

Florida State at Louisville
January 4, 2020 | KFC Yum! Center
Postgame Quotes

Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton

(Opening Statement)

"Obviously, I'm very pleased that our kids were locked in for the whole 40 minutes of the game. One of the reasons why they were so locked in, as we watch and try to prepare for the Louisville game, you see so many things that they do at such a high level offensively and defensively, that we had to be at our very best with no drop-off. Every possession we knew to be very, very important, they're a great rebounding team - one of the best defensive teams in the country. Offensively they're very patient. They get the ball exactly where they want to get it to consistently. One of the better three- point shooting teams that we've faced all year. So as a result of the respect we have for the type of job they've done, the coaches have done with this team, it elevated our focus. And I think it created a higher level of concentration for my team that allowed us to play consistently for the whole 40 minutes. There's no doubt that our kids played very well and I'm proud of that but that was driven by the fact that as you watch and try to prepare for Louisville, you didn't see any holes. You knew you couldn't leave them open. You knew that they were going to hit their free throws. You knew that they were one of the best rebounding teams. That they held their opponents to low field goal percentage, as well as the points that they allowed their opponents. But our guys had driven focus, stuck with the game plan. They made some adjustments there, and went to the zone defense and kind of slowed us up a little bit. Once we called a timeout I thought our guys refocused and we hit a couple shots, a lot of big shots. You can't say enough about M.J. Walker. He hadn't practiced probably in about 10 days. He didn't even practice yesterday, but he walked through everything. He was injured with a bone bruise and we didn't know how we respond without having Balsa (Koprivica), but I thought our other guys stepped up and gave us a chance to be successful on the road against this very, very good Louisville team."

(It seemed like every time they got within five or three you guys always responded and never let them get any closer.)

"Well, I think that our guys showed a level of confidence. Each time the game got close, we stepped up made big shots, executed very well, moved the ball, made the extra pass, and played tremendously unselfish. More than anything else played with a lot of confidence.

(What did you think of your guard play tonight it seemed like your length in the backcourt really bothered their guards)

"Well, I think that we didn't do anything really differently other than we do try to recruit long, athletic perimeter players and I thought that they did a very good job of defending each one of their sets. They do a great job of executing their half-court offense. It was very challenging to make sure that we got to the proper defensive position. There was a period in the first half where I did not think Nwora was ever going to miss a shot. They did a very good job of breaking our defense down and as we tried to help in the lane, they always seemed to find him. It seemed like that's where their focus was and it really, really was challenging to stop the penetration and stay with him. In the second half, we decided that we would take a chance and wouldn't leave him open nearly as much as we had the first half. Obviously, that worked fairly well for us."

(They pride themselves on the defense. Your guys shot over 50 percent. How were you able to get such good shots?)

"We've been somewhat inconsistent with our shooting this year. We had one game where I think we went 1 for 17 from the three. The next game we had 15 threes. We are still a team that is growing. We have six new guys on our team. We're still trying to find out who we are. We're still trying to develop some consistency with the new additional players that we have. I thought that the maturity of Louisville's team allowed them to be a little more consistent than we have been all year long. But we tried to simplify things a little bit more on point what we thought our game plan was. We're fortunate that our guys were able to execute the game plan and make the shots at the end."

(On meeting with Joe B. Hall last night)

"Wow. For those of you who don't know, I worked with Coach Hall for 12 years at the University of Kentucky, some of the greatest times of my life. It was a fun time for me. I enjoyed reminiscing about a lot of great moments that we shared. It was just a fun evening. I just want to make sure that every chance that's available, I'm going to try to come up here and enjoy those moments. Mike Summers, his son-in-law who had worked as football coach here at the University of Louisville obviously brought him to the hotel. It was a great time for me. I have a lot of fond memories of Coach Hall, 12 years... 11 years with him and I can't say enough about the relationship that we were able to establish during that run."

(Getting outrebounded by six, you only shoot five free throws on the road, is there another explanation other than extraordinary shooting?)

"It is unusual for you to be in a game that physical. I've just got to give Louisville credit, I think that they did a good job of working hard on the glass and were disciplined enough not to reach and grab and shove. I think that's part of the maturity that we need to get to where we can play defense without fouling. But I must say that I was a little concerned that we'd gone that long without even an attempt, but that's just the way the game goes sometimes."