

**Coaches Quotes**  
**Florida State 83, NC State 81**  
**Saturday, January 2, 2022**  
**PNC Arena**  
**Raleigh, N.C.**

**NC State Head Coach Kevin Keatts**

**Opening Statement**

“Happy New Year to everybody. My team is playing incredibly hard and the hard thing about it is when you have some young pieces and you don’t win the game, it doesn’t feel like that for those guys in the locker room. And I feel bad for those players who are playing extremely well. We’ve gotten better from three or four games ago. We’ve gotten better from November to now. We’re doing some really good stuff on the basketball floor. I thought in this game if we could have back 10 possessions, 10 possessions where we maybe gave up a loose ball, where we maybe didn’t get back in transition, where we maybe turned the ball over, where we maybe didn’t get a 50/50 basketball, I think we have our chance to win the game. We’re a good team. That’s where we have to get over the hump. One of the things I talked about is cutting those 10 possessions down that we could have got better at, and cutting them down to three or four we’ll put ourselves in a better situation to win the game. Proud of my guys. I know it doesn’t appear that way, but we’re a good basketball team. We’re getting better, some younger guys are getting better. Right now it’s so tough on our guards because we don’t have anybody that we can throw the ball inside to and get a basket. A lot of the stuff is either a paint touch off a drive or more of a jump shot. That’s what we are right now and we’ve got to continue to develop our guys.”

**On Dereon Seabron saying he wished no timeout had been taken**

“Dereon should say that. We called a timeout at halfcourt, and there were three defenders back. And I learned that in the Purdue game, we had one timeout left and at the Purdue game I didn’t call it and it was an unfavorable result towards the end of regulation. So, we called it, every Florida State guy saw us call the timeout and so everyone just stopped. In hindsight looking back, I would’ve done the same thing because I wanted to run something to get him or somebody else a shot. That didn’t lose us the game. It’s one of those things where in football when you call a timeout and the guy kicks the field goal and everybody says ‘ah man the field goal was good’, if we don’t call the timeout it’s probably a turnover because he was going to drive into three or four guys.”

**On what happened on the play following the timeout**

“We ran something to get Dereon a ball into a ball screen, they doubled him, and Jericole (Hellems), for whatever reason, turned it over. Looking back at it, I wish he would’ve looked just straight to his left because Terquavion (Smith) was at the block and could’ve popped out and got an easy basket. So, we’re making younger mistakes that hopefully in the next week or two it’s not the same mistakes. As I tell everybody, those two possessions didn’t lose us the game. You go back to, I don’t know how we ended up holding a guy on the free throw line when we get him to miss but it was called, and so unfortunately, we don’t even get a chance to try and win the game or try and tie the game up.”

**On his message to the team after the game**

“Just keep fighting. I’ll be honest with you, there’s nobody in this program more disappointed than me. I’m disappointed, but I’m not disappointed in my guys. I’m not disappointed at all. I’m not disappointed in their fight. I’m not disappointed in the way they compete. I’m disappointed because we’re not getting the results that this team would like to have or deserve. And my message is keep fighting, because if we keep fighting it’ll turn around for us, and when it turns around it’s going to be great. But right now it sucks, it’s not good, it doesn’t feel good. But at the end of the day if you don’t think we’re getting better or playing hard, then something’s wrong with you, because it’s not our guys, our guys are fighting. And I tell the guys, in today’s world, when things don’t work out, we all have to find someone to blame. Don’t blame our players, if you want to blame somebody blame me. I’m big enough to handle that, I’m okay with that, but don’t blame our players”

### **On adjustments he can make to help the team in defensive rebounding**

"Well we're trying. We're a great offensive rebounding team but we're not a physical team, we're not hitting people. I think we lead the league in offensive rebounds, I think we're one of the best in the country in offensive rebounding. On the defensive end, we're just not hitting people, which we've worked on and we'll continue to work on. We got beat to some 50/50 basketballs that probably cost us the game."

### **On lack of scoring besides Dereon Seabron and Terquavion Smith**

"It is [frustrating]. Those guys played great. When you look at it the numbers are incredible. Thirty-two points, seven assists, five rebounds, 7-of-11 from the free throw line for Seabron, and then you get Terquavion who had another very effective game. The other guys didn't try to miss, they just didn't make shots. We got good shots, I thought we had a great game plan at the end of the day. I'm disappointed because it just didn't work out in our favor and at the end of the day we played so doggone hard and it just didn't work, and it can be deflating to a basketball team. We won't stop, we'll continue to fight, our guys have been very positive. As you said, if I'm Seabron I think because I had 32 points I think I could score from half-court. But when you go back and look at it there were a bunch of people in front of him."

### **On Thomas Allen starting and if the first half is the best half of basketball he's played this season**

"I don't know if it was his best. When you look at how he played at Miami, I thought he was good at Miami also. The reason why he got the start, Cam (Hayes) didn't lose his spot, but Cam hasn't been playing great. I wanted Cam to see the beginning of the game and then come into the game. The narrative is not that Cam Hayes is not going to be our starting point guard anymore. I just wanted to look at something else. When you've lost a few games in a row you have to make some type of change. The change was I wanted to see what a different lineup looks like and we saw it. It was a very effective lineup, but that doesn't mean it's the one we're going to play for the rest of the year. What's happening with our program is - I typically have eight, nine, or 10 guys and we're able if we're not winning, to rotate and have different starting lineups - Nobody has competed at a high level, and even through the games we lost we still had the same lineup because those five guys were the best five. With the emergence of Thomas Allen, it's helped us now. He's become different, he's playing better, he's playing with a lot of confidence. So, obviously it changed and I wanted to reward him for the way he's playing and I thought he did a good job, didn't shoot a great percentage but when you look at it he was 3-for-6 from the three-point line which was important to us"

### **NC State Sophomore Guard Dereon Seabron**

#### **On what the play call was coming out of the timeout on the last possession**

"I was going to get it and then set a rush screen for me to try to get to the basket to either score, look for the drive or get fouled and go to the free-throw line."

#### **On if he thought he had an open lane to the basket before the timeout**

"I feel like I could have made something happen during that transition because they were not matched up. They were just running back and did not know who they had and I could have made a play. The timeout gave them time to set up their defense and made it hard for us to get a ball in."

#### **On frustration level of not being able to get over the hump in these close games**

"It's very frustrating because we are right there every game. It just comes down to a couple of mental breakdowns, whether its missed block-outs or 50/50 balls, we just need to find out how to close out games."

#### **On what he does to make sure his teammates stay confident and team morale stays high**

"We just need to stay positive and keep putting in the work. We have to go back in practice and keep getting better. There are things that we are struggling with right now like defensive rebounds and getting 50/50 balls. We just have to stay positive and get over the hump."

**NC State freshman guard Terquavion Smith**

**On his mindset at end of games and always wanting to take the big shots**

“I just have a high level of confidence and I know my teammates believe in me, just like I believe in them.”