

Making a name their own

A pair of Carrboro High School athletes are taking a different path while living up to their parent's legacy

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As the starting center for the Carrboro High School boy's basketball team, Andrew Montross knew other people were going to expect him to be a 7-foot-tall specimen with a myriad of post moves en route to a playing career in the NBA.

After all Andrew's father, Eric Montross, is one of the most recognizable figures around the area due to his large stature and exceptional basketball skills. Eric was the starting center for the North Carolina men's basketball team during UNC's 1993 national championship run and was then drafted by the Boston Celtics in the first round of the 1994 NBA Draft.

"Other people expected me to play like my dad, go to UNC and then go to the NBA," Andrew said. "But that wasn't really what I wanted to do."

But Andrew is not alone. Jackson Overbeck, Andrew's teammate on



Andrew Montross, left, is one of the few who can measure up next to his 7-foot-tall father, Eric. (Photo courtesy of Andrew Montross)

Carrboro High School's basketball team, also knows about trying to live up to a parent's athletic achievements.

Jackson's mother, Carla Overbeck, played on the North Carolina women's soccer team from 1986-1989 and won four consecutive national championships while at UNC. Carla went on to have a successful 12-year career with the United States women's national team that won the World Cup in 1991 and 1999.

Unlike Andrew, Jackson never enjoyed playing the sport in which his well-known parent accomplished so much. Jackson quit playing soccer in fifth grade and has never played the sport competitively again.

"I dragged him around to all my sporting events when he was younger," Carla said. "He was at all the practices and all of the games, so I don't know if that put a bad taste in his mouth or not."

Neither Jackson nor Andrew is looking to follow in his parent's footsteps when it comes to playing the sport his parent played at a professional level. Jackson plays football and basketball for Carrboro High School, and despite still playing basketball, Andrew is focusing on playing lacrosse.

"Some colleges have reached out to me about playing lacrosse and coming to tour their college," Andrew said.

Regardless of whether Andrew or Jackson lives up to their parent's athletic achievements, Eric and Carla just want their kids to be successful and enjoy what they are doing.

"Whether he played basketball or not wouldn't have made a bit of difference to me," said Eric, who also has a daughter at Carrboro High School. "It could be knitting – I don't care. I enjoy watching my kids enjoy themselves."

"If he decided to quit all sports right now then that would be okay with me," Carla said. "I would like them to do something because sports can teach great life lessons – being a good teammate, being part of a team and the fact that it's not about you in a team sport. So, I love that they are into sports but I



Jackson Overbeck, left, with his mother and Hall of Fame soccer player Carla Overbeck. (Photo courtesy of Jackson Overbeck)

certainly don't put any pressure on him to play the sport that I played."

Both Eric and Carla have jobs that have kept them around the area years after their playing days at UNC were over. Eric is now a radio announcer for UNC men's basketball games, and Carla is an assistant coach for the Duke University women's soccer team.

Although Eric lived in several big cities throughout his NBA career — including Boston, Dallas and Detroit — his passion for the Chapel Hill-Carrboro area brought him back. His wife, Laura, is also from Lexington, North Carolina, and graduated from UNC.

"Our appreciation for the state and for the university led us back to this area," Eric said. "Everything from the geography, to the people, to the diversity – all of those things drove our decision-making process. We've been very pleased."

Growing up in the area that his mom began her successful career is something that Jackson enjoys. After all, it's not everyone's parent gets stopped on the street and recognized for their athletic achievements.

"A lot of my friends think it's cool," Jackson said. "We will just see someone that recognizes her or know what she has done and that is pretty cool."