

FSU Nips Mercer 77-76

in Overtime Cage Thriller

WIN IS THIRD FOR INDIANS

Marcum's Foul Shot Clinches Victory

By PETE NIMKOFF
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Florida State's basketball team claimed its third victim of the young season last night as Coach Bud Kennedy's cagers, a young crew themselves, nipped the frisky Mercer Bears in overtime, 77-76.

A full house of fans enjoyed this one in the West Campus gym, especially since Mercer had defeated the Seminoles 76-61 a week ago as Kennedy opened his season on the road.

Sparked by freshman guard Ham Wernke, who continued his sizzling scoring pace with 26 markers, State drove to a 66-60 lead with less than two minutes to play, then blew it as Mercer fast-broke to a regulation 66-all deadlock.

FSU forged ahead 72-68 in overtime as Wernke, a second-semester frosh who lettered last season, took over the show. He drove underneath for two, scored with a jump shot, then grabbed a short Mercer set shot and fired a court-long pass to freshman Jim Oler for a lay-up.

Mercer came back as Nixon tallied twice underneath but this time State retained the lead. Jerry

Westhafer rang up two free throws, Jim Tom Richardson scored with a jump shot, and Freshman H. B. Marcum tallied what actually was the clincher—a free throw with 15 seconds left.

This put State ahead 77-74, and though Jewett scored for Mercer at the buzzer, he couldn't prevent the Bears' first loss.

BUD MIGHTY GLAD

"We blew the lead too often," said Kennedy afterward, and I was mighty glad to finally see the scoreboard on our side. Our ball-handling was atrocious," Kennedy added, referring to the mistakes which a nervous, inexperienced squad made.

It was largely due to this fumbling that FSU trailed 12-16 at the first quarter. But Wernke caught fire in the second period and Marcum, who like Westhafer had 14 points all-told, added three one-handers from outside as FSU moved ahead 40-34 at halftime.

Still leading 54-39 at the end of the third quarter, State got another scare when Mercer ran hard to close the gap, then inched ahead 58-57.

With four minutes left in the fourth quarter FSU had to pull even and she did it as six-foot-four inch Jerry Westhafer began to control the boards. But it was still touch-and-go all the way into overtime.

Wernke's scoring splurge gave him 88 points for the season as State's record now reads three-and-one. For Kennedy, it was his 53rd win against 52 defeats at FSU.

A good eye at the foul line helped make Kennedy's long record a "winning" one last night. State hit on 25 or 34 charity tosses, and as usual Wernke led the way with 10 or 12.

Fla. State	fg	ft	tp	Mercer	fg	ft	tp
Westhafer,f	5	4	14	Hughes,f	1	2	4
Pence,f	1	0	2	Veal,f	6	4	16
Benson,c	0	0	0	Reid,c	7	4	18
Burst,g	1	3	5	Schwartz,g	5	2	12
Wernke,g	8	10	26	Harris,g	3	2	8
Marcum	5	4	14	Mixon	1	0	12
Dellahan	0	1	1	Jewett	3	0	8
Richardson	4	1	9	Wilson	1	0	3
Oler	2	2	6				
Gordon	0	0	0				
Totals	26	25	77	Totals	31	14	76
Referee: McCoy;				Umpire: Hillaman;			
Scorer: Johnson;				Timekeeper: Mathis.			