

**Headline:** A Hoosier (Logan) grows to love the Buckeyes in Columbus

**By** Michael J. Lewis

Go ahead, make your best joke. Cassie Hoosier and her family have heard them all.

Her 12-year-old son Logan has become an enormous fan of the Ohio State men's basketball team since it adopted him in the summer of 2014.

Even though his surname is the nickname of one of the Buckeyes' big rivals in the Big 10 Conference, Indiana University.

A Hoosier who wears the red and silver of the Buckeyes? Blasphemy!

"It's pretty funny when you stop and think about it," Cassie admitted. "But we are true-blue Ohio State, especially after everything they've done."

Once you hear of the dedication and spirit-lifting done by the Buckeyes, you'll have no doubt why the Hoosiers favor Ohio State.

Logan Hoosier was diagnosed with a juvenile pilocytic astrocytoma in January 2013; his particular tumor is benign, and sits right in front of his pituitary gland, Cassie says.

Because of his tumor, Logan has always been larger than kids his age; his bone-age scan when he was 9 was that of a typical 12-year-old.

Logan endured one brain surgery after his diagnosis, and his mom said doctors determined the tumor was so close to the optic nerve that they were afraid if they touched it, it could do severe damage to Logan.

His chemotherapy began at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus in May, 2013, and soon after that the Hoosiers learned about FOJ from hospital employees.

"When we contacted (Friends of Jaclyn) and found out Ohio State was interested in adopting Logan, we were overwhelmed and excited," Cassie said. "Logan and his two sisters (Jordan, 14, and Peytan, 7) were about as excited as he was."

Greg Paulus, a former Duke standout who's now an assistant coach for the Buckeyes, remembers the intro very well.

"We showed him around the Schottenstein Center (Ohio State's home arena) and walked him into the locker room and showed him a jersey with his name on it, and our guys were so excited to see how pumped up he was," Paulus said. "He just lit up our room."

Once last season began, Logan was a constant presence around the team. He went to practices and games, and often approached head coach Thad Matta to chat after workouts. Sam

Thompson, a Buckeyes standout, gave Logan an autographed basketball, and the players made a habit of high-fiving Logan before games as he sat behind the bench.

“The other players gave him that push, that confidence, which means the world to us,” Cassie said. “That he got a locker next to D’Angelo Russell (now with the NBA’s Los Angeles Lakers) and spent so much time with the team, and have them so much interest in him, is so rewarding.”

Paulus said the players have spoken about Logan in the locker room often, and after a visit often talked about how great it was to spend time with him. With a big roster turnover this year, Paulus said he’s eager for Logan to get to know some of his new teammates.

For Cassie, who has seen Logan struggle so much, talking about being a part of the Buckeyes family makes her a little emotional.

“Whether it’s a text message or a phone call, they are his support system, and he’s very thankful for every moment he has with them,” Cassie said. “The players are such positive people, and to watch Logan’s face light up whenever he goes to practice or a game ... he’s a kid who has so many things to deal with, so every happy moment for him makes everything better.”

Cassie paused.

“They bring him joy, and what’s better than that?”

Nothing at all.