

Hokies add to FSU's misery

By David Whitley
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The mystery remains unsolved, the misery unabated.

Before a crowd of 3,795 that alternated between holding its nose in disgust and yelling its lungs out in vain, Florida State lost to Virginia Tech 87-75 Saturday afternoon at the Tallahassee-Leon County Civic Center.

The loss dropped the FSU men's basketball team to 10-15. More importantly, the Seminoles sagged further in the Metro Conference cellar with a 2-10 record. The Hokies improved their record to 17-6 and solidified their hold on second place in the conference.

The sloppy game was a microcosm of FSU's entire season. The dreadful shooting was there, as were the physical play and subsequent disappearing act by Al Gipson. And naturally, there was that typical stretch of strong play which leaves people wondering why FSU can't sustain it long enough to win games.

"This is kind of a mystery season for us," said Coach Joe Williams. "Our offense is better than it was last year at this time; the players are doing what I ask them to do. There's really not any explanation for what's going on."

Turnovers and terrible shooting wouldn't be bad places to start. Those and Virginia Tech forward Perry Young, who almost singlehandedly beat back FSU after it cut a 16-point Hokie lead to four. Young stole the afternoon from teammate Dell Curry, who'd scored 28 points in Virginia Tech's 85-71 win over FSU last month.

"Going into today's game, we were going to try to cut Curry down on his scoring," said FSU forward Maurice Myrick, who led the Seminoles with 17 points. "If the rest beat us, they beat us."

The strategy worked to perfection. Curry scored 12 points, seven below his average. Young rammed home a career-high 33, many coming when his team needed them most.

"I hope I proved to them that I'm capable of having a big night also," said Young.

He scored 13 points in the first half as the Hokies jumped to a 28-16 lead while FSU struggled offensively. Gipson, FSU's 6-11 center, was being swamped, as usual, down low. He hit only seven of 21 shots during the frustrating afternoon. FSU had no one around, as usual, to loosen things up with outside shooting.

"Gipson's the type of player that if he gets going early, he'll kill you all night," said Hokie guard Al Young. "If you can hold him and don't let him get the ball, he'll get upset."

What hampered FSU as much as Gipson's ineffectiveness, however, was its inability to hold onto the ball or hit the chip shots it got. The Seminoles turned the ball over 19 times on the way to hitting only 31 of 78 shots.

"I don't think it was a question of not enough effort, we played good defense," said Williams. "We invented a new game out there — bumbleitis. Our shots and free throws wouldn't fall, we just couldn't score. Sometimes we'd get the ball on a turnover and just throw it away."

Despite all that, FSU, sparked

by the play of freshman Jerome Fitchett, trailed only 46-36 at the half. No, the Golden Girls didn't perform for the crowd, or the television audience viewing the game on the KATZ network. Instead, a local karate club practiced a little self-defense and board breaking at halftime, the FSU administration apparently choosing violence over sex.

The game had a few violent moments of its own. Al Young, who kept a stream of constant chatter, going all afternoon, and FSU guard Joe Farrar had a slight flareup midway through the second half when Young elbowed Farrar, who shoved the Virginia Tech in return.

"I try to get my opponent upset and confused," said Young, who upset FSU with his five steals.

FSU had its own harasser in guard Dean Shaffer, who had five steals and six assists to spark an FSU rally. When Randy Allen dunked home an alley-oop pass from Shaffer with 15:35 left, FSU had the score down to 54-50. Then Perry Young swung back into action, scoring 10 points in a five-minute span to pump the Hokies' lead back to 68-54.

"Perry Young just took the game over. He just played great basketball," said Williams. "He posted up and score, then we'd cut that off and he'd penetrate and score. He made the difference."

Thanks to its intense defense which forced 24 turnovers, FSU cut the lead back to nine points. The Seminoles never got any closer, however, as they continually

missed makable shots down the stretch.

"Time after time we had opportunities in hand and we bumbled it away," said Williams. "I have no explanation for it."

"It wasn't pretty, but it was an excellent win for us," said Virginia Tech Coach Charlie Moir. "There were a lot of mistakes both ways. This was probably the worst game we've had this season as far as ball-handling goes. We let their half-court trap bother us."

With only two Metro games left, both this week at home, FSU is now in real danger of a last place Metro finish. That will earn them a first-round spot in the Metro tournament against top-seeded Memphis State.

"We have to come back out and

go after it," said Williams.

Virginia Tech (87)

	FG	FT	Rb	Asst	S	Min	TP
Colbert	8-13	2-2	6	4	1	39	18
P. Young	14-20	5-9	6	3	2	39	33
Beecher	4-7	2-2	6	0	0	21	10
Curry	6-14	0-1	8	2	2	37	12
A. Young	3-8	0-0	4	5	5	36	6
Lewis	1-2	0-0	0	0	1	6	2
Williams	0-0	0-0	1	1	0	2	0
Everhart	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	1	0
Brow	3-4	0-0	1	0	2	19	6
Totals	39-68	9-14	29	15	13	200	87

Florida State (75)

	FG	FT	Rb	Asst	S	Min	TP
Myrick	6-14	5-5	12	1	2	38	17
Allen	6-12	0-2	7	1	2	39	12
Gipson	7-21	0-2	11	0	0	33	14
Shaffer	5-16	3-6	5	6	5	35	13
Farrar	5-10	2-2	3	1	1	34	12
Fitchett	2-4	3-5	2	2	1	20	7
Mabry	0-1	0-0	0	0	0	1	0
Totals	31-78	13-22	44	11	11	200	75

Halftime score: Va. Tech 46, FSU 36;
Fouled out: none; Technical fouls: Farrar,
Young; Totals fouls: Va. Tech — 20, FSU —
15; Attendance: 3795.