

Forrest's Unselfish Spirit Gives Seminoles A Boost

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Florida State took it to Missouri in the first round of the NCAA tournament on Friday night, and it was sophomore guard Trent Forrest leading the way.

The No. 9 seed Seminoles (21-11) routed the No. 8 seed Tigers (20-13) 67-54 to advance to play No. 1 seed Xavier (29-5) for the second straight year in the round of 32.

Forrest had eight points, eight assists, six rebounds, three steals, and two blocks in the win in 33 minutes.

When he was on the court the Seminoles outscored the Tigers 65-36. In the seven minutes he didn't play, Missouri outscored the Seminoles 18-2.

And he did it all coming off the bench.

"There's no question that Trent does a very good job of distributing the ball and making good decisions," FSU coach Leonard Hamilton said.

"Trent does a great job defensively, does a great job seeing the whole floor. He makes a tremendous difference when he's on the floor."

He has started just two games this year — when Terance Mann was injured against Syracuse in January, and when starting point guard C.J. Walker was limited with knee soreness against Clemson in February — but he's arguably been the Seminoles best player over the last month averaging 13.7 points per game, 5.3 assists, and 4.6 rebounds.

Hamilton called Forrest his best player during preseason practice before he suffered a hyper-extension in his right knee forcing him to miss most of preseason practice and the first game of the season.

He has been coming off the bench with sophomore guard C.J. Walker in the starting role since his return from the injury and has flourished.

Forrest is the definition of an unselfish player, doing whatever it takes to help the team win.

He's not concerned with being the leading scorer on the team.

He'd rather make an assist than a basket.

He'd rather grab a rebound in between two opponents.

That's just the type of guy he is. "It don't matter," Hamilton said.

"I don't care if I'm the last player off the bench. I just want to play ball and be a basketball player."

His teammates rally around him when he's on the court.

Against Missouri, the Seminoles looked out-of-sync when Forrest wasn't on the court, but were a well-oiled machine that had an excellent offensive rhythm when he was.

“It’s just having a good relationship with all the players,” Forrest said. “Off the court we have good relationships, and on the court, they trust me.”

“We know he’s capable of starting, and we know he can come off the bench and produce like he is now,” junior guard P.J. Savoy said.

“We all believe in him, and it’s just confidence in him to get the job done.”