

## Second chance, first impression

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College recruitment can be an arduous process. The endless stream of meetings, showcases and campus tours is exhausting for young student-athletes and their families. It's a process that Coastal Carolina men's basketball player Elijah Wilson knows all too well.

The Laney High School alumnus is a freshman guard for the Chanticleers. During his time on Wilmington's north side, Wilson finished his career seventh on the program's all-time scoring list. He also shares the record for most points scored in a game – 42 – with a kinda famous alumnus: Michael Jordan.

With the Bucs, Wilson committed to play collegiately at College of Charleston, but a coaching change that took place during the summer before his first semester left him without a scholarship.

With little time and even less options, Wilson decided to enroll at a prep school, Mount Zion Christian Academy in Durham. It was a move that Wilson originally wasn't looking forward to.

"At first, I didn't really want to (enroll at Mt. Zion)," Wilson said. "I just wanted to starting playing collegiately."

Over time, however, Wilson learned to appreciate the additional help – both academically and on the court – that Mt. Zion was providing him.

"I decided to go to Mt. Zion so late in the process, so it wasn't a good start," Wilson said. "But once I got there, I realized it was the right decision. I realized quickly that it wasn't that bad. It gave me another year to develop on the court, as well as more time to work on my SAT scores."

Now at Coastal, Wilson's decision is looking smarter with each passing game. He's started all 20 of the Chanticleers' games, averaging more than 16 points a game while shooting 45 percent from the floor. He's emerged as Coastal Carolina's primary scoring option, a role he embraces.

"(Being the first scoring option) has been a good experience for me," Wilson said, "there aren't too many players my age that can score at the collegiate level. With that said, all the credit has to go to my teammates. The biggest thing is that they have the confidence in me and find ways to get me open. They're really the ones making it happen."

Sitting at 11-9, Coastal Carolina has as good a chance as any to make a run for the Big South Conference title and a trip to the NCAA tournament. It's a goal that Wilson and the rest of the Coastal Carolina team think is very much in reach.

"We need to play better on defense," Wilson said, "as well as being more patient on offense. We're already making the tough plays; we just need to put in a little more work. When it comes (conference tournament) time, we'll definitely be prepared."



Coastal Carolina sports information

Former Laney High School standout Elijah Wilson has started all 20 games as a freshman at Coastal Carolina.

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