

Nettles Leads Way Over Favored Foe

Special To The Democrat

JACKSON, Miss.—Florida State University and the University of Tampa clash tonight at 7:30 in the opening game of the semi-finals of the first annual Dixie conference basketball tourney.

Howard of Birmingham and Lambuth, Jackson, Tenn., clash in the semi-finals of the lower bracket at 8:30.

The two finalists will play Wednesday night for the title.

FSU, tourney darkhorse, gained its berth in the semi-finals with a startling upset over favored Mercer 52-46 yesterday afternoon.

Tampa's Spartans rolled over Millsaps 81-55, and Howard eliminated Florida Southern of Lakeland 69-62.

Lambuth had to get by two foes to remain in the running for the crown. The Tennessee quintet brushed past Stetson 56-46 in the only opening round game played, then edged Mississippi college 65-54 last night. The rest of the teams drew byes into the quarter-finals.

NETTLES STARS

Little Ronnie Nettles led FSU to its initial win in the Dixie conference tourney this afternoon as the Seminoles upset the powerful Mercer Bears 52-46.

Although he scored only nine points during the fray, it was Nettles who swished in two long field goals from near center court to beat back a Bear rally that had pulled the Bruins within one point of FSU during a determined second half drive.

In addition to his offensive work, Nettles drew a defensive

blanket around Mercer's star guard Rudy Stewart and limited him to seven points.

The Seminoles jumped off to a quick lead when big Tom McLaughlin fed Bill Weigle a layup shot, and the Indians were never headed from that point.

After moving out in front, the Seminoles led at halftime 28-23 as Lee Benjamin, Weigle and McLaughlin sparked the offense and Ace Adams dominated the backboards for the Floridians.

Lose Two Starters

The Indians gradually increased their lead after the intermission, but midway through the period Benjamin and McLaughlin went out on fouls and Mercer started to move.

With scoring ace Glen Wilkes beginning to hit Mercer pulled up to a 41-40 deficit. At that point Nettles flipped in his two long baskets, one of which came after he stole the ball from Stewart.

That gave FSU a 45-40 lead which they protected throughout the remainder of the tilt.

The Seminoles, who had lost to Mercer 65-56 and 62-59 during the regular season swarmed over each other as the game ended and literally swept Nettles and Coach Bud Kennedy from the floor.

FSU	fg	ft	tp	MERCER	fg	ft	tp
McLaughlin, f	1	8	2	Wilkes, f	4	4	12
Kendall, f	5	2	12	Murdock, f	1	0	2
Weigle, f	5	0	10	Reeder, f	2	1	5
Adams, a	3	0	6	Barnett, c	1	1	3
Nettles, g	4	1	9	Clements, c	2	2	6
Benjamin, g	6	0	12	Dobbins, g	2	2	6
Wyman, g	0	1	1	Kinsaul, g	2	1	5
				Stewart, g	2	3	7
Totals	24	4	52	Totals	26	14	46