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Florida 77, No. 2 Michigan State 74

## Turnovers too much for Spartans to overcome

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ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Michigan State junior guard Durrell Summers fell to the ground in agony Friday night as his last-ditch three-point shot hit the rim, and the Florida players began rushing to center court in celebration of their 77-74 victory in the championship-round semifinal of the Legends Classic.

Summers' shot from the top of the key, his second attempt at a game-tying three-pointer, hit the rim. His first attempt came with 5 seconds left in the game, and he managed to grab his own rebound. Point guard Korie Lucious was open on the wing, but Summers had little time to get off a second shot, let alone look for another player to take the shot.

"The shots felt good, but they just didn't fall," Summers said. "I was just hurt that we lost. Without the turnovers and the other things, we would have won the game."

More on those turnovers — all 23 of them — in a minute. The No. 2 Spartans still had chances to win down the stretch after they fell behind, 72-71, with 1:56 left, but Summers missed the front end of a one-and-one at the foul line a few seconds later, and then he missed the first of two free throws with 1:04 left. MSU was down, 74-72, after that sequence.

"What hurt the most was those free throws I missed," he said.

MSU led by as many as seven points in the second half and managed to maintain a lead or a tie for most of the half. The Gators then took their first lead of the second half since 18:36 was on the clock when Erving Walker drained a three-pointer with 1:56 left. Walker added two free throws to extend Florida's lead to three, and MSU didn't get a bucket until a Kalin Lucas jumper with 23 seconds left. Florida had a 75-74 lead, but MSU was forced to foul.

Dan Werner hit both his free throws, forcing MSU to hit a three to send the game to overtime.

Florida unleashed a press on the Spartans that threw them off all game. MSU had 14 turnovers in the first half, and 23 overall.

"We didn't deserve to win that game," MSU coach Tom Izzo said. "No matter what the sport is, you can't turn the ball over. I'm shocked we were even in the game the way we turned it over, and I give two-thirds of the credit to their press."

MSU fans might not be keeping track of how long it has been since the Spartans won an early-season tournament, but the players know that their history in such events hasn't been that great over the last decade.

The last time MSU won such an event was in the 2000-01 season, when the Spartans captured the

championship of the Coca-Cola Spartan Classic in East Lansing. If one wants to go back even further, the last time MSU won a regular-season tournament at a neutral site was in 1998-99, when the Spartans captured the title in the Pearl Harbor Classic in Hawaii.

So Izzo will have to wait another game to try to become the winningest coach in MSU history. He has 340 wins, tying his mentor, Jud Heathcote.

It could happen today when the Spartans play Massachusetts in the consolation game.

"The milestone — this is not like Bobby Knight's where everyone was anticipating it because he was going to break a record," Izzo said. "I'm breaking ... 340 wins. Big deal."

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