

Today We Cheer For You

By Chuck Walsh

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Today we cheer for you, Travis Light, Justin Lindner, Will Miles and Harrison Prieto.

Because today you get to lead the team out of the tunnel. The plays in the huddles will all be drawn up for you. The last-second shots will come off of your hands.

Today, you are who head coach Leonard Hamilton will call the stat sheet stuffers, the True Seminoles and the guys who made the difference in another Seminole victory.

Today, you will hear your names called by President John Thrasher because you are in the Seminoles' starting lineup. You will cross the stage (albeit virtually) and become graduates of Florida State University. It may not be the biggest stage you have ever played on in your careers, but it is certainly the most important one you will ever walk across.

"The Green Team have been as important to our team during their careers as any player on our roster," said Hamilton. "They've been there every single day with no excuses and no complaints since their first day of practice.

"I couldn't explain to you how happy we all are that they will all be back next year as the largest group of graduate students on any team in America. Individually and collectively, they make us better, have helped build our program which has enjoyed the most successful four-year period in the history of this team."

The four players arrived at Florida State to begin the fall semester in 2016 with their sights set on becoming Seminole basketball players.

Miles is a Florida State legacy whose father (Bobby Miles, 1982-84) and uncle (Blake Miles, 1989-90) both played at Florida State. Prieto's desire to forecast the weather brought him to FSU's famed school of Meteorology after his fascination with Mother Nature grew during Hurricane Katrina. Light was invited to become a Seminole after a year of prep school at Montverde Academy and Lindner earned a tryout thanks to a connection between his high school coach in Memphis and Associate Head Coach Stan Jones.

The legend of the Green Team began in 2017. To better differentiate themselves during practice, Florida State's scout team wears green jerseys – a contrast from the garnet and gold practice uniforms.

Light (Business Management), Lindner (Applied Mathematics with a minor in Psychology), Miles (Finance) and Prieto (Meteorology) will all attend graduate school at Florida State and will work to help the Seminoles return to the NCAA Tournament for what should be a school-record fifth consecutive time during the 2020-21 season.

"In selecting candidates for our non-scholarship players, we are very meticulous in vetting the type of person we invite to become members of our program," said Florida State Associate Head Coach Stan Jones. "They have to have a passion for and a commitment to Florida State University. They have to be able to accept their roles, because they are going to put in a lot of work and a lot of time and only get largely an intrinsic value from their efforts. They have to be talented academically and willing to sacrifice many things that members of the general student population takes for granted."

One of the more amazing parts of their collective story, according to Jones, is the group's desire to graduate in four years, qualify for admission to graduate school at Florida State, and choose to return as walk-on members of the team for a fifth season (they all redshirted during the 2016-17 season).

“The idea that they all chose to return for a fifth season is incredible,” said Jones. “It says a lot about who they are as people. They value being a part of the program and know what is expected of them. It strongly illustrates the type of program Coach Hamilton has created at Florida State. For all four guys to be committed to return for a fifth season and continue to make our program better shows what incredible people Travis, Justin, Will and Harrison are. The values that they possess are the values that make our program what it is today.”

Prieto, who was chosen to be a team captain by the coaching staff this past season, feels that his choice to return for a fifth season was as easy a decision as he’s made in his basketball career.

“Obviously with the way this season ended was a bummer,” said Prieto. “I want to have another shot at helping us win it all. Playing basketball at Florida State has been one of the best things to happen in my life. I wouldn’t trade that last year of eligibility for anything.”

Prieto has committed two more years to Florida State in order to earn his master’s degree in meteorology.

Lindner returns because he sees playing and learning from the incredible Florida State coaching staff for another year as the best way to further his career aspirations.

“I am coming back to Florida State because when I leave this program, I want to become a college basketball coach,” said Lindner. “Playing another season allows me to learn and develop my basketball mind more and earn my master’s degree in sport management. Once I graduate from Florida State, I feel Coach Ham and his staff will have me ready to begin my coaching career.”

Lindner has played in 20 games, including the Seminoles’ victory over Murray State in the 2019 NCAA Tournament.

For Miles, who has played in 18 career games, including Florida State’s ACC regular season clinching victory over Boston College in 2020, it was also the easiest decision of his basketball career.

“Deciding to return for my senior (fifth) season was an easy decision for me,” said Miles. “I have so much respect for the way this program is run by both the coaches and the players. The culture we have built here is second to none.”

It was an opportunity too good for Light to pass up. He has played in 20 career games and been a member of three NCAA tournament teams.

“I’ve chosen to return because the opportunity to continue to be a member of this program and pursue my master’s degree is a great opportunity for me,” said Light. “I’m looking forward to continuing to grow as a member of a great program and building on this past years’ success.”

As fifth-year players, Light, Lindner, Miles and Prieto are among the Seminoles’ most experienced members of a very talented returning roster for the 2021 season. With three starters and five of the top eight scorers returning from the Seminoles’ 2020 ACC championship team, their collective experience will be important for Hamilton’s team in this period of uncertainty caused by the coronavirus.

“Each of the four guys are accountable as players, are great teammates, are great in the locker room and make our team better,” said Jones. “Along with M.J. Walker, they are the older guys. They are the leaders who will have the added responsibility to help guide our younger guys as we continue to move our program in a very positive direction.”

The best memories are yet to come, with their fondest including winning the 2020 ACC regular season championship, climbing the ladder to cut their pieces of the net after beating Boston College to win that championship, and beating No. 1-seed Xavier and advancing to the Elite Eight in the 2018 NCAA Tournament.

“The best part about being a Florida State basketball player is the family atmosphere we have in our locker room,” said Miles. “It is special when you can completely trust your teammates and know that they always have your back.”

So today we cheer for you Travis, Justin, Will and Harrison in recognition of your graduation from Florida State, all that you have accomplished and the promise of what lies ahead.