

Big men hope to build on big game vs. Gators
Sophomores Ojo, Bojanovsky show off potential in last-second loss to UF

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It wound up being another excruciating defeat on Friday night for the Florida State men's basketball team. But that doesn't mean there weren't positives that came out of the Seminoles' one-point loss to No. 13 Florida in Gainesville. Perhaps most importantly, sophomore centers Boris Bojanovsky and Michael Ojo showed off their potential against a Florida frontcourt that, at times, appeared to have no answer for either.

"Huge games," UF coach Billy Donovan said. "Those kids played really, really well. I'll give them credit. That's as well as they've played this year. I think both kids have really good futures ahead of them. They're only sophomores. They're young.

"We had a really hard time with Ojo. Obviously, Patric (Young) is as strong as anyone in the country."

And yet the Gator senior was simply backed down under the basket by the massive Ojo when he got the ball in the post.

The 7-foot-1, 292-pound Florida State sophomore scored 10 points and pulled down six rebounds in just 14 minutes on Friday night. His fellow center, the 7-foot-3 Bojanovsky, scored 14 points in 24 minutes before fouling out in the final minute.

Not only did the two seven-footers both score career highs in the loss, but they were a combined 9 of 9 from the floor. The rest of the team was 13 of 43.

Ojo also had two straight baskets in overtime against then No. 14 Michigan in the Seminoles' only other loss of the year. And with senior center Kiel Turpin's still recovering from a knee injury, the Seminoles are having to lean on their two inexperienced sophomores to start the season.

"They realize we need them," FSU head coach Leonard Hamilton said. "That was the emphasis all week long. And challenging them to play up to their potential. And I thought we got it out of them (against Florida)."

Bojanovsky, in particular, carried the offense for a stretch in the first half when the Florida State guards were struggling to get open looks. The Slovak Republic native scored eight straight points in the closing minutes of the half.

One on a putback dunk, one on an 18-foot jumper and two points on free throws after getting fouled on an aggressive drive to the rim.

"Things went well so I was quite confident," Bojanovsky said. "I was just trying to do my best."

Bojanovsky only managed two rebounds against the Gators, but did have two blocks and altered a few more.

Said Hamilton: "We all know they have potential to develop into pretty good players. They've made tremendous strides over the year."

The Seminoles (5-2) play again on Tuesday night at Minnesota as part of the ACC-Big 10 Challenge.