



Florida State vs. George Washington
November 14, 2017
Donald L. Tucker Center
Tallahassee, Fla.

George Washington Head Coach Maurice Joseph

On the differences between playing Florida State last year and this year:

“Obviously, they are down three NBA players, three pretty good players, and then [Michael] Ojo was a phenomenal player and obviously a monster down there as well. Though believe it or not, as big as this team is, I was shocked with how much smaller they looked then last year’s team. I came out to warm-ups and despite having a 7’4 kid and a seven footer, believe it or not, I was like “man, this team is tiny compared to the team last year” so that was a glaring difference. Obviously (Jonathan) Isaac last year, Ojo and [Christ] Koumadje and they were just a really long and athletic team. They returned Terance Mann, who I think is a heck of a player, a tremendous rebounder, and great nose for the ball. After that, Phil Cofer has added to his game, he’s making some jump shots, turn around jumpers and stuff so very different situation. Last year we played them on a neutral court, day after playing a game at home against USF; this time around we had a little bit more time to prepare but didn’t get much film on them being the first game and that kind of stuff so had some surprises there, but we thought that if we could mix up defenses that we could limit them to taking some bad shots or some contested shots and we did that, but we just got crushed on the glass and that really hurt us. I was encouraged with our initial line of defense, but our lack of size and their abundance of size really showed by getting 52 points in the paint. A lot of that wasn’t just them driving the ball down the gut, it was getting second chance shots and they hurt us that way.”

On their struggles offensively early in the game, them not being able to replicate in practice or just struggling:

“The way they (Florida State) play topside on the wing, we knew they were going to do that so a couple times we back cut them, we got some good things going there, but their length and athleticism, you can’t replicate that with your walk-ons in practice. It’s something that you got to kind of face, but I was encouraged with some of the guys. I thought Terry Nolan for the first time as a freshman being on this kind of stage against these kinds of athletes, some of the plays he made were well beyond his years, so I was encouraged by that. Yuta [Watanabe] obviously had a tough night, had a bunch of contested shots, played top side, so some points he was pressing a little bit, but a little bit of us kind of shooting ourselves in the foot, but their pressure, they did a good job playing topside on the wings and then when their scoring so many points, especially in the paint, and they can set their pressure up, that’s going to allow them to force 19 turnovers like we had. So we got to look at the film and do a much better job handling pressure because if I’m any other team about to play us, I’m coming after us. Obviously other teams won’t have the length or athleticism that this team has, but credit to them, they did a tremendous job speeding us up and getting us to cough it up some.”

On the challenge of having a small bench/rotation compared to Florida State:

“I mean, it’s challenging. You always want to have more depth; we have to build more depth and get more guys in there and get more guys acclimated especially some of our new, young guys so we can play them more significant minutes and increase our bench depth. That’s a huge asset to their team, he (Head Coach Leonard Hamilton) was quoted saying he feels like he has nine starters and that was very evident tonight.”

He has a bunch of guys he can throw in there and having depth is a tremendous asset to any team and they played a bunch of guys tonight, significant minutes and that's a good team right there. They lost a bunch of really good players, but I think they did a tremendous job of replacing those guys and we just got to do a better job of getting our young guys acclimated and we will, still very early, these guys are young, but again Terry Nolan showed flashes of brilliance and I was very encouraged with that."