



Coaches' Quotes

Florida State 79, Western Carolina 74

Friday, November 15, 2019

Donald L. Tucker Center, Tallahassee, Florida

Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton

Opening Statement:

"This team (Western Carolina) is the sixth best team in their league? I don't think so. They did a tremendous job playing with a lot of heart. Their shooting in the first half was tremendous. It's not like we weren't defending them so you have to give them a lot of credit. They came in with a lot of confidence. I thought we lacked discipline defensively. Our game plan was to not leave shooters in the perimeter and they penetrated. We lost that discipline every time they would drive in. They took advantage every time we lacked discipline defensively. I watched them play against University of Georgia and it was a very similar game to ours, they (Georgia) came back at the end and won the game. I think they're a team (Western Carolina) that will win a lot of games. This was a good test for us; we are a team that's still trying to find ourselves. We are trying to develop a rotation and we are still a long way away from getting that down pat. With that said, I thought we had some guys in the first half that gave us a tremendous amount of effort. We were able to be a little fresher towards the end. We had some starters that made some plays that made a difference in the game. Obviously, getting Balsa (Koprivica) some minutes, I thought he showed what he was capable of doing. Pat Williams is becoming more comfortable at this particular level. My takeaways from this game is that we have potential to be a pretty good basketball team. We're a little inconsistent, we have a long way to go. We have to keep getting better and better."

On Patrick Williams being able to be a big time player on the court:

"He has the composure to go to the free throw line and go seven for seven. He's one of those free throwers, we need him. He's adjusting to playing at this particular level. I think you'll see him get better and better. We have a lot of confidence in him. We saw glimpses of what he's capable of doing. MJ Walker, I thought that even though this is his third year being here, he's settling in to being one of the leaders on this team. He took a back seat with our five seniors last year. With the game on the line, I thought he showed what he's capable of doing. I like how he's showing his leadership. Devin did not have a great offensive game, but I thought his rebounds made a huge difference and tested them down the stretch. That's who we are right now, you guys have to watch this team grow and see them get better and better."

Defensive ability of Malik Osborne:

"He practiced all spring and summer totally on the perimeter. With the injury to Dominik (Olejniczak), we had to put him in the post, and he responded very well. Gives a great effort, very physical. Hopefully when Dominik gets healthier, we are able to put him back at the position that we would like him to play. It would give us better quality of depth. But he also gives the versatility. When we need to go small, we can put him in the five."

You never want to be down that much, but considering all the experience you lost, was it encouraging to see your guys bounce back:

"You're right, I don't ever want to be down 17 points. I didn't see any panic in our guys. I thought they maintained their composure and stayed focused. That was a positive sign. When we came to the bench, our body language, our facial expressions, the verbal callouts we're going through. It showed we're a team that believes in ourselves. We thought we could continue to cut the lead away, and we kept getting closer at halftime. We thought we could win the game in the end, and it played out that way."

During the crucial stretch at the end of the first half, the guys seemed more aggressive at the basket, was that something they were urged to do?

“We have several defensive schemes, we kept adjusting to what they were doing defensively. People have tendency to want to clog the lane up, you have to be consistent from the perimeter so people don’t feel comfortable. Like in football when they put so many people in the box, that’s what they try to do to us sometimes. We have to make different adjustments to counter what they’re doing. They had a good game plan, and we weren’t shooting nearly as well. They exploded, and we kept making adjustments and making chases and isolations. Once we got into a little rhythm and we kept to it.”

Was is a defensive adjustment did Devin Vassell on Faulkner at the end of the game?

We switch one through four and five, so everyone is going to guard. I thought he was disciplined in his list. At 6-6 6-7 those long arms create some distraction. This is not a fluke they are a really good shooting team. We knew that coming into the game. I think 52% of all attempts they make are 3-pointers. This their system, their style. What my takeaways are that we are a work in progress. We have potential when we get some guys back healthy. I’m glad to see RayQuan Evans in, he’s a really, really good player. He’s been practicing for four or five days now; I’m trying to get him more involved. Wyatt Wilkes, one of our better shooters, we have to try and get him more involved as well. We are still learning about each other, and coaches we’re still learning how to utilize all the different players we have on our team.