**Hornets drop home opener to Miami, lose 2nd straight game**

The Charlotte Hornets lost to the Miami Heat 114-106 on Saturday night this was their second loss of the season and the fifth straight to Miami dating back to last season.

This was the first back-to-back for the Hornets this season and the Heat defense tested their endurance and stamina. Miami came into the game as the fresher team only playing on Wednesday this week.

“It certainly took us some time to get our footing you know second night of a back-to-back we played the Hawks one night and we played a different team tonight so it was about figuring out different coverages and schemes on the other side and once we did we were able to settle down,” said Charles Lee, Head Coach of the Charlotte Hornets.

Miami (1-1) controlled much of the game but was sporadic at times, led by as many as 14 points. Jimmy Butler led the veteran team with 26 points, 8 rebounds, and 8 assists. Butler, known for his ability to come up in the clutch, went on a 5-0 run by himself to cap off the victory for Miami after Charlotte had fought back to make it a one-possession game.

Charlotte (1-2) looked sporadic and out of sorts for the majority of the game and kept pace with the Heat, but eventually, the four-time NBA champions were able to pull away. The Hornets were once again led by LaMelo Ball, who scored 27 points with eight rebounds and seven assists.

The turnover battle played a pivotal role in the game. The Heat forced 20 turnovers and scored 17 points off of them. Miami’s defensive intensity added eight blocks and six steals to the stat sheet.

This game also marked Terry Rozier’s return to the Spectrum Center. The point guard played five years in Charlotte from 2019-2023 before getting traded to the Heat.

It was an emotional night for Rozier.

“It’s dope,” Rozier said. “It’s somewhere that I consider home. The fans, my old teammates– it's just a blessing to go back.”

Rozier finished the game scoring 19 points and shooting 50% from three-point range.

The Hornets could not get out of their own way, and the turnovers they had were a result of a discombobulated offense. Lee said that the offense will continue to learn and grow

“We just played three close games that we can learn from and that we will continue to study because last year most of the losses came down to one to three possessions,” Lee said.

Up next for the Hornets they continue their four-game homestand on Wednesday night against the Toronto Raptors.