

Trent Forrest: An Emerging Leader For the Seminole Basketball Team

Great leaders do not always lead by the words they speak. They lead by example.

Florida State sophomore guard Trent Forrest is an example of one of these leaders, a player whose actions speak louder than his words.

Forrest grew up in Chipley, a small town in the panhandle of Florida, which has a population of roughly 3,580 people. Moving to an area like Tallahassee and attending Florida State with a student population ten times the size of Forrest's hometown of was eye-opening.

"Where I am from, there are three or four traffic lights in the whole city, versus coming to Tallahassee that has one on every street," Forrest said.

"The town is only about an hour and a half away from Tallahassee, so the move itself wasn't that difficult.

But with a large campus and massive student body, it can be harder to build strong, lasting relationships. That's the one thing Forrest said he misses about his hometown.

However, he accomplished a lot during his first year at Florida State – on the court and in the classroom. Forrest earned the Seminoles' First Year Academic Achievement Award, was named to the 2017 ACC Academic Honor Roll and the 2017 All-ACC Academic Basketball team.

"You have to find the time to study and get what you need for class so that you can succeed on and off the court," said Forrest. "Hard work goes hand in hand, really, with anything you want to do in life. If you want to be good at anything, work hard at it."

Forrest learned the attribute of leadership back home by watching his mother, Barbara Lee, lead a local church as the community pastor.

His father, Lester Forrest, would also coach him and his friends in youth baseball when they were growing up.

"Trent comes from a wonderful family," FSU assistant Stan Jones said. "Hard-working people, a minister's home, so he's been kind of demanded from a young age to carry himself well, to act beyond his age and that's all beneficial to him."

Friends and followers of Forrest noticed his leadership and maturity as far back as high school, where he set and still holds the Chipley High scoring record. He led the Tigers to two state championships, all while maintaining a 4.3 grade-point average.

During his senior year, while he was navigating the recruiting process, Forrest spoke often with a friend he met while playing AAU basketball, current Seminole teammate and backcourt mate CJ Walker.

“When me and Trent were talking, it was just about what we wanted to do in college and how much of a difference we wanted to make,” Walker said. “So we both wanted to travel pretty much the same path, and he was like, “Why not? We can do it together.’

“And Florida State was just the place for us to be.”

The two freshmen quickly bonded with their teammates and created the “Boom Squad” – the group of reserves that helped FSU establish a reputation as one of the deepest teams in the country and collectively won FSU’s Sixth Man of the Year Award.

“We knew what the coaching staff wanted from us,” Walker said. “We talked about what we needed to do. We know when to give each other the ball, and we are both leaders so it just worked out as Coach (Leonard) Hamilton wanted it to be.”

Forrest’s aggressive defense, explosive offense and winning mindset are exactly what the coaching staff was looking for when they recruited him.

“I think he fulfilled all of those as a freshman,” Jones said. “I am looking forward to him making some significant jumps in the second year here in our program. Not being a fresh face freshman, but to come out and let the experiences grow, manifest themselves into more production, a bigger role and more leadership expectations in the locker room and huddles.”

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