

March 12, 2014



Rutgers: 72
University of South Florida: 68

An interview with:

RUTGERS

THE MODERATOR: We will get ready to get started here with the Coach and student athletes from Rutgers. Head coach, Eddie Jordan and student athletes, Myles Mack and Kadeem Jack. Coach, we will start with you and get your comments on the evening.

COACH JORDAN: Okay. First of all, I just thought as simple and basic as it sounds, I thought our personality and our demeanor on the floor was a key element in our victory tonight.

We missed a lot of layups. We threw the ball away, we had some missed plays, but just our determination and our will and our personality, we didn't point fingers and hang our heads. We didn't go haywire, we kept our discipline and kept poised and something I have been preaching all year from the beginning, you have to compete with composure, you have to have a great personality on the floor, you have to help your teammates, your demeanor means a lot and that was the key element to me.

Obviously we made fouls down the stretch and we made some plays, but they're a good team. They changed their defenses up on us, zone, man, pressure, some traps and just because we sort of saw what was going on we kept our heads up and kept our composure and that was key for us.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for Coach and the student athletes.

Q. Eddie, how much more difficult did it make things when Wally Judge fouled out?

COACH JORDAN: Well, Kadeem has assumed some center position for us and we said

we have to have team defense in the paint because they go to Chris Perry in the paint and we wanted to help Kadeem on that.

They're a post-up team and a driving team and we had to have people who can contain the drive for the most part. But we didn't want to have to worry about a guy getting to the rim and worry about a shot-blocker, although they got to the rim too much for my taste.

They got too many layups, but, again, when it was time to get some stops, we shrunk the floor, it was a team coverage and we got some key rebounds.

Look, we just dug it out, it wasn't a pretty game from my standpoint but it was pretty from the fact that we kept together as a team, we had a great personality, we didn't point fingers and hang our heads and we kept encouraging each other when things went wrong. A lot of things went wrong so it could have been easy for us to separate and point fingers and it didn't happen and that is so important to winning basketball.

Q. Kadeem, Myles, talk about keeping together. This is something you have developed over the last couple of weeks. What has developed that?

MYLES MACK: Our team leadership has gotten better throughout the season. Me, Kadeem and the guys talk about confidence and staying together. We stayed together throughout the first half. Second half the confidence level of staying together went down a little bit but we fought through it.

Q. You got a big boost down the stretch, didn't you?

MYLES MACK: Yeah, he's a high energy particular guy, plays the passing lanes and he had a lot of energy for us.

Q. Kadeem, what did you have to worry about without Wally around?

KADEEM JACK: Being physical and

staying physical because Wally was already out so I stayed physical down there and held my own.

knowing what to expect or was their game plan what you expected?

COACH JORDAN: I thought at Memphis

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Q. Myles, what's changed since you played Louisville and what gives you a chance to beat them?

MYLES MACK: We have come together and the team chemistry has gotten a lot better. We've become a better defensive team, a better offensive team, sharing the ball with each other so I think our confidence level and our defense can keep us in the game.

Q. From that blow out with Louisville, things turned around. What did you put together, what did they put together?

COACH JORDAN: Just a matter of trust. You know, we have to trust each other at the offensive end, trust what we do, trust the system, believe that if we can stay disciplined in our offense that we can get through the initial press and their secondary press in the half-court. We're better at seeing the floor. So that's going to be key for tomorrow, that we execute against their initial press and that we execute to get a great shot in the half-court when they press you.

From my standpoint, my point of view last time they just kept coming and pressing us, making us speed up and I tell our guys, slowing down hurts the press a little bit, less dribbling hurts the press a little bit, being able to be organized and get to your spots. You can move the ball from side-to-side the way you want to. You can get some backdoors, paint attempts, some rhythm jump shots.

Slow down, see, make a pass, limit dribbling and be confident.

Q. Eddie with this match against Louisville do you guys have a greater gauge,

and at Louisville was probably our two worst games of the season as far as not trusting, not executing, not being able to attack their pressure. I felt we did a good job against Cincinnati and other teams that tried to press us, but even tonight for the most part, those two teams, Memphis and Louisville put it to us.

Look, it's a national stage, a great challenge, a great opportunity for to us play with a lot of confidence, to show people where we are and I'm looking forward to it. I really am.

THE MODERATOR: Gentlemen, thank you very much.

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An interview with:

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

THE MODERATOR: We are now joined by USF, head coach, Stan Heath, and student athletes, Martino Brock and Victor Rudd. Coach?

COACH HEATH: It was a tough loss. If you followed us, the game was almost a microcosm of similar games over the last, maybe eight games that we have played. We have been right there, one possession, one strong 3-point shot, a rebound, just a crucial play. Seems like we have been coming up short when it comes to making some of those plays. We battled.

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Rutgers-USF Quotes

I'm really proud of my guys and the fact that you lose games and you lose games that are right down to the wire and it would be easy to pack it in and give up, and we never did. We kept fighting, kept battling. We even got down in this game by 12, and I thought our guys turned it up another notch and had a chance to take the lead. I thought -- I think we had a 3-point shot or a couple of free-throws that would have taken the lead and didn't get those, but I'm proud of them. It was tough. These two guys right here give 100% and worked hard and tried to make plays for our basketball team.

We played without one of our premiere players the whole season in Anthony Collins, and yet we had other guys who picked up the slack and didn't make excuses and just played and tried to give ourselves a chance to win.

Q. Victor, the come back. What were the things that you were finally able to do after they pulled away on you?

VICTOR RUDD: I think we forced them into a lot of turnovers. We got the ball and ran and got some easy layups.

Q. How frustrating has it been these last eight or nine games, one big play away, it seems like? What has been the toughest part and is there a trend in that you just can't get over that hump?

VICTOR RUDD: I think a lot has to do with Anthony not playing. When you have a point guard as good as him, he knows how to take over the game and control the game the last 5 minutes. Even though I thought Josh picked it up real good for us, but you miss a guy like A.C. and you can't replace a guy like that.

Q. Stan, so much has been made about the change in athletic director and what may or may happen. What's your mind going into the coming weeks?

COACH HEATH: I'm just going to do my job. I'm going to obviously evaluate our program right now and see what we need to do to improve it. Three-point shooting is a big area that we've got to improve. We have signed a really good player that can do that and we probably want to add a piece or two in that area. And the guys that we have, we have some good players, guys coming back, like Chris Perry and John Egbunu and for me it's about getting guys better, and my focus is on

the basketball program and preparing for next season as best we can.

Q. Martino, how was it to come to your hometown and have it go this way?

MARTINO BROCK: Not very good. I wanted to come and deliver and play well and we didn't do that. It was tough.

Q. Stan, with the five teams at the top, how do you see this unfolding?

COACH HEATH: I don't think it's as big as people think, you know, toward the end of the year at the end of the year Houston pulled one off against Memphis. Rutgers went down to the wire with them, three or four-point game, last game of the year. I don't think it's as wide of a gap as people think. It wouldn't shock me if something happened. Down the stretch if I had to hang my hat on it, I would say Louisville has the best opportunity, Rick has the best chance; they have been there and done that, and Mick has done a great job with his basketball team, and you obviously can't count out Larry Brown, either.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, gentlemen.

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