

2018 Orange Bowl Basketball Classic

No. 11 Florida State 81 vs. Saint Louis 59

Saturday, December 22, 2018

BB&T Center

Sunrise, Florida

SAINT LOUIS HEAD COACH TRAVIS FORD

Opening Statement

"I don't have a whole lot to say to be honest with you. Florida State is really, really, really, good. They're physical and did a good job of taking us out of our offense and forcing us into either committing turnovers or taking tough shots. Defensively, the numbers are horrific for what we usually do but I think a lot of it can be attributed to our offense, not being able to complete some shots which put our defense at a disadvantage. Give them credit, they're really, really good from all positions and they just keep running guys at you so there's really not much of a break. We just didn't play very well, and Florida State had a lot to do with it."

On not being able to close the scoring gap and make the game more competitive...

"We just couldn't get it going. We looked a little tired out there for whatever reason, a little fatigued and we just couldn't get a run going. I told our team that we have been as physical as every team we've played this season. The only team that has been able to match us physically is Houston and they were just as physical as us. Florida State was more physical than we were. When that happens, you start to see the weaknesses of our team. We usually can camouflage some weaknesses we have by just playing hard and physical and aggressive and overpowering people but when you can't do that you have to start relying on other things and we just didn't have that to go to tonight. We missed some layups and some things that you need to make against a good team. You have to play really well and hope you do a good job of not letting them play one of their better games to give yourself a chance and none of those things happen, give Florida State all the credit. I think we'll be ok. I told our guys this might be the best thing that happened to us. They were the first team that handled us, the first team that actually handled us out of 12 games, they just had a little more than we did today."

On if Saint Louis' turnovers in the first half unforced errors were...

"Absolutely, no question. You have to hope those things don't happen in these types of games. Usually we're able to physically make up for it and get it back somewhere but a team like this doesn't just let you get those back."

On how good Florida State is and can be...

"They're a final four team, especially once they get Phil Cofer back and get him into a rhythm. He's special when he gets in a rhythm and one of the best players in their league, but his injury has allowed these other guys to get some great experience. They just got pieces and they move fast. If you watch them all the time, then you probably get used to it, but those dudes are moving. They understand how to play, they have shot-makers, and they have drivers. They don't have to throw it inside a lot and we knew that. If they start scoring down on that block and start scoring there, I don't know how you stop that. You know they're going to play defense. When one of (Florida State Head Coach) Leonard's teams averages 80 points a game, watch out because you're in trouble because they're going to a good job at all the other stuff. They have a chance to go as far as they possibly want to. Trust me they're good. We've played Butler, Houston, Oregon State, Pittsburgh, Seton hall; we've played a bunch of good teams, but that team over there is a different level."

On defending the three point well but lacking in other areas...

"It's the second game in a row our defense has really not been our defense which has been our strength. I'm going to mark it up to fatigue coming down the stretch here before Christmas. Hopefully we can regroup now a little bit, get our legs back under us, and start playing defense the way we're capable of. We have to play good defense in order for us to have a chance which we have for the most part but our past two games we haven't been who we are defensively. I do think our offense has to do with our defensive troubles but it's still not where it need to be the past two games."

On how FSU played today

"I've watched every game they've played, and I thought they played really well today. I thought we ran into a good team that played really well. We played into that, but they were really good today. Every time I thought we had them where we wanted them, they would kick it and make a shot and then sometimes taking shots we wanted them to take and they were still going in. We had a lot of loose ball that we could have had that led to something. A lot of what-ifs, and coulda-shoulda-woulda's but give them credit. There is a reason they are 11-1 and almost made it to the final four last year; bringing everybody back and playing at a high level today wasn't a good scenario for our basketball team."