

Coaches Quotes
Florida State vs. Florida
November 18, 2022
Donald L. Tucker Center
Tallahassee, Fla.

Florida Head Coach Todd Golden

Was your team prepared for this game?

“Yes. I thought we were going to be well prepared for this game. We didn’t play like it in the first half. I thought we played on our heels, I didn’t think we were invested enough. We weren’t shot ready when we got penetration kick outs in the first half, they blocked a couple of our threes. We just didn’t have a punch to us and that was disappointing and we addressed it at half time. Obviously we changed a couple things. Defensively, we really had to turn up the heat and the pressure because I felt like they were too comfortable offensively in the first half and I thought Trey Bonham did a great job early on in the second half, and really throughout the whole game, of putting pressure on the top of their offense. So, what it did was allow us to steal layups, which lifted that burden we had in the first half on us and allowed us to play with more freedom and a little more belief. But again, it was really the way we came out in the second half. If we allowed them to get a basket or two, we probably can’t get back in that game. But we cut it quick, and had three different big runs in the second half. I’ve been in a game like that, I’ve been on the other side, it’s not a great feeling, but I am incredibly proud of the way our guys competed, stuck together, and kept belief in all 40 minutes.”

How were you able to get Colin Castelton going in the second half?

“I don’t think we did a good enough job as a staff, you know, finding opportunities to get catches. That hasn’t been an issue for us all year, so we didn’t really emphasize it before the game. But, Florida State plays a defensive style that’s tricky and it’s not something we’ve seen a lot of, so it took us a little bit to get comfortable. And then as we got into halftime, we only had five field goal attempts, or whatever it was, and as a staff, we made a considered effort to get him catches; he’s one of the best players in the country. Colin did a fantastic job, obviously efficient, 25-9, and that’s the luxury of having such a great player. You might not get enough touches in the first half, but he’s with it and then he delivers, as he did. He’s obviously a huge part of why we were able to win.”

You mentioned that first half your team was amped up, ready to go. You had a couple technical fouls. Do you think that played a factor as well?

“The first one was a flop technical, so not really on that one. I wasn’t pleased with Alex (Fudge’s) technical because it just gave them the points right back. That dunk that he had could have been an energizer, but that technical kind of took the wind out of those sails. So, I don’t think it was the technicals, but I do think at halftime the guys did a good job of holding each other accountable, challenging each other to step up. And nobody was okay with the situation, but the great thing it wasn’t a down and out or dead kind of feeling, it was more of like a got to change this. And I thought the response to that was great.”

You mention turning up the pressure early in the second half. Is pressure defense something that you want to be a calling card of your team or is that just a situational thing you need to use?

“We’re not a big full court pressure team. I’ve never been a big full pressure court coach. Certain games call for certain things. Florida State with their injuries and their personnel, I think the guys that play for them are really good players, but at times they struggle handling the ball. So, I thought that would be an opportunity for us to get some run-out layups, you know, get hem uncomfortable. We just let them be

too comfortable in the first half, and that was on me. I was more concerned with protecting the paint. Caleb Mills did a really good job, Cleveland was really aggressive in the first half, and they started scoring in the mid-range and floaters. So that defensive pressure I think got them uncomfortable, and I don't necessarily think they were ready for it."

Your first taste of the rivalry, what do you think stands out about it?

"I love it! Absolutely love being a part of it. This is why you coach college basketball. To be a part of an incredible program, get to wear this "F" on my chest here, coming here to Florida State, incredible program. Coach Hamilton has been doing this for a long time and winning at an incredibly high level for a long time. Great crowd in the building tonight. Obviously, you can tell everyone cared about what the result was. It makes the win sweeter, coming back all the way from 17 at halftime to win a rivalry game. I think this is the first time in 10 years that we won here, as a program. Pretty neat, pretty neat."