

Florida State at Louisville
Men's Basketball | Jan. 4, 2020 | KFC Yum! Center

Coach Chris Mack: (Opening Statement) I give all credit to Florida State. I thought for, really, the entire game they were the tougher team. I thought our guards got manhandled. They shot over the top of our guards, especially in the second half. They have a really good team. They are really athletic. We knew that coming in. We had five first half turnovers and in the second half, we doubled that. We got manhandled. Our guards got pushed around. They got to any spot they wanted to. They ran runner action, just like Kentucky did and they got in the lane and shot over us. Our inability to keep the ball out of the lane, especially in the second half, killed us.

(Is that a correctable problem with the personnel?) "We have to be a lot tougher. We're not going to correct our height. It's going to be what it is. But, we could've done a much better job, and needed to have done a much better job, of not letting players get to their spots so close to the rim and shoot right over the top of us. If we had done a better job of whipping a few of the screens so the angle wasn't given to them to get in the lane, then their shots would've been a little bit further out."

(About Jordan [Nwora] making up the bulk of UofL offense) "Against Florida State, you have to be able to make plays. They're going to deny every pass along the perimeter, so our guards had the ball in their hands the majority of the time and we knew that was going to happen. You watch literally every game they've played, like the last five games, they're turning teams over 19 times. It's those teams that are trying to reverse the ball and move the ball. We knew our best chance was to try to get the ball through the lane through post-ups, which again were non-existent. Then our ability to break our man off the dribble and get in the lane and then make the right play. We had a few shots blocked and we missed a lot around the rim. As much as I want to rely on the offense, I give Florida State credit the way they play defense. But it was our defense and our inability to play defense the way we needed to play in order to compete in this league."

(About goal of the three-guard lineup) "The goal was that David [Johnson] was playing well and I didn't want to pull him out. Obviously, you have to have guys that can handle the ball, make plays, and get in the lane to alleviate that pressure. You can drive pressure, or you can post-up and mismatch. It really doesn't necessarily matter if we're not running a ton of set plays, which were tough to get the ball reversed and enter where you want. We really could've played any combination, and I thought that was the best combination at that time to get the ball into the lane."

(About playing time for newcomers) "A lot of their progression at times takes place away from the fans. It's the every day grind of practice, their understanding of our system, and the repetitions they get. Certainly we want to get them out on the game floor because there's also a lot to be said for learning and making mistakes and making plays to help the team win on the game floor. I thought David, like a lot of freshmen, did some good and some not-so-good. We've got to continue to play them."

(About Fresh Kimble getting the start) "Well, one of the things that we sort of bounce around as the staff is, trying to get David in. It's no secret Ryan hasn't played as well as he did maybe the first seven or eight games. I thought Fresh has really played pretty doggone well to this point. When Darius and Ryan start, you essentially have two guys that only play the point guard position on the bench. So it's like a bakery line for David to ever get in the game. By the time we even get to him, there's nine, eight minutes left on the clock in the first half. So by starting Fresh, now you have an opportunity where David can be the first point guard sub in the game and maybe end of the game at 16, 15. Get a better feel for the game and again I think he's making plays and he presents some different things than our other point guards do."

(About Florida State turning teams over were the 16 turnovers were a product of their defense) "Well, I thought in the first half we did a tremendous job. We took care of the ball, we missed so many shots around the paint, and Florida State does that. They block a lot of shots, they alter things. But, I thought we were getting some great looks. If

you put in last year's tape, and then you compare it to this year, we as a staff must have watched our Florida State at Florida State game, five or six times. Just our offensive possessions. And as close as a game as it was, and it went down to the wire, we could not get good looks. And I thought in the first half, we were getting pretty doggone good looks. Open threes, shots at the rim. We didn't do that in second half. We also had some killer turnovers in transition. Not even in the half court but just, we get stopped defensively, now we're pushing it out, and now we advance the ball, and Florida State does a great job reading our eyes. We had a couple car crashes and balls loose and they're going the other way with it. Just sort of backbreaking at the moment but, despite all that, we got into a five point game with our 2-3 zone and, they wore us down, and our guards have to be a lot better."

(On Ryan McMahon struggling late) "I don't know. He's a senior, he's got to figure it out. He had open looks. Defensively, he's not who he's been in the first part of the season. He needs to do better. He's a fifth-year senior. He's got to get a little bit tougher and fight through a little adversity and if he does that then he'll return to the player that he's been. So, I have a ton of confidence. I probably have more confidence in Ryan than he has in himself-right now. The last thing he can do is feel sorry for himself."

(Follow up on Ryan McMahon's confidence) "He needs to be better, and I don't mean the confidence. He needs to play better; he needs to be tougher both mentally and physically for him to be a better player."

(On Dwayne Sutton not having many points) "He didn't play very well. We need Dwayne to do more. At halftime, I think he had zero points and one rebound. I know he didn't play 18 minutes in the first half, he played closer to 10, but another fifth-year senior who has to figure it out for us to be the team that we are capable of being. He's been doing that his whole career, figuring it out, and being the guy that we can count on to be a warrior. Games like today, against an elite level team, we need him to be engaged and productive right from the very beginning. We need him. He's one of our most experienced players. He knows that."

(On the zone defense) "Their ability to get into the lane with that little baseline runner action was crippling us there for a bit. Just once they got to the spot, they rose, and made the shot. We felt like a switch was necessary. It did its job in the very beginning. They started flashing a guy at the high post in, Vassell hit a couple shots. They got a little bit more confidence in that, so we opted to not ride it out throughout the rest of the game, maybe used it one other time. It's a curveball. We've got to be better than giving up 55 percent from the field no matter if we play man, zone, you name it."