



# Joey Thurston continues his family's legacy

By KORI STEWART Circleville Herald Sports Editor Mar 10, 2022 Updated Mar 15, 2022



COLUMBUS— Teays Valley junior Joey Thurston spends a lot of time at wrestling tournaments just chilling. He doesn't pace like his friend Havens, or listen to music like McDanel and Walls. Instead, Thurston is most often found lounging amongst the team's discarded bags and water bottles just relaxing. He jokes easily and smiles warmly and has fun with wrestling.

“Wrestling, because it's an individual sport, you can't really blame anybody else for messing up or anything like that. When you are by yourself and just you control how things go, it's nice.” Thurston said on Tuesday.



Of course, Thurston is only by himself inside the circle. Off the mat, Thurston is surrounded by a tight support system.

Growing up, Thurston split his time between his mom, Sabrina Siriano's house, and his dad, Bobby Thurston's.

“Support was like, I know I could do anything... My dad was always there for me for wrestling. Took me everywhere. I can't complain, I had a good childhood.”

Thurston and his father were close. As his dad's only son, Bobby and Thurston did everything together.

Thurston's mom was always supportive but left things like sports for Bobby to handle.

That arrangement changed last year. Driving home from a youth football practice he was coaching, Bobby crashed on his motorcycle.

Thurston received a phone call from his grandfather and by the time the two made it to the hospital, Bobby was no longer conscious.

Because of the hospital's COVID-19 policies, Thurston wasn't allowed to spend a lot of time by his father's bedside. He was able to see him once, to pray over him and tell him how much he loved him.

A few days later, Bobby's family had to make the tough decision to turn off his life support. For those that knew him best it was clear that was the right choice. A kind and athletic person, Thurston said his father wouldn't want to be kept alive but unable to do anything.



Thurston now lives full time with his mom and his two younger half-siblings. Previously, content to leave the wrestling tournaments to Bobby, Siriano now attends all of Thurston's tournaments along with his grandfather and uncles.

This season, Thurston has been wrestling for his family, both his father who isn't here anymore and his family up in the stands.

After a tough nal loss at districts last week, Thurston's rst thought was of his family watching.

"I felt like I let them down."

Now at states, Thurston is looking to make his family proud and continue on the Thurston wrestling legacy.