

Wanganeen Warriors

By PETER ARGENT



AUSTRALIA'S most famous Aboriginal sporting twins are Mark and Glen Ella who, with brother Gary, dominated Australian rugby union in the 1970s and '80s.

In South Australia in basketball, while not on the same level yet as the Ellas, are twins Tyrese and Cheylen Wanganeen, 15, from the Narungga Nation.

The 190cm identical twins are a pair of young basketball talents in a hurry and are looking to make their own mark on the courts. And they are committed, if the weekly 330km round trip from home at Moonta Bay on the Yorke Peninsula to Adelaide to train and play is anything to go by.

The boys, Year 10 students at Kadina Memorial High School, are part of Woodville District Basketball's Aboriginal Basketball Academy and play under-16s division one basketball with Woodville District Basketball Club.

"We would like to go all the way in basketball and would love to do that together, but it's just about taking each step as it comes," Tyrese, the youngest by two minutes, said.

"Naturally, to play NBL and for our country would be huge. The ultimate dream is getting to the NBA."

As with most twins, there is this special, telepathic bond, indiscernible to outsiders.

"It certainly feels different when we are playing alongside each other and on the court there is a sense where we know where each other are," Cheylen said.



Tyrese and Cheylen Wanganeen, young basketball talents at the Woodville Warriors in Adelaide. *Picture: Peter Argent*

"We encourage each other and are hard on each other. We just want to go as far as we can in the game."

The teenagers are tall, lean and graceful in their movement. They are exciting talents with a strong skill set and a strong desire to be the best they can be. They are blessed to have a strong and supportive environment.

"Back at home on the Yorke Peninsula,

both Trudy Ireland and Ben Wigzell had a big influence as we started our basketball journey," Tyrese said.

"At the academy our current mentors include Tim Brennan and Joey Wyatt."

Forgetting anyone else, boys? "Oh, also, our mum Tania has been an important support for us as she drives us to training," Tyrese said.