

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

Saturday, January 22, 2022

Iowa City, Iowa, USA

Coach Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball Press Conference



Iowa 68, Penn State 51

Q. You guys had six rebounds in the first 18 minutes, come back, end up out-rebounding them. What changed or what did you see?

FRAN McCAFFERY: You know, I thought we had more focus, more activity to the glass. We just wanted to get some offensive rebounds. I thought that was really good. Connor, Tony Perkins, Kris. We missed 15 shots in the first half and didn't get any back. Our defense was pretty good if you look at the numbers, but we just got destroyed on the glass.

That had to change if we were going to win. That's the bottom line.

Q. The last two games you've caused 31 and 33 percent shooting after three games of 50 and above. How conscious did you have to be to get those numbers down and how have you made it happen?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, I don't think anything happened. They had really impressive effort and communication. This is a really hard team to defend. They run really good stuff. They have multiple guys that can go one-on-one. They have multiple guys that can make a three. So it's constantly hand-off, ball screen, down screen to a hand-off, and it's screen and roll hard. So you're helping and you've got to recover, contest and then rebound because they're coming. They're all coming to the glass.

Anything short of that kind of effort, and they're going to beat you. They're going to shoot a higher number and you're going to have problems. It was a really good win for our team.

Q. Their coach came in and really praised your team's toughness. When you hear that from an opposing coach, how does that make you feel?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I've got a ton of respect for Micah.

He's really good in so many different ways, so I really appreciate that. But I think it's a real compliment to the players. We had a tough road game, and it didn't go the way we had hoped, and get home at 3:00 a.m., play an afternoon game on Saturday against a team that is really going to challenge you with their physicality, with their ball movement, with their cuts, with their talent and execution, so the fact that we were able to put together an effort like this I think says a lot about the guys in that locker room.

Q. Late in the game there was a stretch where you scored 20 points; 18 of them were from Kris or Keegan. What's the dynamic like when you have them on the court?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, you kind of expect it from Keegan, and I don't ever want to take it for granted, but I was just really happy for Kris the way he played. I thought he was a little bit sideways the other night and didn't get anything going, and like I said to you guys, sometimes he gets down on himself, and tonight he screwed up one play badly, and it's like, just keep playing. He came back and he made a steal and another steal and a blocked shot and a bucket, made his free throws. Just really proud of him.

Q. Can you talk about Patrick and how he came out --

FRAN McCAFFERY: I thought early on the crowd was really enthused and we jumped up 10-2 and he scored eight quick ones, really being aggressive. That takes some of the pressure off J-Bo and Keegan and Kris when he comes in, Filip. Filip shoots four for five. Everybody that came in really affected the game. Connor's defense and Tony Perkins, his energy level, the one offensive rebound put-back was a big play in the game. So many of those guys made big -- I thought Joe T was really good. You look and say, okay, well, he only had four points, but I thought his activity level, three steals, his energy level was really infectious.

Q. Not that we haven't seen Keegan step up obviously this year, but he was 0 for 6, he his that sidestep three which really sealed the deal --

FRAN McCAFFERY: It's crazy that he was able to do that because he was just off a little bit. I thought the threes that he took were good shots. I don't think he forced anything. He doesn't typically force anything. That's not how he

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plays. But he didn't hesitate on that. Just drilled it. I think that was the dagger.

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