

Lady Seminoles nip FAMU 59-58

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Gasp!

That's what Jan Dykehouse was doing during the final 43 seconds Wednesday night, as her Florida State women's basketball team guarded a one-point lead over arch-rival Florida A&M.

When the final second ticked off, Dykehouse was able to let go a deep sigh of relief. It was more like a yell, though. The 6-foot coach leaped a couple feet off the floor, thrust both fists into the air and gave a war-whoop to celebrate a 59-58 win over the Rattlerettes.

"This is always a great game, always," Dykehouse said of her team's ever-intensifying series with FAMU. "I thought we showed great composure near the end."

Indeed. The Lady Seminoles, 19-7, had folded down the stretch in losing to FAMU in Gaither Gym earlier this season, but not this time. FSU built a seven-point with 2:32 left — it's biggest of the second half — and then played a smart, patient final 2½ minutes.

The Rattlerettes, 14-8, were known for their come-from-behind talents, though, and they tried for another thrilling finish. But with two starters having fouled out in the final 1:19, FAMU could not do it.

"I feel like our girls played a good game," said a subdued Mickey Clayton, FAMU's coach. I'm always disappointed by a loss, but I'm not discouraged by this one. The main thing is that we went out and executed well."

The game, played at 5:15 p.m. in the Tallahassee-Leon County Civic Center, could have held its own as a main event. It was a preliminary, however, and a few hundred watched prior to seeing the FSU men's team play Tulane.

Those who came early saw something special. The game, close all the way, featured sparkling play on both offense and defense, by both teams.

Lisa Foglio and Sue Galkantas, FSU's leading scorers, were 1-2 in that department against FAMU. Foglio, a fiery guard, tallied 20 points and turned in some tough defensive play. Galkantas, who almost always scores well against the Rattlerettes, had 19.

Glenda Stokes, who is to FSU what Wes Unseld used to be to the Washington Bullets, had only nine points but was the game's leading rebounder with 10.

FAMU had three players in double figures: Valerie Robinson (14), Rosa Hudgins (13) and Sybil Rivers (12).

Hudgins and Rivers weren't around for the climax. They had fouled out, just as the Rattlerettes had threatened to steal the game.

FAMU led only twice, 28-26 and 42-41 (with 11:16 left), but the Rattlerettes were in striking distance all evening. FSU led by 10, 18-8, at 7:42 of the first half, but FAMU had forged a tie by intermission. The 10-point bulge was FSU's biggest.

In the second half, the Lady Seminoles led by no more than four until FAMU suddenly went cold.

FSU was ahead 50-47 when FAMU's Robinson hit from the corner at the 6:08 mark, making it 50-49. It was the last basket the Rattlerettes would score for nearly four minutes.

FAMU missed four straight shots, and the opportunistic Lady Seminoles made the best of the situation, scoring six points to increase their lead to a commanding seven, 56-49 with 2:52 to go.

Cynthia Lee, who made the winning basket in the first game against FSU, broke the drought for FAMU with a 15-foot jumper. FSU led 56-51 with 2:32 to go, and FAMU turned to a full-court press in hopes of stealing the ball.

The tactic, which had worked marvelously in the first meeting, didn't this time. FSU wouldn't let it.

"We worked on that a lot," Dykehouse said later. "We even came early (to the civic center) to work on it."

The Rattlerettes' Rivers was fouled on a drive to the basket, starting a procession to the free throw line. She made two shots and FAMU was down by only three, 56-53 with 1:48 left.

Galkantas went to the foul line for the Lady Seminoles with 1:19 left, and made two shots to make it 58-53.

Lee hit two free throws for FAMU, and it was 59-55 with 1:10 showing. Foglio hit one for FSU to make it 59-55 with 1:06 to go.

It was after Foglio scored that FAMU came up with one of the biggest plays of the game. Pam Reilly made one foul shot, and missed the next. Valerie Robinson got the rebound and swished a two-handed 22-footer. The three-point play cut the Lady Seminoles' lead to 59-58 with 43 seconds to go.

Foglio threw up a wild shot that missed at the 13-second mark, giving FAMU much hope. But the Rattlerettes did not come down with the rebound. Instead, FSU's Karen Folgut did for the game's biggest play.

She almost blew it, though, by putting up a shot that missed. The Lady Seminoles got the rebound again, however, and ran out the final six seconds.

Clayton said his team tried for a foul during the last 16 seconds.

"We wanted to foul LeeVayn Oliver," he said. "But they never blew the whistle."

FSU played without two of its starters, and FAMU also was minus a starter. Guard Brenda Fogle is sitting out an indefinite suspension for disciplinary problems.

Neither team shot well. FSU, which had been shooting 51 percent from the floor, shot only 39 percent. FAMU, which had been shooting 43 percent, managed only 35 percent against the Lady Seminoles.

FLORIDA A&M (58)

Lee 3 2-2 8, Robinson 6 2-3 14, Williams 0 0-0 0, Burton 2 3-4 7, Rivers 5 2-4 12, Hudgins 5 3-6 13, Mack 0 0-0 0, Reilly 1 2-5 4, Crawford 0 0-0 0. Totals 22 14-24 58.

FLORIDA STATE (59)

Burroughs 0 2-2 2, O'Neal 0 0-0 0, Palgut 1 0-1 2, Stokes 3 3-5 9, Baker 0 0-0 0, Oliver 3 0-0 6, Foglio 8 4-7 20, S. Galkantas 4 11-16 19, N. Galkantas 0 1-2 1. Totals 19 21-33 59.

Halftime score: Florida A&M 28, Florida State 28. Technicals: Coach Clayton (FAMU); Foglio (FSU).