

Coaches Quotes

Florida State 59, Tulane 54

November 17, 2021

Donald L. Tucker Center, Tallahassee, Fla.

Head Coach Ron Hunter, Tulane University

Opening Statement

"We didn't come here for moral victories. I thought our kids did a nice job of fighting, especially with one of our guys down. It's just that if you talk about a two-possession game and you miss free throws, the lesson here is as I told them. I mean if we played like that against Southern we would've won by 50. You know the focus that we had today is the focus that we have to have all year. So, I'm proud of the kids you had a top 20 team in here and we battled them and we just came up a little short.

It was clear you were right in there the whole game, just hard to manufacture enough offense in the second half to get over the hump?

"Especially when (Kevin) Cross is our third scorer, and so now you are asking Sion (James) or Noble (Days) to score and you know DeVon (Baker) could not get going. I thought Jaylen could get going. He hit some threes early, but like I told our guys you are playing against one of the best defensive teams in the country. We also showed that we are one of the best defensive teams in the whole country. I thought it was a heavyweight fight between defensive teams just doing it in different ways. I told them if we can guard like that, if we can guard Florida State like that then there is no one else in our schedule we should not be able to guard that way."

Jalen Cook wasn't 100 percent going into the game but he gave you 100 percent effort tonight, what does that about his ability to score?

"I think the country is going to find out just how good this kid is and they find out just how good our team is. I thought (Jaylen) Forbes got going a bit earlier, he still did not shoot it great. I thought he got going early enough where we were able to get him some shots and so, but it's hard because the center point of what we do is with Kevin Cross; it's what I've said before our year is going to depend on that. Not having Kevin, that was huge for us that was big and again he tried to go, we talked about it, looked at him in shoot around but he just couldn't move so we will get these next three games."

What are your plans? Do you feel like he will be ready for the first game in the Bahamas?

"I honestly think that if this was a conference game, we would've played him. We would've tried it, but it's too early in the season to try especially with the knee. He just felt it a little bit every time he came down he felt it a little bit. The doctors said that he was fine but another weeks rest will help with that. So, I thought let's just go battle without him and get him ready for next week."

Noble Days got the start and gave you some good defense, kind of a guy you know what you are going to get from him?

"We know that, and that's why I felt good defensively and as the game kept going I thought we confused them a lot. I thought we frustrated them with our defense and so I told the guys that if we ever got the lead in the second half we would win the game. Just because of the way we were playing but we could never get that lead, we could never get over that hump and a lot of it just thought we got tired, we just got tired."

You didn't get many good looks but Jalen Forbes had a pretty wide open three that would've tied it, is that the kind of basket you needed to really give yourself a chance to win?

"I said the other day that the timeliness of our scoring is what is the problem. And that timely three -- boy that would've tied the game right there. I don't know that other end it would've gotten a lot tighter so you know they never had to not play without the lead."

Freshman Jalen Cook

How close to a 100 percent and obviously you still didn't affect you from scoring a lot of points but how close to 100 percent did you feel on that ankle?

"It was about 80-85 percent there I couldn't really cut on it, its sore but I was going to push through."

Gritty effort by you guys obviously you wanted to get the win but where do you feel like you fell short from coming out with the win?

"In the first half, we made a lot of mistakes, missed a lot of free throws, had the lead and could've controlled it more. We got tired. We've got to get more in shape, but that is going to be the best team we play all year so I thought it was a good showing but we haven't even reached our potential yet."

There was not time in that game where it didn't look like you guys could play right with them. How much confidence do you take out of that?

"I take a lot of confidence. The whole game I thought we were going to win and we were going to pull away. Just have to give thanks to my guys they fought and battled. We came up short but just turn the lose into a lesson."

Did the refs call you for a flop on that one play near the end? Or a technical or what was that, what was their free throw for?

"They called me for a flop. They said I flopped."

You guys did this without Kevin Cross and he's an integral part of your team how much more confidence does that give you too, you played a really good team even without a key player

"It gives us a lot of confidence. Kev brings a different energy to our team inside, so missing him was tough but Nobal (Day), Oton (Jankovic), TY (Tylan Pope), they all fought and battled and stepped up so you've got to credit them."

You are headed to the Bahamas for three games pretty soon in three days, how important is it going to be for your guys to do well there?

"We gotta go down there and we gotta get all of those wins; I have confidence we will. These losses hurt early, only will make us better. We've got great teammates, a great coaching staff, I think we are going to put everything together. No worries."