

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Iowa City, Iowa, USA

Coach Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball Press Conference



Iowa - 80, Maryland - 75

COACH MCCAFFERY: Our medical staff did an unbelievable job. Stan Goldstein, a longtime Maryland fan, very loyal. He had an episode on the floor right before halftime. And the way people just jumped into action and saved his life is -- puts perspective on wins and losses. And we're just very thankful that we have such incredibly talented people in situations like this.

Q. Where was this game won?

COACH MCCAFFERY: I think we maintained our composure. Maryland is a talented team. Danny's doing a great job with them. They go on runs. That's what they do. If you follow them, obviously we've watched pretty much every game they played, 13-0 runs, 11-2 runs.

They've got multiple 3-point shooters, got multiple drivers. They've got veteran guys. And they play sort of with a fearless mindset. So you guard against that if you're playing against them. And we jumped them. They came back.

We had a little scoring drought. They scored, eight out of 10 or eight out of 11 possessions in that one stretch. That's kind of what they do. We're trying to guard against it. You change defenses, you run sets, less motion, different motion sets, keep fresh bodies out there. We had a lineup there at the end that I thought was doing a really good job defensively.

But when it's all said and done we only turned it seven times, and I thought we did a pretty good job coming down the stretch. We did a good job against their pressure, that kind of speed and quickness -- Connor inbounding the ball, Tony, Ahron, Keegan doing a really good job getting open.

Q. Point guards were quite good. What led you to go with Ulis down the stretch?

COACH MCCAFFERY: Nothing more than when I put that group in, they really clicked. I thought defensively, if you

watched the game, when you're in a straight 2-3 zone and they're running the kind of action they were running, ball screen overload, driving kicks, and they have four guys who can make 3s, four guys can go off the dribble, you have to have a connected group.

That's where Connor comes in. He's directing traffic back there. He's telling Ahron and Tony and J-Bo what to do in the front. He'll take the high post, you'll take the wing, he'll drop. He's talking to Keegan. That's what he does. And we got the necessary stops we needed to win the game with that group.

Q. Perkins makes that foul with 4.1 left. Was that something you told him to do?

COACH MCCAFFERY: Yeah.

Q. I don't think Filip has ever showed signs of being rattled. Veteran decisions, big baskets down the stretch, rebounding. What did you see that made him so effective?

COACH MCCAFFERY: That's who he is, what you just saw. He's good. He's a talented guy. I think he's tried really hard to fit in. He's such a good person. He wants to win. He wants to be a great teammate. He wants to be coachable.

And at some point you have to go after it the way he did tonight. I think you're right. It was noticeable. His aggressiveness, physicality, was really impressive. I'm happy for him.

Q. At the beginning of the game and second half, seemed like Keegan got into that zone where he was going to take over. What's it like to have a player like that on your team?

COACH MCCAFFERY: The thing about him is he never forces anything. He just kind of plays at his pace. We're going to go to him at times. And at times it's going to come to him naturally. But he wasn't hunting shots. He played defense. He got three blocks, eight rebounds. Got to the offensive glass, obviously a big one late. That's just who he is. He doesn't rattle.

Q. Joe said that you challenged him at half to really

... when all is said, we're done.®



get after the glass. How did you see them respond to that challenge in that second half?

COACH MCCAFFERY: We started the second half in man. So there's one way to look at rebounding when you're in man. It's another way to look at it if you're in zone. A lot of coaches won't play zone for that very reason. There's no necessary, defined, lockout responsibility. You're blocking out areas and you're trying to find somebody.

So they're a team. If you give them second and third shot opportunities, they're going to beat you. If you don't and you can run, then now you have them in transition mode defensively and we're a good team offensively in transition. So that was the thought process there.

Q. What did you see from Joe Toussaint tonight? Seemed like the offense was cranking when he controlled the pace; nine assists and only three turnovers?

COACH MCCAFFERY: I thought his activity and his sense of what we needed was really good. I know he has three turnovers. But I can only remember one that I thought was a bad one. Like, okay, you can't make that mistake right there. You're a junior.

But you look at nine points, nine assists, he's guarding one of the fastest guys in college basketball. And that guy who's really fast is getting a ball screen, like, about every five seconds. That's not easy to do. I'm proud of the way he competed.

Q. That was a game of runs. That's the kind of team Maryland is. To be able to win a game like this, how big of a win was this to start the year and get the first Big Ten win?

COACH MCCAFFERY: You kind of had the feeling it was going to be a close game. You want to be able to win a close game, execute coming down the stretch, get the stops you need, execute your press offense, make your free throws. We made enough. I think it was important.

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