

FSU, FAMU brawl

By David Lee Simmons
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The first men's basketball meeting in nine years between Florida A&M and Florida State was expected to be a battle on Saturday night.

But only a mild shoving match in the opening minutes gave a clue as to how that battle would become. A bench-clearing brawl between the two teams with 1:19 left in the first half forced FAMU to forfeit the game, billed as the final game of the Capital City Classic Tournament before 3,100 at the Civic Center.

FAMU, trailing 38-35, forfeited because all but three Rattlers were ejected during the melee initially involving FSU's Doug Edwards and FAMU's Reggie Finney and DeLon Turner.

Edwards, Sam Cassell and Ray Donald were the FSU players ejected during the fight.

For FAMU, only Kevin Colson, DeLon Turner and Darrell Williams were allowed to continue playing. The Rattlers' record dropped to 3-3.

During the fight, FAMU's Andrew Lovett appeared to kick FSU's Ray Donald. Donald appeared to be in the original part of the fight. Also, Cassell was seen roaming down the press row, where he grabbed a pencil and attempted to re-join the fight before being restrained by FSU head coach Pat Kennedy and assistant Tom Carlson.

The game started with FSU taking an easy 14-2 lead, but before that, Edwards got into a shoving match with FAMU's Kelvin Daniels with 16:08 left in the half. The players were quickly separated, and the game proceeded.

But, with 1:19 left, a fight erupted on the FSU end of the court, which actually was where the FAMU bench was located. The fight appeared to start between Finney and Edwards. Atlantic Coast Conference head official Larry Rose ruled that Finney threw the first punch at Edwards after Charlie Ward scored on a layup.

The two became entangled, joined by Donald and Turner and later by others. Coaches and school officials poured onto the court, and a fan raced downcourt being chased by a Tallahassee Police Department officer.