



Coaches Quotes

Florida State 69, Charleston Southern 58

December 18, 2017

Donald L. Tucker Center, Tallahassee, Fla.

Coach Leonard Hamilton Opening Statement

"I think tonight was a little more evident that we're a team that has potential. But like I've said at about every press conference, that we're still a work in progress. We're still trying to find that magic level of consistency on how to execute offensively and defensively. In the first half, I think we had 37 possessions. We made 2.1 passes per possession. That just does not get it done regardless of who you're playing. So, our execution on the offensive end; we struggled a little bit against Tulane. More so against Oklahoma State. We had five, six, seven, eight, nine passes, and we got half percentage shots and that's a balance that we're going through in terms of a learning process that I call '80/20'. You got to be aggressive offensively about 20 percent of the time, and the 80 percent of the time you've got to move the ball and make the decisions. That's an area that I think we've got to continue growing. Obviously, not having Mfiondu (Kabengele) is an issue for us on the boards and not having Christ (Koumadje). But at times when you have diversity and you have guys that are out, it gives the other guys an opportunity to step in. And those things happen during the course of the year, so I don't feel like it's anything that's not fixable. I'm a little disappointed that we're not shooting a little better from the free-throw line and we're getting wide-open looks from the 3-point position and this team shot the ball extremely well. So I think we showed them we're vulnerable but we're a team that has potential to be a good team, but we still have a lot of areas that we can improve."

On the evaluation of Ike Obaigu's play

"Ike's making improvements in leaps and bounds. He was not expected to be forced into that role. And I think tonight you saw just some glimpses of him catching the ball and finishing. But right now, he's a real strong rebounder. He has unbelievable shot-blocking potential. And even when he's not blocking the shots, he's changing them. I thought he had more than three blocks tonight. We're going to have to go back and watch the films, I'm not sure what the definition of blocks should and shouldn't be. But they think he only had three; I bet if you asked Charleston how many shots he blocked they might tell you it was 10. But he does a real good job of deterring, changing shots, and he's still learning. But tonight, he opened up his shoulders and tried to block them at the rim one time too much instead of getting over and getting in front of the rim and letting someone else rotate over. But I'm pleased with the progress, he hits 80 percent of his free throws in practice but he cares so much – he's so emotional and wants to do it the right way, - that emotions get the best of him when he gets to the free throw line. But I think before too long, he's going to relax himself and be more consistent with his free throws."

On regarding the 7-8-minute stretch in the second half and Charleston's reaction on "switching the zone"

"We're a team that likes to get out in the passing lanes and pressures the full court; we like to overplay a lot. And what people have started doing to us, they'll junk their offense and they'll just spread the floor, move the ball and drive. So we have another system we call "51" where it's not necessarily pack line, but it picks up a man-to-man defense right at the top of the 3-point shooting line. We worked an awful lot on zone all summer and all fall knowing that we had to have a change where people who had the mentality that all they'd want to do is move the ball around for eight-nine-ten seconds and then drive the ball on us and it's pretty effective. It's been effective against us because we're out in the passing lanes and we're spreading the floor and opening up the gaps; so several times this year where people are doing that we have adjusted the goal zone. Or we have backed off and stopped pressuring them and I think against Florida we may have backed up and played what we call '51' – that's picking it up right at the free-

throw line and not give up all the penetration and not playing around. That's adjustments we knew we were going to have to make, especially with the fact that we didn't have Christ makes it more pronounced because we don't have the second shot-blocker and then when Ike goes out of the game."

On when Mfiondu Kabengele is expected back

"I'd like to rest him if at all possible. It's a sprain, I don't think it's anything serious. But I'd prefer to give him as much time. He'll take some time off for Christmas and he thinks he'll be able to play on Thursday so I think we'll wait and see. I'll let the doctors tell me but if they asked Doctor Hamilton, my diagnosis is that he probably needs to rest. Which I got my medical degree from Gaston High School so it's not very valid."

On the end of the semester focus strains

"There's no doubt in my mind that a lot of that is creeping in. And human nature with youngsters is what it is, I mean we all go through it. A lot of it is maturity. You get a good start, you get nationally ranked, everybody is patting you on the back and telling you how wonderful things are going and sometimes you can lose your focus. But we've got a great bunch of guys. They love each other. They'd probably invite any of them to each other's homes to spend the holidays. They really get along very well. But I think we're still young. We've got some guys that haven't been in this position before and we're still trying to grow mentally, emotionally as well as physically; but I like the way they accept the call-outs. I like the way they listen and they want to represent Florida State in the right kind of way and I think it's good that we're going through some of these things and we're still able to find a way to win. So we can continue to keep growing because we don't have very many more games that we can grow because we jump right into the fryer. The ACC always gives us a nice welcoming stretch and they've done it once again and I'm really appreciative."

On the Seminoles' start in ACC play

"In reality, you have to play them anyway. There's not an easy game in the ACC. Regardless of who you're playing, when you're playing, whether it's home or on the road, you're in for a fight. So it really doesn't matter. I'm jokingly saying it because all three are the first three teams in national rank. But in reality, I know it doesn't really matter. Regardless of where you're going and who you play, if you don't have your A-game on, they're going to hand you it, give you a hat and show you where the door is because this is the greatest basketball conference ever in the history of college basketball. The fans are knowledgeable; they're waiting on you when you come out to warm up. It's rabid, it's fun, it's exciting, and all the teams are well coached and loaded with talent. That's why they call it the ACC. I'm thankful that we have the opportunity to play the best and come out the best. That's my story and I'm sticking to it."