



#### **Coaches Quotes**

**Florida State 80, Saint Francis 65**

**November 23, 2019**

**Donald L. Tucker Center**

**Tallahassee, Fla.**

#### **Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton**

##### **Opening Statement:**

“We went into this game with clear understanding that this Saint Francis team, they were tremendously talented shooting the ball from the 3 and they didn’t disappoint us in the first half. We didn’t do a very good job on having a sense of urgency on how we defended them, their priority shooters. Obviously when the team, I think they had seven threes in the first half; I think the second half, our defense picked up a little. We were able to at least give up two threes in the second half. This team (Florida State) is still a work in progress. They (Florida State) have a lot of new parts. We are trying to see how they are going to fit. We started Dominik (Olejniczak) today. He’s probably about 95 percent healthy, not quite 100 percent yet. I think that made him a little uptight and nervous a little bit. I thought he wasn’t quite as comfortable as he has been. (RayQuan) Evans, we were able to get him on the floor a little bit. He had a pretty good stat line, five or six turnovers I believe, which is pretty good for a guy who hadn’t played very much, on and off. We are still trying to develop a rotation. Glad to see Wyatt (Wilkes) step up and knock down some threes. Obviously, you can see why we put him on the floor, that’s going to be his role. We think Nate Jack brings that same level of three points to our team. We need to figure out how to get him going with a level of confidence. It’s taken Wyatt a while and hopefully he’ll get that done. Overall, I’m pleased we are making progress. When I look down the road, I just know that we’ve got to become more consistent. The second half, the ball didn’t move nearly as well. We didn’t execute as well offensively. We didn’t get to the foul line nearly as much. I think we had 25 or 26 deflections, so we got some defensive stops. The defense kind of balanced out our lack of execution on the offensive end. There are fundamental things we’ve been working on, not quite there yet. Overall, I’m pleased we got the victory. We made some adjustments. Got some guys some minutes. Got a better feel for our rotation but we are ways away. As a staff trying to feel that we have a good understanding of how to utilize our talents. Two of our starters obviously didn’t play today. I don’t think it is anything overly serious. Hopefully we will be able to get at least one of them back by Monday. One’s ankle turned and one’s a hyperextension that’s getting better. Maybe we just erred on the side of being cautious, no need for us to rush these guys back. We just want to make sure, when they do, they will be healthy.”

##### **On Wyatt Wilkes...**

“I think it’s just a period of adjustment that all shooters go through. Confidence wise, knowing where to pick your spots in terms of shooting, especially when we are telling you to move the ball and make the extra pass. That’s part of the adjustment. He shoots the ball well in practice and we encourage him to take open looks. His teammates are encouraging him. He and Jack both need to be aggressive in looking for these shots. It all fits into our offensive schemes. If the ball moves and we get paint touches from dribbles and drives and we also throw the ball into the post, it gives the defense a little bit more of a challenge. Those shooters can get open looks. We are still trying to find the right rhythm, the right balance of ball reversals,

paint touches, post touches and perimeter shooting and the ability to move the ball quicker so we can create challenges for the defense so we can get to the foul line, get to the basket and take some easy shots.”

**Decisions for new starting lineups:**

“We have guys who practice very well, they probably have earned a certain amount of minutes. They just have not been healthy. Dominik (Olejniczak) had great practices prior to his injury. Right now we are trying to learn as much as we can about our team, trying to get guys on the floor that are going to play hard for the minutes they are out there. We are still searching for the right balance. Substitutions, starters, who’s the best against zone, who’s best against man-to-man, who’s best against high pressure, who’s best when they play pack line defense. We are still learning about this team so when we go into games experimenting a little bit and that’s pretty much where we are. The problem is we started off with some tough games earlier. We had some injuries that have not allowed us to get into a rhythm. So we are still searching. You might see a few more different lineups. In our system, starting lineups, are not as much of a factor for some guys. We truly believe we win games by committing. We believe that we’ve got to get more guys involved. That’s part of our system. We are still trying to find that right rhythm.”

**On the replacements of the two injured players:**

“Hopefully, once you get a system and you’re consistent with that, then you just move guys in and out of your system and the level of play stays consistent. Right now, we’ve got so many guys out we can’t move them in and out to see who plays best together, and what groups are more consistent. But that’s part of the process we are going through right now. I’m embracing it. I’m just glad we’ve got some options. I love my guys’ attitudes; the chemistry on the team is excellent. The culture, I think, is growing. The guys understand who we are and what we are about. They aren’t fighting us, there’s no selfishness in our guys. They are cheering for one another but we are still, as a staff, as a team, we are still trying to figure out who we are.

**On the performance of the defense:**

I liked our defense once we started out one for six, one for seven I believe and then they finished up six for seven. The technique is why. We didn’t have our hands up to create some indecision on their part, go out and put our hands down. We hustled and closed out but we didn’t close out close enough. Those are things that you learn, you’ve got to have reps, over and over, against competition like this. So this was a good game for us to play because if we did not do a good job defending them on the perimeter, they were going to make threes. We are going to play against people in the ACC that probably can shoot just as well. I like the fact they gave us that challenge and I thought we adjusted in the second half, giving up 7 in the first half and only two in the second. Our defense’s intensity picked up, we had more deflections, transitions, got some easy baskets and we got some good looks ourselves. We still are a ways away from executing defensively and offensively.”