

# Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Tournament

Saturday, March 12, 2022

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Gainbridge Fieldhouse

Iowa Hawkeyes

Coach Fran McCaffrey

Jordan Bohannon

Keegan Murray

Postgame Press Conference



**BIG**

MEN'S BASKETBALL  
**TOURNAMENT**  
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Iowa - 80, Indiana - 77

MODERATOR: We are joined by Iowa Head Coach Fran McCaffrey, along with Keegan Murray and Jordan Bohannon. We'll start with an opening statement from Coach McCaffrey and then we'll take questions for the students and then we'll come back to Coach's questions.

Coach?

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: Couldn't be more proud of our team. We beat a tremendous team today, incredibly well-coached team. They fought. Trayce is a handful. They kept coming, but so did we. I remember about four minutes to go we're down five and I just felt like in the huddle that these guys kept believing and that's what they had to do. We were right there, put ourselves in a position to be right there against a team that's really good, playing really well. The star is playing well, but we continuously get great play off the bench from a lot of different people and it's an incredibly unselfish group, an incredibly fun team to coach.

**Q. Jordan, this is for you. I've been with you, been with your brothers and everything. How many times have you had that moment in the backyard taking a shot like you took today and who were you when you took that shot?**

JORDAN BOHANNON: I can't even put into words the amount of times I was throwing up those kind of shots in the backyard with my brothers. I could never get in the paint because they would just foul me so much, I just had to shoot those shots. So in a way it kind of prepared me to be a deeper end shooter and shoot the ball well from that kind of distance.

You've got to give credit to Indiana, they did a phenomenal job taking away our original play, but kind of did a great job in finding me and, you know, I just tried to do what I've always done, be confident in late game situations.

Got to give credit to Keegan because I got a lot of open threes at the end of the game because of him. They put so much attention around him I was able to get open for a couple of shots and when I see a couple go in, it starts getting a little fun.

**Q. (No microphone.)**

JORDAN BOHANNON: Not me, nothing's changed. I'm the same person as I was as a freshman. I've had my ups and downs, but the guy two seats down from me, Coach McCaffrey, is one of the few coaches who believed in me coming out of high school and without him I don't know who I would be. I tried to do everything I can to represent this university as well as I could and without him, I honestly don't know where I'd be. So I just try to make the most of the opportunities he's given me.

**Q. Keegan, could you talk to us about your mindset after Jordan hit that big three, because I saw you kind of getting the team back together and getting things settled down a bit?**

KEEGAN MURRAY: Yeah, for me, he hit a big shot obviously and there's still time on the clock and you've seen crazy things happen in March. I didn't want our team to get too high that we hit a three, but there's still a time to get a shot up. I just wanted them to lock back in on defense, make sure they didn't get a clean look. We stuck to the game plan to guard the last final possession. That's what I was trying to do for our team.

**Q. Jordan, I think this was game 177 for you. What does this moment kind of mean? This is what you came back for, isn't it?**

JORDAN BOHANNON: Yeah, just flashing back to all the other opportunities I've had to play at this level. From game one to 177 I've tried to do the most I can to represent this jersey and represent those that came before me. You



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know, I've met so much alumni, people that played here. I looked up to so many of these guys that played here before me and I've continued to just try to live up to their name.

I've played with some phenomenal teammates. The guy to the left of me is going to be a lottery pick. Luka Garza, Tyler Cook, Joe Wieskamp, you just go down the line of all the phenomenal teammates I've had.

And that's what makes this year so much fun too, because we lost some of those guys last year and we have a guy like Keegan step back up into the role and I don't think he got enough acknowledgment for what he just did the last game. He broke Luka Garza's single-season record. After how phenomenal and dominant Luka Garza was, he decided to break his record the next year after. There wasn't a lot of hype around Keegan and that just shows the type of person he is. He continued to put his head down and work. That's what makes this group so special. We have a lot of guys that just want to work and want to win.

**Q. Jordan, still haven't heard yet, did you think it was going in when it left your hand? And also I like Keegan's answer also, and what was it like when it finally did go in, Keegan?**

JORDAN BOHANNON: It was great. I really didn't get a lot going, honestly, into the game. I was just trying to play my game and wait for the game to come to me. You know, something my dad always would tell me when I was little, you know, when things aren't going, don't try to force the issue, just continue playing your game and good things will always happen.

I was trying to find Keegan to get open for some shots, screening for him, doing what I can. That's why Connor's so great, too, he doesn't force the issue. He continues to be a stability on offensive end. So when I was able to get the ball late game, I felt confident that it was my time to kind of step up to the plate. And Keegan being Keegan, he's still crashing the glass, so I'm sure he's going to give an answer like that.

KEEGAN MURRAY: For me anytime Jordan shoots the ball, I think it's going to go in, so that shot was no different than a wide open shot you would take off a kickout. But no, I thought it was going to go in. I just had to crash the glass just to make sure.

**Q. Jordan, you said that Coach McCaffery was the only one who believed in you out of high school. This team didn't have a lot of believers before the season. How have you tried to instill that belief in your fellow teammates and how did you see that play itself out**

**today?**

JORDAN BOHANNON: It starts with Coach. From day one, he knew obviously what we lost last year, but he also knew what we had in that locker room before he started that first game of the year. And I think his belief from day one had us around the locker room, put our hands around each other and kind of bring this team in one direction. I mean, you're seeing we are all on the same page right now, we're all clicking. We got down five and Coach just continued to keep us calm and steady and keep playing our game, and that says a lot about him. He let us play, let us get back. We got the lead. It went from 7 to 4 so quickly after that timeout we had and after everything he said. So it's just so much fun this year. This is what I came back for and we still have a lot left. Though.

**Q. Keegan, you're fourth in this league in offensive rebounding on pretty much bigger guys. You got a huge one with about 1:10 left, Jordan hits a three to put you guys up four. A, how much pride do you take in that part of your game, and B, how significant do you think that sequence was for you?**

KEEGAN MURRAY: Yeah, for me, I think rebounding is just an effort thing. It doesn't really matter how tall you are, how short you are, how much you weigh and anything like that, but it's really just an effort thing just to get to the glass. We weren't getting many offensive rebounds early on in the game, but in crunch time we had to get them. We didn't know if the shots were going to go in or not, but that was obviously a big sequence in the game and just Jordan hitting his shot just was icing on the cake.

**Q. Keegan, obviously after you hit a couple and going into this game you knew you were going to get a lot of attention, you still managed to get some clean looks. How did you manage to do that whether it was just moving without the ball, the screening? Just what all worked for you to get some shots without hands in your face?**

KEEGAN MURRAY: Yeah, for me the game plan was take away my drive. I figured that out early on, so I tried to change the way I was playing. I was coming off screens with the 4 and the 5 man for them. So I tried to tell our teammates to start screening for me a little bit more and they did that. They did a really good job of that. I was able to get open looks and just credit to our guys that are screening for me. They were really big for us.

**Q. Jordan? Jordan?**

JORDAN BOHANNON: Yeah, sorry. I just looked at -- I saw Keegan had eight threes. No one said anything about



it. I was like oh, my gosh. that's insane.

**Q. You've got another game in less than 24 hours now and you're playing for something you guys never played for before. How do you get your minds and bodies right for this?**

JORDAN BOHANNON: Same thing we've been doing, keep the course, continue to put our head down and work. We have a short obviously prep like we have these last three games, but I know I'm not worried just because of the guys we have in that locker room. We like to have fun, but we're also -- when game hits, we're locked in no matter what happens and that's shown all year long. There's not many games that we haven't fought from the beginning of the games to the end. No matter if we were down a lot or if we were up a lot, we continued to keep going. We have some chance to do something special here and everyone's aware of that and we want to bring something back to Iowa State that hasn't been done in a while.

**Q. Jordan, can you describe for the people out there that have never hit a game-winning shot just the adrenaline rush when you factor in the crowd against you, the stage? What's that adrenaline like to hit something like that?**

JORDAN BOHANNON: Something that can't even be put into words. You dream about it as a little kid, throwing up shots in the backyard, throwing up shots at the local YMCA when you're a kid and hoping one day you get to this stage.

And I was running in circles, I didn't know where to go because I was so excited. To be in that moment, it's been so much fun. What makes it more special is the group of guys that we have to celebrate with. There's a lot of -- easy to root for guys on this team, guys that work really hard, know their role. And our bench has always been fantastic this year just to see everyone -- see everyone be happy for each. Even when you're getting subbed out, want the other guys to do well. I think that's what's been separating us from these other teams.

**Q. Fran, we talked a lot about Jordan's late shot, but there were a lot of shots that led to that shot. Kind of walk through what you saw in that huddle, because you saw Perkins taking it to the rack. Patrick had a couple huge buckets in that stretch as well.**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: We were running stuff for those guys. You've got to spread it. You know, at the end of the day Keegan and Jordan are going to be a big part of what we do, but we've got to get Kris involved, we've got to get Tony involved, Patrick, Payton Sandfort, Joe Toussaint.

I mean, we run stuff for those guys. They know they all have the green light to shoot the ball. And I thought Tony's and-one, huge play in the game. Patrick stretched there just late in the second half. When they were really chasing J-Bo and they were really chasing Keegan, and somebody's got to go make a play, somebody's got to go finish the play and his and one and his left-handed runner. I thought pretty much to a man who I put in really performed at a very high level. Some of them scored more than others but they were all rock solid.

**Q. Can you go through what the original look was going to be on that play? I don't know if you had a timeout, but did you almost use one?**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: Almost used it, thought about it and then he raised up. He was supposed to get a shot in the corner. they jammed it up. Credit them for that. He kept coming, Connor hit him. Now he's on the open floor. He's pretty good up there. As a coach, you're like take a timeout, don't take a timeout. He looked up and he just raised up and drilled it. As long as he's shooting it, it's probably better than anything I could have drawn up anyway.

**Q. Fran, there was a moment where you were in the Indiana huddle for a little bit. What was that about? What was going on?**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, seemed to be a conversation over there and I was pretty sure that those guys were not advocating for the Hawkeyes, so I just wanted to include myself to see what the discussion was about, but it was amicable.

**Q. Fran, Jordan kind of talked about it a little bit, they weren't beating his door down, they weren't beating the Murrays' door down. What does a moment like this mean to you and your program?**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, in so many ways, these are Iowa kids. It's been written a million times, Jordan's dad, Rose Bowl quarterback at Iowa. Kenyon was an McDonald's All-American who came to Iowa and met somebody and stayed in Iowa.

I watched those kids grow up, all three of them, and it's a proud moment as a coach to watch three Iowa kids excel the way they have. But the amazing thing is just how they conduct themselves, how they carry themselves, the way they lead, the way they treat their teammates, the way they compete and they take tremendous pride in wearing that jersey. That's something when I came here, I wanted to make sure that everybody understood, we have an amazing basketball tradition at our school and anybody

that puts that jersey on has a responsibility, like Jordan said, to represent those that came before, and those guys do it as well as anybody.

**Q. Fran, when you're out recruiting, how much of an emphasis is three-point shooting when you're looking at prospects?**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, it's huge and I think it has gotten even more pronounced. We obviously are looking for shooters, but you're looking for athletes, you're looking for size, you might look to replace a position, but as we move to position less basketball, you want your 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. We don't even use those terms anymore. We want everybody to shoot threes. Everybody we're looking at, that is a big component of the evaluation process.

**Q. Coach, can you reflect for me this aspect? You remember the lean years with Iowa when you first started this program? What does it mean to you now that 24 hours from now you're going to be competing for a Big Ten championship? What does that mean to you as far as how far you've come with the program with what you've tried to build here at Iowa?**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: Truthfully, I feel like it's my responsibility to do everything I can with my staff, with our administration to build a program that can consistently win. I think that's the most important thing, and we've done that.

Anybody that coaches in this league has unbelievable respect for every other team because every other team is trying to do the same thing. We don't have in this league haves and have-nots. We are not the top five teams are always the same top five teams, everybody else -- the top -- bottom four teams, everybody beats them twice. It doesn't work that way in this league.

So we feel like we have a program that can win any night we take the floor and we can come here and win any game that we play, but we're also respectful of our opponent and recognize that it could go the other way. So it's constant work. It's constant meetings, preparation, whether it be recruiting or scouting or coaching or preparing practice, preparing a film session and making sure that people know and understand who we are and what we try to do within this program. The word that's thrown around all the time is culture. Well, that's what culture is. Everybody throws that term out. Well, that's what it is. What kind of kids are you bringing in, how committed are you.

You heard these guys talk about the locker room and how connected these guys are and how they love and support each other. It's not always like that. It's like, why is he playing and I'm not? These guys are like whoever's out

there, they're pulling for that guy and hugging that guy when he does something good. And if he doesn't, put their arms around him and try to help him and not criticize him.

So that's what we've got. I'm really proud tomorrow we'll be able to represent Iowa in the championship game.

**Q. Coach, this is a grueling tournament, playing every day. Can you describe the challenge of preparing for a new team each day, and to Jordan's point, how locked in the team has been to get to this point?**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: You have to have a special group that knows and understands how to process a game plan. You think about it, last Sunday we played Illinois on the road, they got Kofi, they got Frazier, whatever challenges they present. Then you've got Northwestern. We played them before, but they were all sick, now they're back, they had just come off a win. Then we play Rutgers who finished strong, presents a different set of challenges. And then an Indiana team's playing as well as anybody in the country and then tomorrow we'll play a great team, whoever that is. So it's incumbent upon your student-athletes to be able to process a game plan, execute a game plan and then turn around and do it in less than 24 hours.

Our guys have been incredibly professional and diligent, they lock in, they read the report, they study it, they're aware. Whoever we play we've already played them, so we have familiarity with personnel and style, but we have to adjust to whoever it is.

**Q. Fran, I want to ask you about Patrick. It seemed like yesterday and in the first half today things weren't flowing for him and then in the second half from the get-go he's looks like a different guy. What was that all about?**

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, I think one of the things that helped, I didn't go back to him yesterday, I kind of stayed with Connor and Payton and Tony, I didn't give him a chance to go back in there. And I need to do that, he deserves that, he's earned that, so that's part of it. Missed a couple early. I don't think he was aggressive enough. I think he did have four points in the first half, got a big tipped dunk when we weren't offensive rebounding. They were offensive rebounding in the first half, we were not, so that was a big play, a momentum play.

But I challenged him to be who he is, affect the game the way that you can, driving the ball, moving without the ball, running the floor, use your length on defense. And he was special and I'm proud of him.

