



Photo submitted by Savvy Hughes

HUGHES | Following her first collegiate season as a setter for the Central Methodist University volleyball team, freshman Savvy Hughes transferred to Truman State University, where her brother, redshirt freshman guard Taurin Hughes, is a member of the men's basketball team.

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Beginning during high school, redshirt freshman Taurin Hughes and freshman Savvy Hughes navigated the recruiting process, both keeping their eyes on Bulldog athletics. As a high school senior, Taurin Hughes' commitment to the men's basketball team sparked an even greater interest in Truman State for his younger sister.

After progressing through the volleyball recruiting process, Savvy Hughes said she wanted to learn more about what Truman could possibly offer her. Following her junior year of high school, she said she attended a volleyball camp in Pershing Arena hosted by Head Coach Ben Briney and several members of the team.

"I really liked the program, and I loved the team," Savvy Hughes said. "At that time it just didn't work out for me to play here. They had

filled their setter position, and so I really just used it as a learning experience."

Savvy Hughes said the camp was important, however, because it started a relationship with Briney, who she kept in touch with for the remainder of her recruiting process.

Savvy Hughes said Briney was a middleman for her in contacting coaches and was helpful in finding a school that would be the best fit for her.

The conclusion of this recruiting process landed Savvy Hughes at Central Methodist University in Fayette, Missouri. During her freshman season, she earned a spot as the starting setter and recorded 732 assists for the Eagles, averaging 5.9 assists per set and helping the Eagles to a 26-10 record. Despite the success, Savvy Hughes said she knew she wanted to take her college career elsewhere.

Coinciding with her choice to transfer, Truman had an opening for a setter, leaving an opportunity for Savvy Hughes.

"After my [first] season I knew I wanted to leave and head onto bigger things," Savvy Hughes said. "I started contacting other coaches to see what was out there for me, and it was such a huge surprise and blessing to see that the Truman setters were moving on, and I could come in as the only setter. It was just cool how everything ended up working out."

Savvy Hughes said she is appreciative of her freshman season at Central Methodist. She said she thinks her role as the starting setter allowed her to improve and gain experience.

"I learned a lot at Central that I think I can carry over to Truman," Savvy Hughes said. "I guess you could say my previous team was more dysfunctional and had trouble meshing on the court. I learned how to handle those situations, and coming from that, I feel more organized, and I can be a better leader on the court here."

Savvy Hughes officially became a member of the Bulldog volleyball team before the spring 2016 semester and joined her brother as a Truman student athlete.

"It's funny because, at first, in high school, I was just joking about it," Savvy Hughes said. "Like 'Oh Taurin, I'm going to come to Truman with you.' And at that point he was totally against it. Like, 'No, never, really don't come.' But as soon as it was a serious thing, he was actually really supportive of it."

Taurin Hughes agreed he was less than excited about the initial thought of sharing a school with his sister, but he said it didn't take long to warm up to the idea.

"During high school, when we were both making decisions on colleges, I was pretty much begging her not to come," Taurin Hughes said. "I didn't think I wanted my sister to be here at college with

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- Freshman Savvy Hughes

me. When my parents first told me she was coming, though, I was surprised in how I reacted. I was happy, and I wanted to tell other people, and so I guess I actually was excited she was coming."

Being so close in age, the siblings agreed they have a close relationship and enjoy having the opportunity to keep up with one another.

Taurin Hughes said during the year they were apart he missed being able to see her compete and he looks forward to getting back to the family time that came along with her games.

"I missed the intensity of her games, and how into it my family gets," Taurin Hughes said. "It's nice knowing that this spring my whole family will be here, and I'm looking forward to that and getting to see her play again in the fall."

Taurin Hughes said he did miss being close to his younger sister last year and sometimes made trips to Fayette to watch her grow as a college athlete.

Savvy Hughes now is getting the chance to practice these skills as the Bulldog volleyball team continues offseason workouts and practices. She said it has been nice getting to grow closer with the team, while also having time to focus on her individual skills.

Briney said he thinks her transition has been great and likes the improvements he sees each week. He said he is confident in her abilities, and he said she will work hard enough to make the changes the team needs.

"Savvy is a really hard worker, and that's one of the things we liked about her at her very first camp," Briney said. "She's very coachable, and so we knew what we were getting from a work ethic standpoint. She was going to fit right in with the team."

Briney, Savvy Hughes and the rest of the volleyball team will get a chance to see its work in action with the first spring scrimmage March 17 at Indian Hills Community College in Ottumwa, Iowa.



Photo submitted by Taurin Hughes

Top: Freshman Savvy Hughes (left) poses with her brother Taurin Hughes (right) following her high school graduation. Above: Savvy and Taurin pose with their sister Talyn Hughes (right).

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