

Terance Mann Stuffing The Stat Sheet For Florida State

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Tallahassee, Fla. -- Every team has a backbone.

A vital piece that acts as the support system for the rest of his teammates. For the Florida State men's basketball team, that backbone comes in the form of sophomore guard Terance Mann.

Born and raised into a family of prolific athletes in Lowell, Massachusetts, it was clear that Mann would grow up to be one himself...and an exceptional one at that. His mother Daynia was an accomplished women's basketball player at Georgetown University and later went on to direct the women's basketball team at the University of Rhode Island. His father Eustace, on the other hand, played soccer and attempted to instill the sport into Mann, which he soon outgrew fairly quickly.

"My mom and dad pushed it a lot. He used to drive me to games everywhere, all around the country," Mann said about his days as a soccer player. "I played soccer for a long time, but I got too tall so they just said to stick with basketball. It was basically my parents pushing me, being there all the time and taking me places."

From then on, his career flourished.

During his first years of playing high school basketball at the Tilton School, Mann had experienced a breakout in his career, which led him to becoming a highly-touted, Top 100 by ESPN, four-star recruit. During his senior year in high school, the 6-6 guard averaged more than 23 points per game and nearly eight rebounds per game, all while shooting 61% from the field.

It was the excitement and energy that he brought on and off the court and his clean-cut athleticism that sent his name all around the New England area and soon into the hands of Florida State's assistant coach Charlton Young, whom at the time was the head coach of Georgia Southern's basketball team.

"Coach Young, I've known him since I was thirteen. He recruited me hard. He gave me my first division I scholarship offer when he was at Georgia Southern before he was at Florida State," Mann said. "He asked 'wherever I go, will you come with me?' and I said 'yeah.' I gave him an early commitment basically."

From that point on, suiting up in a garnet and gold uniform, Mann would develop into one of the most impactful players on the Florida State basketball team.

In his first year as a Seminole, the freshman made an appearance in each of the 'Noles' 34 games, averaging 5.2 points per game and 3.7 rebounds per game, while shooting a 58.4 percent field goal shooting percentage. He found himself ranking in the top 20 among freshmen in the ACC in scoring, rebounding, shooting percentage and steals. In a season that Florida State's basketball team was poised to be a tournament team after attracting a top-five recruiting class, Mann made exceptional strides that has earned him a spot in the starting rotation during his now, sophomore year.

"Terance is what you call a stat stuffer. He affects the game in every way—offensively and defensively. He is a team guy and he is a hustle guy. He gets deflections, steals, and rebounds," FSU head coach Leonard Hamilton said. "A lot of his contributions don't necessarily show up on the statistical column but he is a winner, has an unselfish spirit, has a great attitude."

Accepted as a team leader by not just the freshmen but the veterans as well, Mann and his charismatic attitude is what a team comprised of eight newcomers is in need of if a tournament run is set in mind. In his first seven games

as a starter, Mann has produced on all columns of the stat sheet for the Seminoles. Averaging 7.7 points per game, 5.0 rebounds per game and 2.1 assists per game, the sophomore has helped lift the Seminoles to a 6-1 start for the season.

“He has gotten a lot more aggressive. He is a guy that can fill up a stat sheet. He can get rebounds, he can get assists, he can get points,” fellow sophomore guard Dwayne Bacon mentioned. “He’s a guy that can pretty much do it all. I see him like the Draymond Green on our team. He plays that role well. He is a guy that really doesn’t complain, he just wants to do whatever to win.”

Though last year’s season was cut short of an NIT Finals appearance because of a loss against Valparaiso in the second round of the tournament, Mann is optimistic for what the future entails for this year’s Florida State basketball team. Already having a taste of what it is like to be ranked among the top 25 teams in the nation, the Seminoles have the pieces to make their dream of making the NCAA tournament a reality. It is Mann’s encouraging presence on and off the court that could help propel Florida State into the “Big Dance” come March, snapping the school's four-year drought.

“Just keep growing as a team. Keep learning from our mistakes. We don’t have room to look ahead,” Mann explained on what the Seminoles must do to earn a spot in the tournament. “We have to take one game at a time and finish it off. If we stick to what we do and what we know we can do, we are a Final Four team.”