



Florida State 78, Duke 80
Saturday, January 12, 2019
Donald L. Tucker Center
Tallahassee, Florida

Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton Quotes

Opening Statement

"I thought we played against a team tonight in Duke that obviously was very well prepared. Early on in the game they created some problems for us, caused us to have 11 turnovers in the first half. We always look back at the last possession and emphasize that and that's the play that nailed the coffin, but those turnovers early on, 11 turnovers in the first half, our inability to keep them off the offensive boards in the first half I thought really really made a huge difference in the game. Down the stretch we had a hard time contesting those shots. I thought they did a very good job, two young players, very talented. Some of those shots were contested and I thought they did a very good job of just making them. They did a very good job of staying with their system. We had a chance there at the end, we basically got the things that we were looking for, we just came up a little short today against a really, really good Duke team that has a chance I think to win it all."

On If He Expected Duke To Run That Final Play

"I didn't expect them to get the ball at the elbow, I thought we had that covered. I expected them to get the ball inbounds but not a direct pass out of bounds to a guy at the elbow. They did a very good job of creating some misdirection. I've got to go back and look at the film and see how he delivered that pass right on the money with a 7'4" guy right on top of him. I thought that would be enough for them to at least have to go in another direction with that short amount of time on the clock. Great execution by them and great finish by a very good player."

On What He Learned About His Team Against Duke

"I learned that we've got to get better. We've got to be a little more consistent. We had to shorten our bench up a little bit in this particular game obviously to play with our more experienced players. I realize that we need to probably accelerate the progress of our rotation players so that they can give us a little bit more. I thought our veterans really really held their own and did a very good job of executing our game plan. You don't have very many opportunities to make mistakes against a team as talented as Duke. They were extremely well prepared, and we had to fight and claw and scratch for everything that we got and that's normally the way it is against a close game, close team."

On Takeaways From The Game Against Duke heading Into Pitt On Monday

"The basketball gods have been very good to us. Coming out of the bat we just played two number one ranked teams and had a very hard fought game today and we play again on Monday. That's extremely challenging so we're going to have to maximize our energy and make sure that our game preparations are solid, and you've got to move on. Regardless of who you're playing in the ACC if you're not at your best obviously something bad can happen. We do have to put this behind us quickly and prepare ourselves to go on the road and play against a team that upset a very good Louisville team at home the other day, so they got our attention."

On The Vibe In The Locker Room

“Obviously they (Florida State’s Players) were extremely disappointed and that’s positive that they care about winning. They were trying to lift some of the guys up who felt that they didn’t play as well in certain situations. We’ve just got to make sure that we just bounce back. You don’t want to take any moral victories away, we had a chance and we got beat by a team who played a little better than we did today, and they deserved to win.”

On If Today Was The Next Step in Mfiondu’s Kabengele’s Progression

“Well you know philosophically you’re talking about his next step; we have a long season. You’re going to have good games and you’re going to have some games where you don’t play quite that well so I’m not going to try and judge him by his performance today. I’m going to encourage him to keep doing the right thing, keep working, keep staying focused. We were pleased with his effort today, but I’m not ready this early in the season to crown that he’s made his next step. Maybe come March ask me that question and I’ll give you a better assessment.”

On How Close The Seminoles are To Where They Expected To Be At This Point

“I think we have a lot of room for growth, I think that there’s no question about that. I think we’re getting better; I think playing against a high-quality team like Duke lets you know where you are in terms of competing against the top teams in the country. The way the ACC regular season conference race is is as much mental and emotional as it is physical. We’ve got to make sure that we re-charge our batteries and get focused again because we can’t go on the road now and come back without a W. We need to even ourselves out, come back to 2-2 and hopefully we can take a few days off and re-group, evaluate where we are and hopefully, we can get better for our next outing.”

On The Resiliency Of The Team Against Duke

“That’s what we’ve spoken to, that’s basketball. I think we’re at a point where we’re capable of doing it, I thought we were poised, we executed very well against a very tough opponent today. Once again coming close just doesn’t count, it does in horseshoes but not in basketball. We’ve just got to learn from this game, evaluate it, but I’m concerned right now because we’ve got to re-group mentally. I’m sure they’re very disappointed. That’s probably the biggest thing we have to do is make sure that we bounce back and be prepared on Monday.”

On Duke

“Duke is a team that is capable of winning a national title. It’s unusual to see four freshmen go out and execute as well as they did in an environment like they played in. I have a tremendous amount of respect for guys who can do that because it’s not easy to come from high school, come right into the ACC and put yourself in a position where you’re the No. 1 team in the country. They’re going to continue to keep getting better as well, that’s a scary thought. I know what we’re doing with some of our inexperienced players and I’m watching their progress but they’re playing at an unheard-of high cliff. There’s no telling how good they’re going to be come March and they’re to be commended for the outstanding job they’re doing. They’re putting themselves in a pretty good position.”