

Louisville nips FSU

Rally after brawl ends in 63-62 win on shot at buzzer

By Gerald Ensley
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How many times have you heard it: Fighting causes more problems than it solves.

In a clip-and-save example for peace-lovers everywhere, the Florida State men's basketball team learned that lesson Saturday night. FSU's 13-point lead evaporated into a 63-62 loss to Louisville following a bench-clearing brawl midway through the second half that saw four players ejected from the game.

The Seminoles led almost the rest of the way, until Herbert Crook — somehow left alone under the Louisville basket — banked a layup into the basket just as the buzzer sounded.

It was FSU's third loss at the buzzer this season and left the Seminoles 7-5. Louisville, uncharacteristically struggling this season, is 9-4.

A crowd of 9,645 — the second largest in FSU basketball history — watched in the Tallahassee-Leon County Civic Center.

The fight, which started between FSU's Al Gipson and Louisville's Manuel Forrest, occurred with 11:03 remaining — halting play for almost 12 minutes — and the Seminoles ahead 47-34. Ejected were Gipson and Forrest, plus FSU's Dean Shaffer and Louisville's Mark McSwain.

Clearly rattled, the Seminoles began losing their lead in gradual increments, as dead-eye Jeff Hall brought the Cardinals back with long jumpers. The Seminoles led by 11 points, 58-47, with as little as 4:51 to play. But with an old Seminole bugaboo — missed free throws — raising its head, the Cardinals cut the Seminoles' lead to one point, on Billy Thompson's jumper from the side with 34 seconds.

With 28 seconds to play, Maurice Myrick missed the front end of a one-and-one free throw situation. Louisville moved the ball across half-court and called time out with 15 seconds to play.

FSU then got what appeared to be a game-clinching break when Crook misfired on a pass to Hall, with Hall's desperation attempt to save the ball before it crossed over the half-court line (an over-and-back violation) turning into a wild fling that Randy Allen snared for FSU. Fouled by Louisville's Chris West, Allen went to the line for a one-and-one opportunity with five seconds. But Allen missed the free throw — FSU's fourth miss on a one-and-one opportunity in the final 1:16.

Louisville's Barry Sumpter grabbed the rebound and passed to Hall, who dribbled to half-court, spotted Crook wide open under the basket and passed to him. Crook caught the ball, leaped toward the backboard, and despite a valiant run and leap attempt at a block by Allen, the ball banked off the board and through the net as the buzzer sounded.

"Me and Maurice were back there. One of us was supposed to give up a foul. We both went for Hall. We didn't talk. The guy was open," FSU's Joe Farrar said, assessing the FSU breakdown on the final play.

"We just weren't too smart at the end," said a disconsolate FSU head coach Joe Williams.

Hall, who scored 13 points after the fight, led all scorers with 16 points. Allen and Myrick tied for FSU honors with 13 apiece. Gipson, who played well before being ejected, and Farrar added 12 apiece.

FSU travels to Blacksburg today for a Monday game against Virginia Tech.

Louisville (63)

	FG	FT	Rb	Asst	S	Min	TP
Forrest	5-12	0-0	6	2	0	25	10
Thompson	6-10	0-0	5	0	1	37	12
Sumpter	4-9	1-1	6	1	1	34	9
West	2-3	0-0	5	3	0	28	4
Hall	7-14	2-4	4	3	0	34	16
Valentine	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	1	0
McSwain	2-4	0-0	1	0	0	11	4
Jeter	0-0	0-0	0	0	1	6	0
Abram	0-1	0-0	0	0	0	7	0
Crook	2-6	4-6	4	1	1	17	8
Team			3				
Totals	28-59	7-11	34	10	4	200	63

Florida State (62)

	FG	FT	Rb	Asst	S	Min	TP
Allen	5-10	3-5	3	0	1	37	13
Myrick	6-8	1-3	7	0	1	36	13
Gipson	3-7	6-7	11	0	0	25	12
Fitchett	0-3	1-3	3	1	0	27	1
Farrar	4-11	4-5	4	3	1	36	12
Shaffer	4-9	1-2	3	2	3	22	9
Mabry	0-0	0-0	0	0	0	1	0
Speights	1-2	0-1	1	1	1	16	2
Team			1				
Totals	23-50	16-26	33	7	7	200	62

Halftime: Florida State 33, Louisville 24