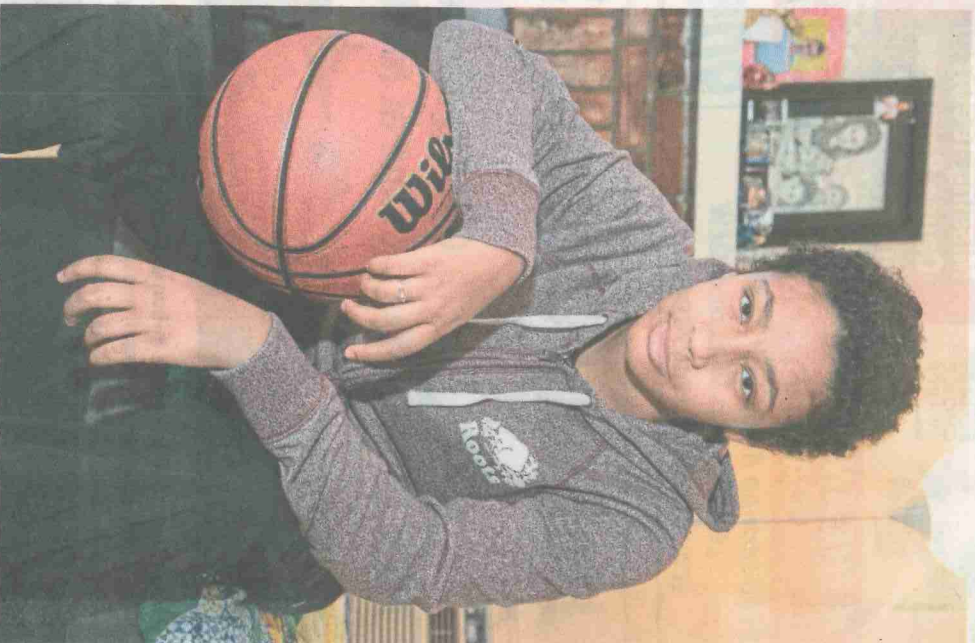
Councillors at Camp Ooch noticed her love for basketball and recommended she sign up for a contest for an unforgettable trip to a Toronto Raptors game.

After sharing her story with the Air Canada Foundation, Jenner and her family won the contest and not only did they get to see the Raptors host the New York Knicks on Nov. 10, but they also got to meet Raptors guard Norman Powell, who gave Jenner a signed jersey.

"I was happy because he also went through some injuries, even one right now," Jenner said. "He said obviously it wasn't the same as what I went through, but he knows it's tough when you can't do things all the people around you are doing."

Jenner won the experience through the Air Canada Fan Flight program, which is run in partnership with the Toronto Raptors and all seven Canadian NHL teams. As an added bonus, she'll get to go to New York in February when the Knicks host the Raptors. She's excited for that trip, especially because she has never flown on a plane before.

Last year, Jenner was first diagnosed with tendinitis after she was going



Riziero Vertolli/Metroland
Jada Jenner, a Mississauga teenager who is determined to continue playing basketball despite having her leg amputated after she was diagnosed with osteosarcoma last year.

through a lot of pain. As time passed, something still didn't seem right and her family was concerned as she was often fatigued.

She was eventually taken to the hospital and diagnosed with osteosarcoma, the same disease that plagued Canadian hero Terry Fox.

Although being diagnosed with cancer can be scary, Jenner was more worried about not being able to go to school and see her friends.

"After a while, it started to hit me that my friends weren't the No. 1 priority, getting healthy was," she said. "Immediately, my mindset changed and I said 'I've got to do this.'"

Fortunately, the cancer was detected early and she went through chemotherapy and rotationplasty amputation shortly after her diagnosis. She's now in remission and goes

through physiotherapy at ErinoakKids once a week.

Throughout her battle against cancer, Jenner has stayed positive. Even as she was going through treatments at the Hospital of Sick Children, she was excited to be around the nurses.

She remains determined to stay involved in basketball and plays whenever she can. An Our Lady of Mount Carmel Secondary School student, she said she would eventually like to help manage the high school's girls' basketball team. She'd have to miss a lot of practices and games at the moment because of her physio treatments.

Going through cancer has given Jenner a new perspective on life. She says even though the illness may have been difficult, it also made her stronger.