



Coaches Quotes

Florida State 82, Louisville 67

Monday, February 24, 2020

Donald L. Tucker Center

Tallahassee, Florida

Florida State Head Coach Leonard Hamilton

Opening statement:

"I thought that Louisville had an excellent game plan at the beginning of the game and that they kept us at bay. They held the ball, even while we were pressuring them to move the ball, and they were patient in the first half. We had a hard time stopping penetration and they had two excellent shooters on the perimeter. It is difficult when you face guys that can take you off the dribble, and (Lamarr) Kimble gave us a hard time because he was getting below the free-throw line and hitting shots. We had a hard time finding our guys on that end. In the second half, I thought that we turned it up with a little more energy, a little better focus, and we were able to get some defensive stops. We got out and made some easy baskets and started to get back into the game. When we got the lead, I thought that our guys executed very well offensively, and maintained the energy and effort on the defensive end. We had a lot of guys that I thought stepped up and gave us big contributions tonight, Dominik (Olejniczak) gave us tremendous energy off the bench, (RayQuan) Evans, and (Anthony) Polite. I thought that they made a huge difference, we continue to keep winning games by committee. This team is eighteen strong, we had nine guys score tonight. That is who we are; I am very proud of our guys. This was a very important game, but our plan was not to allow the game to be more important to Louisville than it was to us. I have to give Louisville credit, they came out and played extremely well, and they wanted the game just as bad as us. I just thought that our guys gave a little bit more effort, got some stops, got out in transition, and gave us an opportunity to come away with a very important victory. I can't say enough about the crowd, there were times throughout the game where we could hardly hear even in the huddle. We were screaming and hollering, but I cannot say enough about the support that we have got from the community and the students. It has made a huge difference to our players and I want to thank everyone for giving us that type of support."

On Florida State's Defense

"I think that we have been winning games all year with the quality of our depth and our ability to play good defense for long periods of time. Devin (Vassell) played his heart out, and he asked for a break. I thought that (RayQuan) Evans and (Anthony) Polite came in and gave us a tremendous life. I think that we can keep doing that, the good thing about this team is that we still have a lot of holes in our game, we still have a lot of room for improvement and we have a lot of new guys that are still growing in our system. I hope that we can continue winning and that we will start peaking somewhere here soon."

On the crowd's noise level during the game

"I think our players are responding to the support that we are getting and the support we are getting are responding to the players. I think we are working together, and we are a great team."

On the difference between this matchup and the previous one against Louisville

"Obviously, the injury to (Malik) Williams early in the game made them shorthanded with their post play and position. However, their smaller lineup created more problems for us in the first half. We were a little indecisive on how we could match them because their inside guys were a little more mobile than our big guys. Dominik (Olejniczak) stepped up, and I thought Malik (Osbourne) gave us good effort from an interior standpoint that didn't allow when

we switched one through five their perimeter guys would take advantage of us. I thought we was locked down fundamentally and played sound defense.”

On Florida State’s Depth

“There is no doubt that we win games by committee. It is interesting that our players embrace that. People keep asking questions about how do we keep everybody happy with playing so many guys. These guys are happy to come out of the game because they give tremendous effort. We feel like that is who we are, that is the style of play that best suits well for us, and we have different guys stepping up every night. Tonight, Trent (Forrest) scored 16 points and didn’t even realize it. I thought there were moments in the game where you could see that each player took upon himself to make a major contribution.”

On Trent Forrest showing a lot of emotion during the game

“You guys are not around these guys all the time, but these guys have a lot of fun. He (Trent) seems to have a quiet demeanor, but he is one of the fellas. I thought he got excited during the game and he demonstrated after his dunk how much that moment meant to him. He bleeds garnet and gold, he is a Seminole through and through, and he represents what the unconquered spirit means to all of us. I am glad to see him have his moment, especially in his senior year.”

On what this big win can do to Florida State’s confidence

“We are going to try and keep this in perspective. This game was important to us, but we are in a conference of teams with some of the richest traditions and most success in basketball history. We are trying to find our niche. They have 75 to 80 years of success ahead of us so we cannot start to get excited now because just about every team in our league has gone to the final four and won a national title. We have a big mountain to climb. We want to keep doing what we are doing by not trying to pick up momentum, not get down, and not get overly excited. We just have to keep grinding to see how far we go by staying focused and believing in a philosophy that makes sense.”