



Coaches Quotes

Florida State 113, Chicago State 56

Monday, November 25, 2019

Donald L. Tucker Center

Tallahassee, Fla.

Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton

Opening Statement

"I thought our guys maintained their focus throughout the entire game, from an energy and effort standpoint. I thought we moved the ball, made the extra pass. We went into the game wanting to see how close we could come to executing our game plan. From an effort standpoint and a focus standpoint, I thought we were there. We knew they weren't a great three point shooting team but we took shot fakes and gave them a lot of opportunities inside, that's just executing the fundamentals of defense. We backed off there, stopped pressing there in the second half because we wanted to work on our half court defense against a quicker team. But overall, I think we showed tonight that we have potential to be a pretty good basketball team. I thought we had moments there though where we didn't execute our defensive plan nearly as well as I would've hoped. Offensively we made open shots, they started out playing a lot of zone. I'll be curious to see if one night we can shoot the ball in a game setting as well as we've been shooting it in practice. I was glad to see us shoot the ball very well from the perimeter. We got some guys some extended minutes, RayQuan Evans got some extended minutes and he showed that he's a little rusty because he hasn't practiced very much; he's missed about six weeks of practice. So getting those extended minutes obviously was very important. RaiQuan Gray hadn't practiced in a couple weeks; he had missed three or four games; he wasn't quite as in shape as we wanted him to be. We got Dominik (Olejniczak) some extended minutes, coming off of his injuries. I thought that he showed that he still needed some more playing time so he can feel comfortable. We are showing that we are a work in progress, but I like our team, I love our attitude. They seem to accept coaching very well, and they realize where we are in teams of the process and we are looking forward to stepping it up with the competition, the next four games we play obviously taking them one at a time but that speaks for itself. But we definitely have to be a little better if we want to be successful these next four games."

Did you like the maturity, it looked like the guys were focused?

"No doubt about it, I was pleased with that level of focus, but some defensive execution things, instead of helping over we were helping up, giving up passes, things that were technical. But I thought the effort was good, we were giving tremendous effort going to the wrong spot, but that's part of learning and we have to get to the point in basketball where everything is reaction and instinctive and we aren't quite there yet because we haven't had enough reps and we haven't been in the situation enough in order for us to recognize certain things but from an effort standpoint and a focus standpoint we took this team seriously. I thought we played hard the entire game"

Is the greatest benefit of a game like this in this juncture of the season to get those extended minutes for the guys who are either filling with the injuries?

"No doubt about it. This game serves a tremendous purpose from that stand point. Getting Dominik (Olejniczak) and (RayQuan) Evans extended minutes -- Wyatt Wilkes, Patrick Williams, guys who I think have potential to be able to make significant contributions to the success of our team, got some important minutes tonight and theirs' nothing like getting game experience, to get comfortable, to gain confidence from that standpoint I think we accomplished that tonight."

How much are you looking forward to having a full arsenal for the first time this year?

"I'm looking forward to having a full team. In practice I'm going to be celebrating. I'm going to be very thankful, its thanksgiving, I might be in the thanksgiving spirit, but I'm going to be extremely thankful that I've got everybody healthy and ready to go, now if we could just get a little practice in maybe we might start developing a little bit."

Have you had a chance to look at Tennessee at all and if so, anything stand out in film?

"I watched them all last year, they were ranked No. 1 in the country at some point in time last year. I saw a couple of their games earlier and I was just unbelievably impressed with the culture that they've been able to create. And when the game is on the line, their guys step up with a championship type mentality. They have some guys who are really, really talented and are making big plays, showing a lot of maturity. They deserve their national ranking, and we are going to take them seriously. It's another typical ACC type game that we are going to be facing, at the highest level come Friday."

Is this what you expected from the free throw line with this team?

"The last couple years we have been really harping on it, trying to become a much-improved free throw shooting team. We put statistics on the board, to let them know that most of the ACC games are decided by four points or less -- I'm sorry seventy percent of the games are decided by four points or less -- so every possession is important and every opportunity to get to the free throw line is important. Our guys have worked real hard all spring and all summer focusing and I think that the fruits of their labors are showing that they have been focusing on improving in those areas. If we can just focus on keeping the ball and keeping our turnovers down, and then drive to the basket and get to the free throw line a little better to utilize our free throw shooting, I think would help us."

Talk about Nathanael Jack's Play?

"There is no question that we know that Wyatt Wilkes and Nate Jack are very capable of knocking down threes. That's the strongest contribution that they are capable of making. Wyatt's been in our system a little longer, so he has a better understanding of what we're expecting; offense, defense, situations. Nathaniel is learning them but one thing we know he can do is that if he gets good looks, he can knock down the jumper. That the strength he brings to the table. Now he's improving on his defense, he's worked real hard at it. We think that he is going to be able to give us that sharpshooter coming off of the bench that can stretch that side of the floor and give us a guy who can be in transition, when he's trailing, running towards the basket and flooding the lane areas, we think he will be able to give us what you saw tonight. I'm not real sure how we will be able to utilize any of our players right now, but I know I have a better feel of knowing what he's capable of doing in certain situations. But, at the level we are trying to compete at, you have to be able to do a lot more than just shoot, you've got to be able to make decisions in point five seconds, sometimes he struggles with that. Not because he's not capable it's just that he is in a new system, sometimes junior college guys have a bigger adjustment period because they've played a certain way. But we feel very comfortable that he's able to come in and knock a couple threes. Anytime you can shoot like that, there is a place for you."