

## Florida overpowers Rutgers in Legends Classic final

By JOHN O'KANE, For The Press | Posted: Sunday, November 29, 2009 |

*Inside: Izzo makes Michigan State history at Boardwalk Hall*

ATLANTIC CITY - Rutgers reserve forward Dane Miller emphatically slammed home a dunk off a James Beatty miss midway through the first half Saturday to bring Rutgers within five points.

On the ensuing Florida possession, Chandler Parsons drove the lane and tried to float a shot over the Rutgers defense.

Hamady Ndiaye had different plans.

Ndiaye rose up and swatted Parsons' shot into the front row of fans at Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City.

The Rutgers fans in attendance rose to their feet and chanted, "Defense, defense, defense."

Unfortunately for the Scarlet Knights, similar highlights were few and far between Saturday.

Florida (6-0), which led by only five at halftime, used its trademark full-court pressure defense to pull away from Rutgers in the second half for a 73-58 win in the finals of the Legends Classic, the first to be held in Atlantic City.

Florida has been one of the most successful college basketball programs in the country over the past 10 seasons.

The Gators have won 261 games (fifth best in the nation) during the span and won back-to-back national championships in 2006 and 2007.

Yet Rutgers (3-2) coach Fred Hill defies critics, going out of conference for games such as Friday's as well as a later date with nationally ranked North Carolina, not to mention Rutgers' already brutal Big East schedule.

"I think they are great challenges for us," Hill said. "We've got a very inexperienced team, and I think that showed tonight."

"We're not quite there yet. I thought we did a lot of really good things versus the press, we just weren't able to finish at the end of it."

Rutgers sophomore guard Mike Rosario kept the game close in the first half with 11 points, three rebounds and two steals.

But Florida's team speed and defensive pressure helped limit Rutgers' top scorer to three points in the second half.

"Even though we played a lot of zone, I thought we did a pretty good job of at least tracking Rosario in the second half," Florida coach Billy Donovan said. "He had 11 in the first and only three points in the second half, so we did a pretty good job on him."

When Rosario was asked why he hasn't been as strong in the second half as in the first, Hill was quick to interject, pointing out that the guard led the team in rebounding each of the past two games with seven Friday and six Saturday.

"I tried to go out there in the second half and do other things than just shoot the ball," Rosario said. "They shaded me more and more and more. They didn't let me catch and shoot on the wings because their coach knew I was a great shooter."

Rosario was named to the all-tournament team along with Massachusetts' Anthony Gurley, Michigan State's Kalin Lucas, and Erving Walker and Vernon Macklin of Florida. Walker was the MVP.

Rosario finished with 14 points, six rebounds, three assists and two steals. Ndiaye added 12 points, four rebounds and three blocks.

Kenny Boynton led the Gators with 19 points.

Notes: Jonathan Mitchell scored four of Rutgers' first six points of the game and finished with six points and two rebounds. Mitchell was part of Florida's 2007 championship team before transferring to Rutgers. ... Florida senior forward Dan Werner and Rutgers sophomore guard Mike Kuhn were high school teammates at Christian Brothers Academy in Lincroft. ... Saturday's announced attendance for the two-game session was 3,626.

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