



#### **Coaches Quotes**

**Florida State 82, Pitt 67**

**Tuesday, February 18, 2020**

**Donald L. Tucker Center**

**Tallahassee, Florida**

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

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

"Obviously, you're always pleased when you're able to get an ACC victory. There are a lot of things I liked about how we played and there were some things that concerned me. This time of year, middle of February, you like to have your team hitting on all cylinders. I thought for 75 percent of the game, I thought we were pretty sharp. 25 percent of the game concerns me. I just think, from an execution standpoint, the first part of the game, I thought we turned over the ball three of the first five possessions and that concerned me. We don't work very much in zone. We thought we would experiment with it a little bit because they do such a good job of getting to the foul line. That experiment wasn't very good. You need to have some change up zone defense, so we've been working on those areas and trying to get a little better in those areas. I was very pleased though with our bench. Our rotation guys came in and gave us, I thought, a lot of effort and execution. Obviously, MJ (Walker) was a little challenged by the mask that he had, trying to protect himself and not playing the other night, obviously he was not as quite in-tuned. I think this team has potential and the good thing about this team is that we've still got a lot of room for growth. The thing that concerns me is that we still don't have our entire team productive and consistent all at the same time. Probably, if you talked to 1000 coaches, 999 of them would say the same thing that I am saying; that they would love to have their team 100 percent efficient this time of year. That's what coaches do. We're fighting for that and I think that's what we are trying to accomplish. Overall, pleased we got a victory. Utilize this to go back now and hopefully get better as we prepare for what I know is going to be another hard game against North Carolina State on Saturday."

##### **On Patrick Williams' Performance:**

"I think Pat came in as a freshman and realized that he had certain areas of his game he wanted to improve on. He wanted to become a better defender. He wanted to be able to play with an extreme amount of intensity for a long period of time. He worked very hard at that, right from the start with conditioning, his effort, he's a student of the game who's a very sharp youngster. He's a great, great teammate. He's just wanting to go out and play, win, and get better. I think his attitude, his unselfish spirit, how character allowed him to be focused on continue worrying about the things that are important. Just getting better every day. I'm very proud of him. I think you've only seen him scratch the surface of his potential. I think he is going to get better and better. He's going to make a huge difference to our team. He finds ways to make contributions. Deflections, steals, put-backs, blocks, he hits his jumpers and he's just working on trying to be a complete player. I'm very proud of him."

##### **On what has led to Patrick Williams' ability to thrive:**

"We allowed him to develop at his own pace. We are telling him, teaching him and he is responding. Probably the most impressive thing about Pat, he's allowed himself to be coached. He's listening to his teammates. He's extremely respectful and he's always engaging in conversation. He's really becoming a student of the game."

##### **On Florida State's tenacity at home:**

"We have not been as consistent with that throughout the year. I think the last three games we have concentrated on those areas a lot more. I was very pleased with the effort that Dominik (Olejniczak) and Balsa (Koprivica) gave us tonight. We've been challenging them to be more productive. I think they get 12 rebounds and 12 points, seven

rebounds, something like that. They made major contributions to us tonight. We need that size and physicality. I like what I saw in them tonight. We need them to be a little bit more consistent. We are just trying to reach our full potential. I think we are moving in the right direction except we are not all getting on at the same time.”

**On the standard set by Florida State’s bench”**

“I thought there were times in the game where the quality of our depth was taking its toll. That’s kind of who we are. We utilize the full complement of all our players and we try to hold our guys accountable when they give tremendous effort while they are on the floor. We’ve been pretty close to that. Physically, I thought we did a great job but mentally, I thought that we had some periods where we just weren’t quite as sharp.”

**On MJ Walker blocking a dunk:**

“It’s not easy fellas to have an injury like he had -- 12 stitches inside of your lip. That’s the number of shots that you have to take at the dentist where they can go in and sew you back up. It says a lot about him. He started with the mask, but that mask wasn’t going to work. I could tell because we were trying to protect him. He’s a warrior. He gave tremendous effort, didn’t shoot the ball as well as he is capable, but we are not worried about that. Neither are we worried about Devin’s shooting ability. That’s the strength of their game. This team seems to be coming together in a lot of the areas. We’ve just got to get a little more consistent with execution.”

**On MJ Walker’s Competitive spirit:**

“No doubt about it. I mean his defense was good, he moved the ball, and he tremendously showed a lot of courageous effort in the second half. I thought he drove to the basket, aggressively. That kind of backed them up a little bit, defensively. He showed that we challenged him to be a little bit more aggressive going to the boards and it was like nothing was wrong with him.”

**On shooting from the 3-point line:**

“I’ve said all along, even early in the year when we went 1 for 17, in the tournament down in Fort Walton Beach, we had potential be an improved shooting team. Our guys get a lot of shots there and I think the more you shoot, the more you get in rhythm of the game. But the most important thing, is that you have to get passes to give you opportunity to be in rhythm. We had what, 20 assists on 32 buckets and we showed that we have pretty unselfish spirit and that they were getting good passes. Guys were moving the ball well enough to get those uncontested threes.”

**On ball motion on offense:**

“Our system emphasizes ball movement and player movement. We have quantity of depth, you know, you want to move that, which has a tendency to take its toll a little bit on your opponent. Sometimes you realize it and everybody’s standing around, sometimes the defense can rest. So, we play a lot of people so we try to be as aggressive as we can defensively. We want to be equally as aggressive on the offensive end and tonight I thought our guys did move quite a bit. The other night against Syracuse, I think we really moved the ball and moved our bodies better, it went very well. Tonight, I thought the second half we did a much better job than we did the first half.”

**On winning games on the road and at home:**

“We have won games at home, and we’ve still got what, five more games? Let’s wait until after the season before we start taking any bows. You know, I’m pleased with the crowd and it’s important that we’re getting here at home. The administration, the student body is live and doing well. The community is supporting us; you like to see that. But, from a coaching standpoint, we want to just continue what we keep doing and focus and not start getting relaxed and feeling good about ourselves. We want to have something to be proud of in March.”

**On the fashion of winning games:**

“I think sometimes when you have success that can be your enemy. If a game comes to easy for you, it goes both ways. It depends on the maturity of our team and I heard a coach the other day make a comment that, ‘Teams are only as good as their locker room in February.’ Where we have guys who are still locked in, still playing unselfish, still staying focused on the things that you need to be focused on, and the betterment of the team. I think our guys are

doing that now, I'm pleased with that. The culture is good, the effort is good, and sometimes you have to guard against that when you have so many distractions that youngsters are faced with. But, this team seems to be holding it together. We've got to enjoy this victory for a few hours and then tomorrow morning we'll be studying and preparing for North Carolina State."