

Balanced Scoring Leads Florida over Saint Peter's

Five players reach double figures as the Gators open with a win in the 2K Sports College Hoops Classic benefiting Coaches vs. Cancer

[box score](#)

GAINESVILLE, FLA. (AP) -- Florida coach Billy Donovan got what he wanted in the season opener: balanced scoring and a strong defensive performance.

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Corey Brewer scored 18 points and was one of five players in double figures, Taurean Green held Keydren Clark to 11 points and the Gators opened the season with an 80-51 victory over Saint Peter's in the first round of the 2K Sports College Hoops Classic benefiting Coaches vs. Cancer on Wednesday night.

Florida showed it could win without Matt Walsh, Anthony Roberson and David Lee -- the team's top three scorers from last season.

"That's exactly what we want," said guard Lee Humphrey, who scored 14 points. "We talked a lot about that in preseason, how we want to win with the whole team scoring and playing good defense."

The Gators advanced to the regional final against Albany, which beat Oakland, 90-73, on Thursday night. The winner of the Florida-Albany game will play in the semifinals at Madison Square Garden in New York.

Florida entered the season unranked for the first time since 1997, and Donovan wanted more balanced scoring than he got with the "Big Three" last year. Walsh, Roberson and Lee averaged 46 points a game last season, or 60 percent of the offense.

Chris Richard had 11 points and Joakim Noah and Al Horford each had 10. Horford added 10 rebounds.

Maybe more important, the Gators established a defensive identity.

They held Saint Peter's to 31.7 percent shooting from the field and pretty much shut down Clark, who led Division I in scoring the last two seasons. He is trying to join Oscar Robertson and Pete Maravich as the only players to lead the nation in scoring three straight years.

"With the success I have had the last two years, I expect to see double-teams every time I step on the court," Clark said. "I thought Florida did an exceptional defensive job. They didn't back off on me on defense until I gave up the ball or took a forced shot."

Clark was 4-of-17 shooting, including 0-for-5 from 3-point range. Clark said his leg injury was not a factor in his shooting woes. He missed a week of practice with tendinitis in his leg, but returned for the last three days.

The Gators played man-to-man the entire game, and Green forced Clark, who averaged 26.7 points as a sophomore and 25.8 last season, to take long-range shots or tough ones in the lane.

"We knew how many points Clark averaged last year and how he has the ability to go off," Humphrey said. "We really focused on him in practice. We wanted him to drive, and we got some guys to take some charges on him and just did some things to take him out of his game a little bit."

Florida's frontcourt combination of Noah, Horford and Richard also blocked five shots and combined for 22 rebounds.

Humphrey was 4-of-7 from beyond the arc and the Gators finished 9-of-21 from 3-point range.

Raul Orta led the Peacocks with 17 points, including 5-of-5 on 3s. He hit three 3s in the final two minutes, well after the game was in hand.

The Gators led 37-27 at halftime and opened the second half with a 19-5 run.

"It's a lot easier to play the game when you're up by 20 points," Saint Peter's coach Bob Leckie said.