

Big Ten Basketball Media Days

Tuesday, October 11, 2022

Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Iowa Hawkeyes

Men's Head Coach

Fran McCaffery



KEVIN WARREN: Before we welcome the last coach to the podium for today, just a couple announcements and thank you. One, I want to congratulate Satvik Patel, who's been at the conference, and his wife, Erin, with their son who was born recently. Satvik, congratulations for what you do, what you do for basketball in our conference.

Also I want to thank our American Sign Language interpreter today, Ben Olson, for everything you've done today to bring this to everyone who loves Big Ten basketball.

Then I want to give another thank you to TIAA for being our sponsor not only for our Big Ten men's and women's basketball tournaments, but our Media Days as well.

The next young man to the podium is head basketball coach at the University of Iowa, Fran McCaffery. Fran and his wife, Margaret, have been very instrumental in raising money for Coaches Versus Cancer, have worked tirelessly to raise money, have raised over \$4.5 million to help people battle the horrible disease of cancer.

Fran and I go back over 40 years when we played basketball together at the University of Pennsylvania. Fran was a senior when I was a freshman. I appreciate his mentorship then and his friendship now. It's an honor to serve Fran and all of our coaches in the Big Ten Conference on a daily basis. It's coaches like him that make the Big Ten special.

With that I'd like to welcome to the podium head basketball coach at the University of Iowa, Fran McCaffery.

FRAN McCAFFERY: I just want to begin by thanking Commissioner Warren not only for that introduction but more importantly for the incredible job that he has done leading our conference. It's a pleasure to work with him every day and know that he has such a keen interest in putting Big Ten basketball on the map throughout the United States, throughout the world, in so many different ways.

But most importantly I think how he puts the student-athlete at the forefront of everything that he does. We go way back, like he said. We reconnected at the University of Notre Dame years later. Been friends for years.

As far as our team, I'm excited about this team. I think everybody that stands there at this time says the same thing. I said this last year. I didn't know what we had. Everybody last year was in a new role. I had never coached a team before where everybody on that team was in a new role. We ended up doing really well.

This is a different team. We're not as big as we've been, but I think we're every bit as deep and versatile. I'm really excited about the blend of youth and experience we have.

We have three starters returning. We put together, without question, the most difficult schedule that I've ever put in front of our team. So obviously I feel like they can handle it. I'm excited for the challenge.

I'll open it up to questions.

Q. You've obviously coached one of the greatest players we've seen in Luka Garza. Going forward, how hard will it be to hold onto top talent with the transfer portal?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah, I think if you treat your players the way they're supposed to be treated, you look out for them, you're cognizant of the NIL world, and help in that capacity. But if you coach 'em up right, you treat 'em right, you look out for 'em, I think for the most part guys will stay.

Q. How do you think the amount of turnover from some of the top players in the league from last year to this year is going to impact league wide?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think any time that happens, it's obviously going to be a change. You have expectations for veteran teams at this time of year. So this year, while we have some players departing, a lot of teams are still veteran teams. Even though they have new players, they're veteran players.



I do think it makes it interesting to see where we're going to end up. People predict who's first, who's last, who's everywhere in between. That's why we play the games.

Q. What kind of progress, what kind of leaps have you seen over the summer from Kris?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think what you would have expected to see. He was terrific last year. I think he's had a really interesting spring. He worked out with his brother, put his name in the NBA stuff. I think that was good for him. Did really well.

I'm really proud of him because I think it's safe to say that he probably could have taken a two-way deal, perhaps been in the league. But he's betting on himself to come back and be a first round pick. I have a lot of respect for people that do that. It was his choice.

It will be the first time in his career he hasn't played with his brother. Obviously every team, I saw him play a lot growing up, same age as my son Patrick, since fourth grade on I've watched the two of them grow up. They've always been on the same team. Now they're not.

We're thrilled for Keegan, but we're thrilled for Kris. Kris is going to have a spectacular season. He's playing with great confidence. His body looks different, much stronger. Shooting the ball with great confidence, posting up more, driving the ball. He was always a good defender with his length, always a good rebounder, and we need him to do that.

Q. Can you speak to the dynamic of support that you've seen with the men's and women's team? Something interesting and unique.

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think it starts with there's a tremendous amount of respect amongst our coaches, Lisa and I and all of our assistant coaches. I think most importantly with our players. They really support each other. They respect each other. But I think they're really good friends. If you go to our games, they're going to be there. We go to their games, our guys are going to be there. It's real, it's genuine. That's the way it should be.

Q. With Kris, is there a special kind of pressure on him because of being a twin brother of the guy who was a superstar last year? There might be an expectation he'll deliver a carbon copy of the season from last year?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think that's a fair assessment, but I don't think it's true. Like if you're around these two guys,

they're different. Their games are different. Their personalities are different. Kris is really a confident guy. Kris is probably more verbal than Keegan was.

I kind of wish he could just be himself and not continually be asked that same question. He's a completely different human being. They just look alike. If Aaron White was replacing Keegan Murray, we wouldn't be asking these questions.

I said, it's a fair question. They look alike. Keegan was so spectacular, I think obviously it's something we all hope that Kris puts up those kind of numbers, and he may, but he may not.

I can tell you this, he's going to be really good. I do feel like he's going to end up being a first round pick.

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