

Coaches Quotes
Florida State 60 vs. Syracuse 63
Donald L. Tucker Center
Tallahassee, Florida State University
December 4, 2021

Syracuse Head Coach Jim Boeheim

Opening Statement

"Their pressure defense is so good you know. I am happy that we didn't turn it over more than 13. And that we finally, you know our defense really won the game for us. It has not been good, but our defense kept getting stops when we had to have them. And when they put their shooters in, we tried to drive that guy, we tried to take advantage of the shooter on the offensive end. And Jimmy (Boeheim) did a really good job of that a couple times, but I just thought our defense was the difference. You're down eight on the road and come back and take a lead like that -- it's hard to do. They are in your face the whole game; they are a tremendous, tremendous defensive team especially in here (at the Donald L. Tucker Center). They are a tremendous defensive team, but I thought even though they missed shots from the three, we were there. We were getting them a little off balance from the three. And you know teams are taking 30 plus threes every game we play. Sometimes, it's going to come along where a team doesn't make 15 of them. I thought again we rebounded the ball better. I thought in the first half Frank (Anselm) did a really good job for a couple minutes there. I thought Symir (Torrence), even though he didn't score, he got five assists, and he pushed it up. I thought he did a good job but at the end of the day Joe (Girard) and Cole (Swider); I know Cole is going to make eight or ten of his threes one of these days and you know, he didn't, he started out one for six I think and then he hit a couple, and I think missed a couple more. If they are going to play face-guarding Buddy and Joe that way, Cole is going to get shots, and he is going to have to cash them in. I think he will as he gets a little bit more game experience with us. But again, you know we had a horrible trip and we had to come back and these two games were really big games for us and you know, we got to go home and get ready for a great Villanova team, but a tremendous win here, a tremendous character win here for us to hang in there in the end and Cole go get that ball and make the free throws. We wanted to foul, but we did foul last time and it didn't work so I guess maybe it was a good thing we didn't foul, but you know, it was a gutty win a really, really hard win here."

Is the one-one-three here to stay?

"We use it, and then we switch out of it. So, in situations, Buddy (Boeheim) knows how to get out of it. He was playing center one play, Jimmy (Boeheim) had forgot he was the center and Buddy went back in there playing the center spot. But yeah, we use it, we can come out of it in different circumstances, it depends on where the ball goes and what they are doing. We can come back out of it but it has been a little more effective. It is not just that, it is that our forwards are moving better Jessie is moving better in the corner. We trapped them really well a few at times and again, our defense was good you know we needed that. We had been struggling at the defensive end."

Have you used that (the 1-3-1 zone) before or was that just to keep Jessie out of foul trouble?

"We have used it before, against Indiana we used it

Have you used the 1-3-1 zone before this season?

"No, we have never used that."

What was the difference offensively between the first half and the second half?

"I think that we got Jimmy (Boeheim), when they switched, and we got the bigger guy on Jimmy he drove, when they got the bigger guy on Buddy (Boeheim) when he tried to drive. When they had the shooter in the game he is not as good defensively, so we were trying to drive on him, Jimmy did a great job on him. And then we when they had to come off and help, we knew Cole (Swider) was going to keep getting that shot over there, he had six good looks in the first half, seven good looks in the second half so, he is going to get that shot. And Joe (Girard) did a good job of getting Jessie (Edwards) down on the little guy and getting him the ball a couple times too."

Did you want Cole Swider at the line there at the end or is that just kind of how it played out?

"Yeah, I mean, he had to come and get the ball."

Did you do anything in the second half to try to force them outside and take threes?

"We tried to protect inside as much as we could. Then they did start to drive a little bit but, when they have their defensive pressure, their big guy cannot be in the game because we are switching him onto Buddy or Jimmy, and then they are going to drive him. So, when they do that, they have to go a little smaller so now they do not have that inside presence there."

We have talked a lot about rebounding, but you rebounded the ball really well today.

"Better, better, we have got to keep getting better. That is an area we obviously have to improve on."

With Buddy Boeheim being doubled a lot this game what do you have to change in the second half to better help the team?

"The other guys have to take advantage of that. They doubled him and Jimmy (Boeheim) got the ball and Jimmy drove in and we ended up getting a three with Cole Swider. So, they are going to double him and other guys have to pick it up. Buddy made two impossible drives I do not know how he made those shots even, but they are going to double him or when he goes with the ball, they are coming to help, other guys are going to get shots and that's the way it is when you are a really good player. Some nights that what we got to do, we have to get it to the open guy and we have other guys who can make shots."

How big of an impact did it have on the second half when they could not make shots and then, they could not set up their press?

"They stopped pressing a little bit at the end of the first half and then they weren't really. It is hard to press 40 minutes like that, and we handled their pressure really good the whole game. But the biggest difference was the mismatches, we got Jimmy (Boeheim) on a mismatch where they had to help and then, Cole (Swider) would get a three. Or we could get Jessie (Edwards) down, some of those situations. We missed you know, and almost botched the game. Jimmy missed two lay ups and you we to make those. We had a bad turnover at the end, but you know you have to hang on and find a way and we did."

You just ended their 25 game home winning streak, why are they so good at home you think?

"Because they (Florida State) are good, and they have been good. They have been in the top ten the last three years."

They haven't won as much on the road as they have at home?

They (Florida State) have had a top ten team for two or three years that I remember and it is hard to beat those teams on the road. It is hard to beat them here they are good, they are a really good team and this team is good too. They just missed some shots for us and overall, we handled their pressure pretty well, and we got situations that we can take advantage of. And we just could not make anything and then all of a sudden Joe made a three, Cole made a three, and pass and Jimmy made a drive. Cole made some shots and that was the difference."

In the first half you guys obviously were not shooting well but it was still a two-point game a three point game what changed?

"Our defense kept us in the game."

Forward Cole Swider

Obviously you hit those big free throws late what was going through you mind in that situation?

"Just win the game, we practice that every single practice. Coach Boeheim puts you on the line and if you miss you have to run so we are used to that. I made some big free throws at Villanova, last game as well so we just want to win the game and do whatever we can to get out of here to win."

Were you surprised that they kept shooting from the 3-point line even though they missed a million shots?

"We played pretty good defense. They were doing a good job when they got into the paint, but I think they stuck to what they wanted to do and they kept on shooting them. Maybe some days they will make those shots, but I am glad they did not today."

You and Jesse Edwards did a great job on the rebounds today tell me the team's evolution on the glass?

"I think it is just playing hard, playing with passion, just wanting to win. I think every single game it is going to be crucial for us to get on the glass, get rebounds and obviously, it is a key for us to win. It is hard to rebound with the zone but whenever we can just win the rebounding battles it is going to be good for us."

You mentioned that the defense was pretty good today, why was that?

"I think it is a combination of everything, we were rebounding the ball better, eliminating second chance opportunities for them. I think it is a combination of things, we work really hard in practice, Coach Boeheim is one of the best coaches in the country and it is going to come. I am not saying we are a finished product but I think it is a good start for us

I don't know if you knew this but they had a really long home wins streak here and they had not lost since 2019, were you guys aware of that?

"I actually didn't know about that until after the game thankfully, but they are a great program, they have an amazing coach -- one of the best in the country. They are a tough team to play against they play really sound basketball, tough defense, they do all the right things, they are super physical, and it was a great win for us and we are excited to keep this momentum going until Tuesday."