

FSU Guard Terance Mann Finding Confidence In His Jump Shot

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Terance Mann has done almost everything for No. 15 Florida State during his three-year career.

He's been one of the Seminoles' (2-0) best defenders, led the team in scoring for most of the 2017-18 season, and led the team in rebounds.

The one area where Mann hasn't been great for FSU is from the perimeter.

Mann has been able to score by driving to the basket and getting to the free throw line, but his lack of confidence shooting the ball from beyond 15 feet has been a detriment to his game.

Not anymore.

"I'm very confident," Mann said. "Any time I have an open shot I'm ready to take it."

Mann is already off to a hot start this season.

He's averaging 15 points and 9.5 rebounds per game through the first two games of the season and led the Seminoles with 21 points, 10 rebounds, and three assists in FSU's 80-69 win over Tulane Sunday night at Fogelman Arena in New Orleans.

"Most people think he's a legitimate NBA prospect and if he shoots the ball, I think he's going to really put himself in position to where maybe he can fight and get into the first round," FSU assistant coach Charlton Young said.

"He's big. They list him at 6-foot-6, but he's probably closer to 6-foot-7, 220 pounds. He's the new wave guy that can play the one, the two, the three, the four, the five, or the six. He can play every position. His success is really going to depend on if he can keep people honest."

Mann's shooting improvement actually came about due to an injury he suffered last season.

He slipped on the court in FSU's 67-54 NCAA tournament win over Missouri and tore the adductor muscle off his groin and tore one of his ab muscles.

Mann played the final three games of the tournament in extreme pain, and had surgery to repair those muscles following FSU's exit in the Elite Eight.

He wasn't able to run or dribble or do anything that made him the basketball player that he had been over the first three years.

So he went to work fixing his shot.

"It helped me a lot," Mann said.

"I did a lot of putting the chair in front of the goal and having a rebounder. Shooting about 600 of those. Shooting a lot of stationary catch-and-shoot threes. Once I got the groove there it helped me a lot because I couldn't do anything full speed.

"I couldn't do any dribbling, driving to the basket or contact so I almost had no choice to work on it."

Mann's hard work is already paying off through the first two games this season.

He's still doing the work he needs to around the paint and on the boards, but he's also knocked down two of his three attempts from beyond the arc.

He's taking the open look and as he gets more confident in that shot, he's going to become a very tough player to guard.

"I don't think he'll ever be strictly a jump shooter, but with his size, athleticism, and ability to put the ball on the floor and get downhill, and he has high-speed Wi-Fi, his decision-making is off the charts, he just has to shoot well enough to keep people honest where they don't back off of him," Young said.

"I think he's confident enough to make people pay for that now. I'm excited to see him this year. When he sees an opening he isn't gun-shy any more. He's an intelligent kid and knows this is important to his success."

The biggest issue that Mann had with that open jumper wasn't with his release or anything to do with his hands or arms.

It started with his feet and his mentality.

"My feet were just a lot slower," Mann said.

"I wasn't catching ready to shoot. I was catching looking to drive. Catching ready to shoot opens up the floor for you. I watched a lot of film and if they close out short, which they probably will be doing for the first half of the season, I'm just going to let it fly."

Mann has found a little bit of success with his jumper through the first two games, but he's still getting used to taking those shots instead of passing on them.

As his confidence grows and he takes those shots consistently, it's not only going to make Mann a better basketball player, but make the Seminoles a better basketball team.

"It opens the floor up," Young said.

"We have some other guys that were really good at getting downhill. The last two years we lived in the opponent's paint. So, him making shots is huge for opening up the paint for other guys not just himself."