

Coaches Quotes
Florida State 78, Rutgers 73
Rutgers Athletic Center
Piscataway, N.J.

Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton Opening Statement

'I thought Rutgers was very well prepared. Early in the head game I think they kept us off balance by mixing their defenses. We knew they would play some 2-2-1, and mix it back and forth with man-to-man and zone, but it bothers me more than I hoped that it would. It kept us out of rhythm. They were very well prepared, and they got a lot of second shots early in the game. We did a poor job of keeping them off the glass. The game could've gone either way. The first half we had a little spurt. That gave us a little bit of cushion, but that I didn't really feel safe. We used a zone; it wasn't very good. But, at least this gave them a little bit of change of pace. It gave us a couple opportunities to get a couple steals, force a couple turnovers. Each turnover we got late in the second half turned into a basket for us. They've done a great job bringing their program back. I thought our kids just stepped up and made a few plays when the game was on the line. It probably gave us a chance to win the game, it could've gone either way.'

When Deshawn Freeman of Rutgers went down it seemed to change things, how big was that for you guys?

"It's kind of just the nature of the game. It changed for us when Mfiondu (Kabengele) had his four fouls, and M.J. Walker had his. Terance (Mann) had what, four fouls? It gave them a lot of opportunities. When he (Freeman) went out, it helped it flow back in our direction. I thought we struggled a little bit because we had some guys that characteristically shoot the ball really well. But once we got in foul trouble we had to find a way to play with who we had available. So my guys just stepped up. The game could've gone either way. Obviously, I'm pleased with the fact that we came away with a victory, but I thought that Rutgers obviously could've put themselves in the same position."

There were a couple times where they got it within three, were you concerned at any point with that and the crowd?

"We're accustomed to playing against crowds like this: passionate crowds in the ACC. But I thought our kids showed a lot of character. Obviously CJ (Walker) recognized something when his teammates were in foul trouble, and he stepped up a little bit. And for him to be a sophomore, this is the first big opportunity he's had, and I thought he showed a lot of character by making play after play. I thought Phil Cofer stepped up tonight for us. So we're a team here that has to win games by committee. Every game we play we have somebody different, a new leading scorer. We're still trying to find ourselves, very similar to Rutgers. I thought the deciding factor was that we had a guy that was able to make some plays down the stretch and hit some free throws. That put us in a good position to win the game."

What did you think of Eugene Omoruyi? This is by far his best game as a collegiate player...

"Obviously we went zone, and we knew they would throw the ball into the middle of the floor. He took advantage of us. He made play after play, and we didn't have much of an answer for that. We kept them out of a system that they're normally accustomed to running. But having a guy like that that can come off the bench and give you points in a game like that says an awful lot about him."

How important of a test was this for you guys heading down to Florida?

"It's a tremendous test for us. This was the kind of game I thought we really needed. We going down to one of the top-five, six ranked teams in the country. They're playing very, very well. Averaging 100 points a game, shooting 47% from three-point. But we will enjoy this victory tonight, and tomorrow we will start giving our focus to University of Florida."