

## **Lowell Native Mann Stars For Florida State**

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Lowell Sun

Nov. 7, 2017

After seeing his team lose its two leading scorers to the NBA and its third-leading scorer to the NBA G League, Florida State junior guard Terance Mann knows he'll have a lot more on his plate in the 2017-18 season.

For starters, the 21-year-old Lowell product is one of the Seminoles' few elder statesmen. He's a grizzled vet compared to the eight freshmen on the roster.

"I'm just around here telling people the do's and don'ts of college basketball," said Mann.

While there is certainly immeasurable value in the off-the-court intangibles that Mann is providing, the 6-foot-6, 215-pounder is also being heavily counted on by FSU coaches, players and fans to be a reliable two-way factor on the court.

The Seminoles open the new campaign next Tuesday when they'll host George Washington.

Last season, Mann started 34 out of 35 games (his only non-start was Senior Day) for the Seminoles and averaged 8.4 points, 4.5 rebounds and 1.0 steals, while shooting 57.6 percent from the floor. Florida State finished the season at 26-9 and in the top 25. Mann's 69 consecutive game streak makes him one of the most experienced players in the mighty ACC.

"Terance has had such a positive impact on our team since his arrival as a freshman," said Florida State head coach Leonard Hamilton. "He is a leader, both vocally and by his actions, and has been throughout his career. We named him as one of our team captains as a sophomore and that says a lot about a player on any level.

He will be a team captain again this season and that says everything about his character."

The chance to be play big minutes and be the unquestioned leader of an ACC program is an opportunity not afforded to many people, and Mann is embracing the opportunity. He's been well trained for this throughout his life -- one of the luxuries of having a mother who has been a successful college coach and has handed down the values of humility and hard work.

Mann's mom, Daynia La-Force, is the head coach of the women's team at the University of Rhode Island.

Over the summer, Mann split his time between Rhode Island and Lowell, where he went through vigorous workouts at UMass Lowell's Costello Athletic Center. The primary focus was on improving his jumper. Mann only attempted 23 3-pointers last season, making just seven.

"I definitely expanded my game," said Mann, who won the dunk contest at the team's traditional Midnight Madness event to begin the season. "I'm trying to score in all three levels now -- 3-point, mid-range and getting to the basket. I worked on my jump shot really hard all summer and I just can't wait to get out there and show everybody what I got."

Mann was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., and lived there until he was 10 and moved to Lowell. He quickly became a fixture at the Fr. Maguire courts in the Pawtucketville section of Lowell and at the Boys & Girls Club. He rapidly grew in size and in stature as a player and took his talents to the Tilton School in Tilton, N.H., where he became a four-star recruit and a top-50 prep player nationally.

Mann averaged 23.1 points and 7.8 rebounds as a Tilton senior and was named New Hampshire's Gatorade Player of the Year. He considered offers from Indiana, Boston College, Iowa, Maryland, Florida and West Virginia, but passed on all of them for the chance to play for Hamilton in the same class as future NBA player Dwayne Bacon.

"I think we have like 45,000 students who go here, so the college life is amazing," said Mann. "All the connections you make with students from all kinds of different places and also with the people who are also from New England."

Mann has been a perfect fit in Tallahassee from the get-go. He played in all 34 games as a freshman and then made a giant leap in 2016-17 alongside Bacon and 6-foot-10 Orlando Magic lottery pick Jonathan Isaac. Mann is seventh in school history in career field goal percentage (.579).

Back home, he's proud to see a college basketball program on the rise in UMass Lowell.

"It's great to see Lowell have a Division 1 team now," Mann said. "Growing up in Lowell, everybody used to talk about going to UMass Lowell and wanting to put Lowell on the map, and back then it was just a Division 2 team. When I was (at Tilton) I think they went Division 1 and by then I was getting looks at high-major schools. But it's amazing to see how far they've come."

Mann wears his Lowell pride on his sleeve. He knows a lot of excellent players have come through the city, but none have gone on to play in the NBA.

Maybe he'll be the one to change that fact.

"It would be amazing, especially to my friends back in the city who are all rooting for me," said Mann. "We all grew up competing for years in Lowell, so to take it to that level would be amazing."