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ASHEBORO - The Asheboro High School boys varsity basketball team is off to a perfect 5-0 start this new season and there are many reasons why. One of the biggest, both literally and figuratively, is the play of junior inside player Jerquarius Stanback.

At 6-foot-6 ½, he has given the Blue Comets a solid inside presence on both ends of the floor. He is an incredible shot blocker, can get down the floor quickly and has the ability to work underneath offensively. And he's still adjusting to a body that is still growing.

"Defensively, he gives us something we haven't had in a long time," AHS coach Brian Nance said of Stanback, who was 6-2 in 9th grade, 6-4 as a sophomore and now is listed at 6-6 ½. "He has length and timing and he's learning to go up without blocking someone. He has to learn to become more physical, but he's getting there. A year ago, he would shy away from that."

As a sophomore, Stanback averaged 11 points and 7.5 rebounds per contest. This year, he's averaging 15.2 points, 9.1 rebounds and 5.0 blocks as the Blue Comets have defeated Providence Grove twice, Southwestern Randolph twice and Randleman. The Blue Comets will travel to Randleman this Wednesday.

"We don't get many 6-5 or 6-6 guys anymore," Nance said. "The emphasis is getting the ball inside and start there. Everything we do starts from the inside and if we establish that, it gives open looks to our outside players."

In the Blue Comets' game last week against Southwestern Randolph, AHS found itself in a tussle as the Cougars answered most every charge by Asheboro with one of their own. With the score tied at 33-33 early in the final quarter, Stanback scored seven points to fuel a fourth-quarter that saw the Blue Comets go on and record a 47-38 victory.

He then put up 19 points in a win over PG.



Asheboro High School junior Jerquarius Stanback. Photo provided.



*Stanback in action against Ledford High School.
Photo provided.*

Long and lean, Stanback is quick to the basket and his athleticism allows him to be a threat on both ends of the court. Blessed with a long reach, he is a shot blocker and one who definitely alters inside opportunities by the opponents.

And he's working on another part of his game.

"He is trying to develop a perimeter shot," Nance said of Stanback, who was honorable mention all-conference last season. "He's working hard to add that to his game."

That would make Stanback even more dangerous because he has plenty of "game" now.