



Coaches Quotes

Florida State 98, Southern Miss 45

Thursday, December 21, 2017

Donald L. Tucker Center, Tallahassee, Fla.

Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton

Opening Statement

“As we tried to prepare for this game, what jumped out at us as we watched and saw that they were up at Michigan at halftime. It really got our attention as we watched more film; we recognized those are the kind of teams that have been giving us trouble. Small and quick. I also thought that our team has been somewhat inconsistent with our execution offensively and obviously we’ve been inconsistent with our free throws and our rebounds and I’ve said all along we’re still a work in progress. We have a lot of young guys that are a first or second-year players. Today I thought mentally, as a result of the loss to Oklahoma State and not playing so well the other night (against Charleston Southern), I thought they are coming back to the reality of the fact of how we have to play and who we are, what’s important for our team to be consistent as we move towards the beginning of conference play. We still have a lot to learn. Today I felt they were connected; all 18 of them trying to do the things we’ve asked them to do, for the execution standpoint. I was pleased with the focus in the final minutes. For us to have the kind of year we’re capable of, we have to play with a certain mentality. We call it “junkyard dog defense”. We have to be consistent with that. Those five or six deflections that we get to lead to two or three baskets; five or six possessions where you make passes and you get a foul; we got to have those in order for us to be successful. It’s kind of what’s been missing with this team – those little things. As we pointed those out, I think our guys are slowly coming back together. We did something a little different this week – we let them prepare the post-game report for our last game. We wanted them to watch the film, we wanted them to write down the plus’s and minus’s. I think we had nine things that we wanted them to accomplish in our last game. They divided themselves into three groups, they evaluated and they gave it back to us. This team has the ability to be a pretty good basketball team – I’m still going to reserve my totally opinion until we become more consisted and connected; but we’re still a work in progress. Today is one of those days I thought we took a step in the right direction.”

On The Self-Evaluation Exercise By The FSU Payers On The Last Game

“We have principals that we are trying to accomplish offensively and defensively. They know exactly what they are. It’s one thing to know them and another thing to go out and execute them and be consistent with them. A lot of it is because we depend on a lot of guys who haven’t played a whole lot. It’s a lot of game slippage. We’re at a point now, though, that we don’t have very much room for error. Our league from top to bottom is extremely loaded; you see Duke going to

Boston College – who was the preseason pick for 14th in our league – Duke is number one the country. That’s not something we should be shocked with. That’s the nature of the ACC – everybody you play is capable of beating you. No longer can you say “When do we play Duke?” You can’t worry about playing because every opponent that we face in the ACC is a high caliber well-prepared loaded well-coached team. And you don’t have the luxury of not blocking out – of giving offensive rebounds. You don’t have the luxury of not making an extra pass. You don’t have the luxury of making more turnovers than you have assists. We’re at that point now where we’re still fighting it, they’re still developing. They’re still good, I think the kids all like each other, they have great chemistry. It’s just that we’re still fighting for consistency. Today, we were consistent for 40 minutes.”

On Scoring 98 Points – 19 3-Pointers

“We’ve had times in practice in the preseason – we’d be a really good shooting team. I think we’re going to end up being a really good free-throw shooting team. We’re just not consistent. Ike (Obiagu) could do it in practice and shoot 95%. He’ll go 15-16 free throws in a row. But because it’s part of the development and maturing process. You’re going to the line, it’s your first year, you’re a freshman, your adrenaline is going, you know your team is dependent on you, it’s not as easy as you might think that it is. But I’m confident that as he grows and as he matures, he’s going to be more consistent. But we have a lot of areas where we are fighting for consistency and you have what they call “game slippage” but now I really feel that they are holding each other accountable, the comments that they have with each other is a little more serious now. Sometimes, all losses are not bad losses. Sometimes, losses will do something to you and then sometimes losses will do something for you. I’m hoping that the Oklahoma State loss did something to them.”

On Florida State’s Consistency

“We didn’t do anything today that we weren’t working on in May, June, July, August, September, October. We didn’t come up with any magic system. We didn’t change. It’s just that our kids were locking in today with little details and make sure they held each other accountable to execute what we feel we have to do in order for us to be successful. Why that’s a challenge, that’s just a part of human nature, that’s part of trying to develop it, it’s a part of being young and maybe sometimes you can come up with a lot of excuses. But this is the closest we’ve come to all being on the same page in terms of how we execute it. We only ran one part of our system today. We wanted them to keep it spacing on the floor, we want our balls to be at a certain spot. We want the floor to be open and we want them to make the decisions every time the ball moves and I think for the most part we did.”

On The Closeness Of Tying The School Record For 3-point Shots Made

“I asked Chuck how close we were to tying the school record today and he said one away and I didn’t know anything about that during the game – our players didn’t know anything about it during the game. We wanted some walk-ons to have some fun on the court. We don’t talk about it. I don’t think we’ve said anything about our home game winning streak. Right now, we’re just not trying to get caught up in those things that don’t matter. We want to block out, we want to get that extra pass – that’s what we’re focused on.”

On How Close The Players' Self-Evaluation Was To The FSU Coaches' Evaluation

"It was on point, no question about it. They know exactly. It's just one thing to know it and it's one thing to go out and execute and get it done. It's challenging sometimes to get it in the young people. They have a tendency to have their own ideas of how they want to do things. Sometimes, they kind of lose their focus. We're trying to reel them back in, get back to that junkyard dog mentality defensively, making the extra pass and executing them being in the right spot, cutting hard, and snapping your passes and meeting your passes. All of those little things that sometimes you got to become consistent with it. I think we know it, we just have to hold them accountable and get it done."

On Trent Forrest's Game

"Trent was probably our best basketball player on our team going into the preseason until he got hurt. So for him, he was gaining confidence, the players were gaining confidence in him and he had six weeks where he couldn't do anything. I wanted him to be where he is now so we treated him cautiously. And he's just now moving back to that level where he was before. We'd like to see him shoot the ball some more. He has such an unselfish spirit, the only he wants to do is make the right decision, to help us win games. I think you saw a lot of it today. He passed up a lot of shots to creates opportunities for his teammates. That's what we need to be doing, what we've been lacking as a team, is that leadership."

On Florida State's Guards

"We are really out overplaying. Our post guys are rotating over. They're doing a good job on contesting and our guys aren't on the weak side to get the rebound. Our guards need to clean up and we need to get some of those rebounds. That's part of the growth and maturing process. It's interesting, there were several times in the game where they took shots, and our guys were just turned because naturally you want to go get the ball. But in reality, instead of going towards the basket, you want to go away from the basket to create space for between you and the guys who are trying to go through the basket. And that's why you very suddenly have great rebounders. That's why everybody in the NBA who averages five or seven rebounds a game is making ten million dollars a year. It's hard to develop. I think that's an area that we need to become more consistent with as well."

On update on Christ Koumadje

"I'm not going to try to play doctor. We're going to evaluate it and let the time table and let nature take its course. That's why they always say four to six weeks. This time, it's somewhere around that area. He's shooting free throws, he's doing standing shots, he's lifting weights, we got him on the bicycle doing cardio. We just want to make sure that when he comes back that he's healthy and can finish the season. At this point, we're prepared to move on until they tell us when we can expect him."