

Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Friday, March 13, 2026

Chicago, Illinois, USA

United Center

Nebraska Cornhuskers

Fred Hoiberg

Pryce Sandfort

Rienk Mast

Postgame Press Conference



Purdue - 74, Nebraska - 58

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by Nebraska head coach Fred Hoiberg, along with student-athletes Pryce Sandfort and Rienk Mast.

FRED HOIBERG: That game, obviously it came down to points off turnovers and second chance points. That's the game. And just watching after the game in the coaches room, it just had some mindless turnovers in that first half.

Then you dig yourself a hole. I thought we did a nice job fighting out of it to pull back within two, 21-19. I thought we missed some good looks early. Unfortunately they didn't go down, and then I thought we started pressing a little bit just trying to make plays into small spaces. You can't do that this time of year.

Good learning opportunity for our guys, and we'll build off of this one. Obviously our inability to finish off the possessions in the second half really did us in. Our first shot defense was really good, I thought, in the second half. But just inability to finish it off and get the rebound, and we need to fix that.

Q. Rienk, just how similar was Purdue's frontcourt, just the way they went after things tonight, compared to a month ago?

RIENK MAST: Yeah, pretty much the same as what they did last time we played. We saw it on film. We knew they were going to do it. Yeah, they did the same thing they did last time.

Q. For either one of you, I know this is kind of like the way you guys like to play with a lot of the 3-pointers,

but what is the sweet spot for you guys in terms of shooting the 3 or pressing for more, especially like in a tournament setting where you have to win a couple games in a row and your 3-point shot may go in and out depending on the situation? Can you talk about the objective there?

FRED HOIBERG: We're looking to take what the defense gives us. In Purdue, their defense protects the paint. They give up a lot of 3s. When you look at their 3-point rate, that they give up, that's what they give up. Unfortunately, we weren't knocking them down early. I think we were both the same, 10 for 31, in the 3-point line. They obviously hurt us inside and the second chance points was 19-8. That's a big difference in the game.

But with our offense, we're always looking to take what the defense gives us. Shots at the rim or we avoid the mid-range or try to get uncontested 3s. Which again I think we got good looks, but unfortunately it just didn't go down today.

Q. In the Big Ten, you guys know each other's tendencies so well at this point in the season. How excited are you for Sunday to find a new matchup and and get into that week?

PRYCE SANDFORT: It will be exciting to see that, but first we've got to go back and learn from this film and figure out what went wrong exactly. We'll do that for sure, and we'll go from there.

Q. Fred, this was another game where self-inflicted mistakes were an issue against some of the turnovers and ball handling against pressure, I guess. What do you chalk up for the reasons that's been such a struggle over the last couple weeks?

FRED HOIBERG: Like I said, they were just mindless. Second half, we had two. We did a much better job of taking care of the basketball, but you give them eight opportunities and points-off-turnover differential in the first half and the inability to finish the possession in the second half.



We did a solid job on the glass. At halftime actually, we were out rebounding them, a team that's a lot bigger and more physical than we are. Then second half that was the difference. First half it was the turnovers, second half it was the rebounding.

We've got to find a way to put two halves together if we want any chance of advancing here starting next week.

Q. Early in the season we talked, and I said something special was happening with this group. You nodded your head in agreement. I don't want to erase any of that, and I want to celebrate it. What's the reset? How do you relocate and redirect this team for next week?

FRED HOIBERG: We found a way to regroup after the disappointing game at UCLA. I thought we played great, especially in that second half at USC. Did not play as well against a hot UCLA team, and then found a way to regroup and focus for Senior Night against Iowa at home. Now we've got to get that same focus back.

Listen, give Purdue a lot of credit. They're playing great basketball. I thought they were terrific last night, and they followed it up with another great game in this one.

Pryce is exactly right. We're going to go back and watch the film and find a way to get this thing back right and hopefully go on a run here starting next week.

Q. Fred, how much of an issue did Purdue's ball movement cause specifically with the way it went after your defense and forced you into rotation?

FRED HOIBERG: It's what they do. They've got the best point guard in the game. He's coming off a 16-assist, 1-turnover game last night, and they get that thing popping, they're so good at getting into the pocket. When they got it in the pocket, their movement was really good.

Again, our first shot defense was great. It had nothing to do with that in the second half. It was finishing the possession, and we just did not do that. When you get outscored, whatever it was, 36-13 in second chance points and points off turnovers, it's hard to win. You've got to find a way to narrow that gap and give yourself a chance.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports