

# BRENNAN MORRIS SIGNS VOLLEYBALL GRANT-IN-AID TO PLAY AT JACKSON STATE

By Ron Barry

Brennan Morris recalls being an eighth-grader and watching Crockett County High School's volleyball team play against her sister's Chester County squad.

"I remember being impressed with the way they played," she says. "I liked their style of play; I liked their offensive and defensive sets; I liked everything about them." So much so, she says, that she wanted to be a part of the program.

Bobby Rawson - Crockett's head coach at the time - remembers Brennan Morris from two years earlier.

"This sixth-grader came up to me after a match and introduced herself to me and said, 'My sister is the libero for Chester County,' Rawson recalls. "And she said, 'I like the way you guys play.' I thought that was unusual, first of all that a sixth-grader would be bold enough to talk to another team's coach. But even then, I could see that this girl had a high volleyball I.Q. - she knew the terminology, she knew a lot about the game."

Andrew Laman - Crockett's head coach now - remembers Brennan Morris newly-enrolled at Crockett County as a high school freshman. "Like Bobby said, it was obvious she knew the game early on," he says. "She could talk offense and defense; sometimes she might even suggest an offense or defense."

At any rate, Rawson and Laman were the beneficiaries of the transfer talent from Chester County, who held a signing ceremony Wednesday to announce she would be continuing her volleyball career in college as part of the brand-new program at Jackson State Community College. There, she'll join former Lady Cavalier teammate Joy Evans as a part of the initial season of the sport at JSCC.

Morris, who as a senior this past season led the entire state of Tennessee Class-AA players in service aces - as well as establishing a new career record for the school - was praised at the ceremony for her work ethic, her value as a teammate and mentor to younger players, and for her knowledge of the sport.

Rawson, who now assists Laman in a reversal of their roles from Morris' freshman year, lauded the amount of time Morris has put in to improve her game.

"It's one thing to know the game as well as Brennan does," he says, "but it's another thing to put in as much work as she has to be the best she could be. I have no doubt she'll be successful at Jackson State, because she will work at it."

Both Laman and Rawson acknowledged that - sometimes - Morris could be as much of a coach as she was a player.

"Anyone who knows Brennan knows that she's not shy," Laman laughs. "And sometimes, she'd be coaching up the younger players, being encouraging, and sometimes, she'd suggest stuff for us to try as the coaching staff. That's just the way she is, and as far as I'm concerned, she doesn't need to change at Jackson State. She just needs to be who she is."

Morris says the challenge of being in a first-year program is part of the attraction at JSCC.

"I want to set all the records," she laughs. "I came to Crockett because I thought it would be the type of program that would help me reach my goals and improve as much as I could. It has lived up to that and more, and I'm so grateful that it has given me this opportunity to keep playing at the college level."

Morris was joined at the signing ceremony Wednesday by several members of her family, some church friends, and her Lady Cavalier volleyball and tennis teammates. Morris teamed with Izzy Yearwood a year ago to achieve All-District status as the #1 doubles team for Crockett, and is readying for that sport's upcoming season now.

Morris - who is also a talented singer - helped Crockett to two straight volleyball state tournament appearances in her junior and senior seasons.



**Right:** When Brennan Morris has her serve working -- as she did at this fall's West Sectional -- she knows she's about to work some magic against the opponent. (Photo by Ron Barry)





**Above:** Flanked by family members, Brennan Morris signs Wednesday to play volleyball at Jackson State Community College. (Photo by Ron Barry)

**Below:** The unique combination of a competitor and a cut-up are caught in this shot of Brennan Morris, teasing assistant coach Bobby Rawson this past season during a fun time on the bench. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Below:** Known for her deadly serve, Brennan Morris cranks one up in last fall's TSSAA State Tournament in Murfreesboro. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Coaches praised the versatility of skills possessed by Brennan Morris, here diving for a dig at this fall's regional tournament. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Below:** Brennan Morris is joined by her volleyball teammates at Wednesday's signing ceremony. (Photo by Ron Barry)



**Above:** Also present at Wednesday's ceremony were the tennis teammates of Brennan Morris. (Photo by Ron Barry)

