

**February 8, 2014**



An Interview With:

## **COACH McCAFFERY**

**Q. Is this the best performance your team has put together all year?**

COACH McCAFFERY: You know, I think if you look at how well we played at both ends.

**Q. How about the job that Marble and Oglesby did?**

COACH McCAFFERY: They were locked in defensively. They had some help. I thought we did a much better job on ball screen action than when we were up there. I think you have to against them. They do so many different things with ball screens and space and dribble-ats.

You know, we were pretty much, you know, locked into collectively going after Stauskas but I think your point about that is a good one. You know, it's very difficult to get 26 in a game like this and at the same time guard the other team's best player. It's one of the reasons why we didn't put him on him up there. I didn't want to do that to him. I didn't want to get him into foul trouble.

I just said, you've got to go get him and you've got to do it at both ends and when he does that, I think it has great impact on everyone else's energy and everybody else's performance. I thought collectively, I think to a man, I think everybody I put in the game played well.

**Q. Type of performance you look for out of him?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think more importantly looks for it out of himself. He has very high expectations for himself. He's a tremendous leader. He doesn't -- there's never a hangover with him, if he doesn't play well or if he has an off-night, he just comes right back to work and he's incredibly professional that way.

Again, that has great impact on how we prepare and how we bounce back from a difficult

defeat. Because you come to practice the next day, nobody wants to watch the film and you know, nobody really wants to go through it. But it's, okay, we are moving on, what do we have to do to beat Michigan and he was really, really good in terms of his leadership.

**Q. Can you talk about the defense?**

COACH McCAFFERY: We felt like, to beat Michigan, you have to play the kind of defense that we played. They have so many different weapons.

You know, so it was not only, getting stops, but it was getting stops and then running, and getting offensive opportunities in transition and not giving them seconds. They killed us with second shots up there. We were essentially trading baskets and get down to the end and they scored at the end and we didn't and they won. Just get opportunities, get a chance to get the lead and extend it.

**Q. The first half, I think nine out of ten the first half; what does it say about the transition?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, he's been just getting better game by game, you can see it. Obviously in the two losses we had here at home against two very good teams, we got down 10-2, 10-3; it takes a lot of effort to get it to even, to get a lead. It was great to be able to get a lead today. I thought it really engaged the crowd.

I thought the Hawkeye fans were as good as I've seen them since I've been here. Particular in that stretch in the second half defensively when I had three or four guys at the table and guys were exhausted. But they were still fighting, sliding their feet, all over the glass and that was a big stretch in the game.

**Q. With Mike, is that as complete a performance as you've seen?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Especially in light

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of the fact that he played that kind of defense, as well. We talk about Dev, but Mike was absolutely spectacular. He had five or six steals, he could have had a lot more. Got his hands on the ball, he was really, really competitive.

**Q. After the game in Michigan --**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, what we did was we decided to put Marble on him, we thought that would be a better match and he was really good.

**Q. How big was the start, to fight back from that offense, put them in the hole early?**

COACH McCAFFERY: You know, it changes everything. You shoot threes, do you not shoot threes, do you drive it, do you grind it. When you're behind, it changes your entire approach.

We felt like they were going to keep coming. I thought LeVert, in particular, he impressed me with his -- how he mixed his game. I thought they didn't-- and I wouldn't have expected them to panic and start taking crazy shots and start driving into packs of people. They make you drive the middle, and they were able score. But our defense today I think is the best it's been, anything short of that, they are going to keep scoring.

**Q. On a game where a team comes back with an approach like this -- do you say keep shooting?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I always say keep shooting, just the way I am. I never want my guys to have any doubt in my mind they are going to shoot the ball, it's going to go in.

As far as the first part of your question, specifically, our first meeting, normally, would be we view Ohio State, we view the good things and the mistakes that happened in that game. We did not do that. We agreed we did not play with the intensity level necessary to beat that team for 40 minutes. We hung around, we did some good things. Let's not talk about, hey, this was good, this was bad; move on.

We know what Michigan is. They have already beaten us once, they are in first place in our league, we know who they have. Let's focus and lock into, what can we do differently, what can we do better and let's try to get performances out of more people than we had against Ohio State which we clearly did.

**Q. Zach was one of those guys.**



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COACH McCAFFERY: You know, I brought Zach in after the Ohio State game, I said, I think you're pressing to do so much from the three-point line. I said, you're a three-point shooter but you're a basketball player; you can post up, you can feed the post, you can handle the basketball, you can pass it. So let's maybe shoot a few less threes and shot-fake-drive it, throw it on, make a play for somebody else. You look at his stat line and that's who Zach McCabe is. I'm just thrilled for him, big smile.

**Q. Did you sense desperation in this, from your team, coming off of two losses that they were really zeroed in, focused in on the game plan and had a bounce in their step?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I thought they had great focus. In no way, shape or form is there anything close to desperation.

**Q. How much of what Mike did helps Marble and White?**

COACH McCAFFERY: They help each other, you're absolutely right, when they are playing like that, when you have guard play like that, it changes everything.

And in terms of everything that happens, whether we are running sets, whether we are in motion, whether we are in transition, and because you turn the ball over 14 times, which we did up there, you are not winning -- you are not winning at Ann Arbor; 14 times, I don't care what you shoot, because that's 28 points typically. Seven turnovers, we can live with that. We had that one little stretch in the first half, we turned it over a couple times and they scored, that's what they do. So I was proud of our team's ability to take care of the basketball.

**Q. How about the 50/50 balls, and offensive rebounding?**

COACH McCAFFERY: To see how many guys were diving on the floor today I thought was really important. And in particular, Josh was a big momentum player in the game because he dove on the floor, got the time-out, very intelligent play. I thought Josh was great, I really did.

**Q. What is it about this team that you respond so well after losses?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think we've been through a lot. We've got an experienced team.

We have really good guards. We have multiple players that can step up for you if somebody is not playing well.

I think we have a belief in ourselves that there's never any panic and I think we have a willingness to look within ourselves and say, okay, we lost, we are not a group of finger pointers. They don't blame each other, they don't blame me.

They look at the film and they study it and try to get better and they are honest with themselves. I think if you do that, you are more likely to be able to come back and play better in the next game.

**Q. You've given up large leads before, how much did it show that you were able to expand on the lead instead of see it whittle away?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it's a big step. I think you're typically more likely to do that at home. It's a little tougher on the road. But I think it's a big step for us.

**Q. The stretch in the second half, you had four of your starters on the bench and you not only kept the lead but extended it. Is that really the essence of your depth right there that you can do that, extend the lead?**

COACH McCAFFERY: You know, a lot of times when you go to your bench, you just can't wait to get those guys back in the game and that's never the case. I just put those guys in and see how they do; stay with them, if they make mistakes, I'll stay with them. Eventually I'll get them out, typically it's when they are tired. And sometimes they will play a little longer and sometimes they will play a little less and you know, I felt like when I had Marble back in, I wanted to be able to get to the wire without another rest.

So I was comfortable leaving them out a little longer. Josh was doing fine. Mike was fine. Pete was in there. And it's terrific to be able to have that kind of flexibility when you're sitting there trying to math the game and set to see the 15-minute mark to the 12-mark, home.

**Q. Against Michigan --**

COACH McCAFFERY: That was one of the few times all year, it really was. It was the only time all year when I put those guys in together but none of them really produced the way they are capable of.

**Q. Finally coming up for air, a week between games, what will you do this week?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, we'll do a lot. I'm going to go recruiting a little bit obviously, take advantage of that time. They need a little bit of rest I think, no question, so we won't do anything tomorrow. We'll live in the training room a little bit. And then we'll get back to work.

**Q. Attacking the rim today --**

COACH McCAFFERY: You know and I would like for that to be how we play every game, we want to be an attack-the-rim team but I think we had great effectiveness when we did that today.

**Q. Mike the last couple of week, confidence-wise, has struggled but he had two big baskets.**

COACH McCAFFERY: He was really sick in the last game. Nobody knows that. But he was not himself against Ohio State so you can't really judge him on that game. In retrospect, probably shouldn't have played at all. He wanted to play, we put him in there. He was more like himself today.

**Q. When Mike got in the paint, he didn't just absorb contact, he created it to get a shot off.**

COACH McCAFFERY: He's a powerful athlete. He's got great foot speed. He's got lateral quickness and explosive ability to get to the rim and you are seeing him get more and more comfortable. He has as good a mid-range pull up jumper as I've seen. I'd like to see him mix that in a little bit more. I think right now he's really a tough cover.

**Q. From the opening tip, seemed like you guys were showing emotion, more than all year; where does that come from?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't think we showed much the other night. I didn't see a lot of emotion against Ohio State, and you know, in these kinds of games, you have to have that in my opinion. Especially when the crowd is engaged like they were, so I think that was good to see and I think it was very helpful.

**Q. Depth, size overall, do you see them as worn down -- especially the second half --**

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't -- you never

really looked at them as not having depth. I think they have got pretty good players coming off the bench, maybe not quite as deep as we are, but I look at it like this. They have multiple position players. I mean they have guys that can literally play three or four, sometimes five positions if they have to.

So in terms of wearing them down, we just got after them defensively and made them really work to grind their offense and I think that's why they got worn down more so than anything else.