

Twin towers: Jonah and Josh Hopper return to form a dynamic duo for North Greene

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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WHITE HALL - It's not hard to spot two tall brown-haired twins in the North Greene community, but it's much harder to tell who's who.

Josh is six-foot-five and Jonah is six-foot-four. Both have just about the exact similar physical and facial features. If that weren't enough, Josh wears No. 22 and Jonah has No. 23, however they're perfectly recognizable on the hardwood.

"There's a lot of publicity around town. Everyone knows us," Jonah Hopper said. "It's a lot different then it was before and I like it a lot."

Last season the Hopper's helped lead North Greene to a 19-9 season. Recordwise it was the Spartans best year since the 2012-13 season when they also finished 19-9. Jonah, a small forward and shooting guard averaged 17.4 points and 8.1 rebounds per game, while Josh, a center, averaged 12.6 and 7.4 per contest. Overall, the two players averaged 30 points and 15.5 boards a game. Both players earned first team all-conference honors in the WIVC. Additionally, Jonah made the IBCA Boys Basketball 1A/2A Fourth Team.

"It's always been the case. I've always been down low and he's always been up top so it's like a one-two punch," Josh said.

Jonah comes into the season needing 109 points to break the 1,000 point milestone, while Josh has 692 points, and will have to score 308, but he's done that twice before.

Both have played major minutes in every season throughout high school. When they were freshmen in the 2014-15 season, the Spartans dealt with a mixture of long-term injuries and off-court issues, which forced the Hopper's into the starting lineup, including the regional championship.

"It's hard to get used to when you don't know anybody out there and they were a lot stronger," Jonah said. "Now we've gotten used to that over the past three years. It's been a lot better."

The twins formed arguably the best dynamic duo in the WIVC last season and this year they aim to accomplish that and much more with their height and athleticism. Jonah is a winger and if he gets doubled teamed in the backcourt or when he drives to the basket then he'll kick it to Josh down low at center where he'll power his way in for a layup or square up for a hook shot.

It's difficult to find a potentially more deadly combination for any other Class 1A school in the state given the twins' physical advantages.

“I’ve gotten a lot more versatile shooting outside and I’m stronger with my footwork,” Josh said. “We’ve worked harder every single day and we’re a ton better than we were last year.”

The Hopper’s are part of a senior-laden Spartan squad with seven seniors, including them. At the same time, since they have been playing up for the past couple of seasons, Jonah and Josh are happy to be playing with their classmates all together for the first and last season.

“I know last year we had trouble communicating with the team, so I think our jobs are to lead our team to victory,” Jonah said. feels amazing. We’ve been waiting to play with them all this time and it’s nothing better than you can get. I’m going to be a leader and try to facilitate more and put points on the board.”

The twin towers have everyone’s attention in the WIVC with their display on the court the past two seasons, and in the 2017-18 campaign, they’ll be sure to leave their mark in a big way.

“We want to go to state. That’s about it.” Jonah said.