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Rick Jackson wins Legends Classic MVP award

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Mike Waters / The Post-Standard



Dennis Nett / The Post-Standard

Syracuse's Rick Jackson and Baye Moussa Keita sandwich Georgia Tech's Jason Morris during Saturday's game in Atlantic City, N.J.

Atlantic City, N.J. — The Heisman Trophy voters never reward linebackers for sacks or offensive lineman for leveling blocks, but Syracuse's Rick Jackson won one for the unsung hero.

The senior forward received the Legends Classic MVP award Saturday despite not leading the Orange in scoring in either of its games this weekend.

Jackson, Syracuse's 6-foot-9, 240-pound senior forward, recorded 10 points and 14 rebounds in the Orange's win over Georgia Tech in the championship game. He played all 40 minutes, establishing a post presence on both ends of the court.

"I'm just trying to rebound the ball," Jackson said. "I figure that's what I have

to do. Get the rebounds and play solid defense. We're going to get offense."

In Friday's semifinal win over Michigan, Jackson put up 10 points and 12 boards. In six games this season, Jackson has five double-doubles. He's averaging 12 points and 13 rebounds for the year.

"Ricky had a big tournament, rebounding it for us," Boeheim said.

Joining Jackson on the all-tournament team were Joseph, Oliver, Darius Morris of Michigan and Randy Culpepper of UTEP.

End-game trouble

Syracuse held a 79-69 lead with 47 seconds left in Saturday's game but had to hold on at the very end as Georgia Tech closed to within four points.

The Yellow Jackets even got a late steal that led to a missed 3-pointer.

In the final 47 seconds, Syracuse turned the ball over three times and then missed one of two free throws.

"We got the lead and made two bad turnovers at the end of the game," Boeheim said. "You can't do that. If it's a four-point game, you lose the game. Those things shouldn't happen. We're better than that."

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