

# Atlantic Coast Conference

## Operation Basketball

Wednesday October 26, 2016



## Dwayne Bacon

## Xavier Rathan-Mayes

Florida State Seminoles

THE MODERATOR: We have Florida State Dwayne Bacon and Johnathan Isaac afterwards.

**Q. Dwayne, tell us about your expectations for 2016-17.**

DWAYNE BACON: I would say my expectations for us is really to just compete at the highest level we can, compete on defense. Because that's something we didn't do, and we lacked in last year. Just go hard in everything we do. In practices we've been competing hard, going at each other. It's not just to try to win a spot with each other, it's just to try to get the best out of each other, and we've been doing that and having great practices so far. So I would say compete at the highest level.

**Q. Dwayne, if I'm counting correctly on the roster, six freshmen is part of this year's team. That's a dynamic new mix for you guys. What's it been like for all these newbies on the floor?**

DWAYNE BACON: It's been pretty amazing to me. We lost a lot of guys, and to bring six in that can compete at very high levels is just amazing. Those guys come in and they compete. They want to learn. They want to get better. They want to take knowledge from the guys that have been here before them. So it's just been amazing to have those new guys come in and want to learn right away.

**Q. I've got to ask a lighthearted question: Obviously you've got a very unique last name. Fans really took to it last year it seemed like at home. How much does that play into your style of basketball, your perspective about college basketball? Because you obviously sizzled with some excitement last year.**

DWAYNE BACON: College basketball to me is amazing. But to just see that and have some fans that actually wear my last name is just crazy. I've never seen anything like it. But I actually got a chance to meet those guys, and I know where to get the suits now, so it doesn't matter.

**Q. Well, there will probably be more than three strips in 2016-17, if I had to guess.**

DWAYNE BACON: I hope it is. I heard there's going to be four, so they're adding one.

**Q. That's good. There will be a pound eventually. Obviously, Dwayne, people measure the success of the season in wins and losses. Do you have to win titles? Do you have to win National Championships to be a successful team?**

DWAYNE BACON: I would say being a successful team for us right now is just making it to the Tournament and taking it game by game. If we make it to the Tournament, do the things we have to do on defense, who knows what we can do. We feel like we can get to the title game if we just buy in on defense, because we have the offense. We have enough guys that can score. So if we just buy in on defense, who knows where it will take us.

**Q. Dwayne, how would you consider your guys' style of basketball?**

DWAYNE BACON: This year it's going to be very fast. I would say just run. We have the plays, we have the offense, but we want to try to run and be able to not get into the offense and get easy baskets going into our offense. So I would say run very fast.

**Q. We'll bring up Xavier standing in for Johnathan Isaac. Questions for the junior? Xavier, normally we have people that describe their teammates. Tell us what you learned about Dwayne Bacon last year.**

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: He's a prolific scorer. A guy that you can get the ball to in any situation. He's going to go and get you a bucket. Great teammate, great guy to be around. Great friend. Just somebody that this program can count on day-in and day-out. He worked really hard this off-season to enhance his game, and he's done a good job of being one of our leaders in this preseason camp. So we're excited for this season. We're excited to have him back and it's going to be a good season.

**Q. Xavier, you seem like every year you're getting more and more comfortable on the basketball floor at this level. Your game seems to be improving in so many aspects even beyond the statistics. What is it about yourself that you're learning about this Florida State college experience?**

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: College basketball is difficult. Coming in, kind of at first I thought it was going to be easy, but I had to work extremely hard. I had to work extremely hard to get to the point where I'm at right now. I've done a lot of learning with my coaching staff and just film study and stuff like that. I just learned to just take it day by day and just be a good person. If you can do that, everything else will happen for you.

office, and he can be on the phone and he'll stop all conversations to attend to you.

So Coach Hamilton is the best coach that I've ever been coached by. I'm just so thankful to be able to have a coach like him in my life and somebody that mentors me in the right ways.

**Q. Obviously the coaching staff places expectations on its student-athletes. What type of expectation have you placed on yourself? What have you done in the summer to try to improve who you are as a basketball player?**

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: I've put in a lot of work this summer trying to improve my percentages. I think the biggest thing I've worked on this summer is trying to be super efficient from the floor. Another aspect is defensively. I'm looked at as one of the leaders of our defense, a guy who picks up the ball 94 feet. So our defense kind of starts with what I do, and I wanted to really take that to heart and be that guy for us. I think if I'm able to do that, I think our team can be really successful within the dynamics that the coaches have put in for us. I'm just going to keep working extremely hard to try to be a leader for this team and just to blend in and help us win at any cost.

**Q. What you can say about putting your name into the NBA Draft, what you took away from that experience, and how that can help you this season?**

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: It helped me a lot because I got a lot of feedback from NBA teams. I was able to sit down with Coach Hamilton and kind of evaluate where I was at. And I just thought the best decision for me was to come back to school, come back and be able to do something special.

When I came to Florida State, I wanted to go to the NCAA Tournament. I wanted to help Florida State do something special within our program. I think with the pieces that we have this year, with the system that we have and the coaches that we have, I think that we got an opportunity to do something special, so I'm really looking forward to this year.

**Q. You talked about sitting down with Coach Hamilton. What's your relationship like with the coach?**

XAVIER RATHAN-MAYES: Man, Coach Hamilton is like a father figure to me. Somebody that I can just kind of go in the office and just talk to whenever I need somebody to talk to. It doesn't even have to be about basketball. He's such a players' coach. He puts his players before anything in his life. You can walk into his