

**February 17, 2013**



An interview with:

## **COACH MCCAFFERY**

**Q. You think your zone and your press really turned that game around and got you playing better?**

COACH MCCAFFERY: They were really cooking early with their offense. We were having trouble with them. But we were also having trouble at the offensive end. They finished pretty good. Didn't seem like we got any clean looks early. Even the one three that Zach made was not a clean look.

So, it changed sort of the complexion of the game in terms of style. It slowed it down a little bit. And there is plenty of time, so it enabled us to get a bang at 21-5. Then it's 23-8, then it's 23-10, and all of a sudden, it's 23-15, 23-17. The crowd got really involved, and we were getting some steals and we were working to get some baskets.

We got some loose stuff. We weren't getting anything loose early, and you know, we stayed after it on the glass, which is what you have to do against this team.

**Q. You ever seen a game turn around like that that quickly?**

COACH MCCAFFERY: I've been involved in comebacks like that. Rarely are you down 15 and win by 20. But that got away from them at the end. Didn't feel like a 20-point win.

**Q. (Asking about Eric May)?**

COACH MCCAFFERY: This guy is just playing so well. He's doing everything. He's handling the ball. He's making passes. He's in the press. He's rebounding in traffic, hitting threes, dunking the ball, stealing the ball. I mean, what can you say about him? He's arguably playing better than anybody else we have right now. With

all due respect to Marble who has been spectacular, and so many guys, Gesell was good today, no turnovers. We had great performances from a lot of people.

**Q. How much do you think it's a sense of urgency?**

COACH MCCAFFERY: I don't think it's a sense of urgency at all. I think it's a guy who has tremendous character and work ethic and has figured it all out. He's been through a lot. He went through a coaching change. They play one style. They go to another style. He feels pressure to score when he's a sophomore playing for me. We need him to score. Then last year he has some injuries. He's feeling pressure again. He might lose the starting job.

Now he's relaxed. He knows our offense. He knows where to lineup. He knows what I want out of time outs. He knows what I want on the free-throw line, and he is the guy that's telling everybody what we're doing. Everybody seems to feel better when he's out there.

**Q. You're down 21-5, and you had all five of your starters on the bench. Were you trying to make a point to them?**

COACH MCCAFFERY: No, I was not. I yanked a couple guys. We had a couple of bad mistakes early. I took Aaron White out because he was exhausted. That happens to him sometimes. But if you don't get him by the first media, you can just look at him. Then I went back to him.

Basabe didn't play well at the start and really played well in the second half. I thought that was big. Same thing with Woodbury. Woodbury and Basabe slow starts and much better in the second half.

**Q. (Indiscernible) What kind of sparked the come back?**

COACH MCCAFFERY: What it did was it

got them playing east and west instead of north and south. They were using clock. We got a lead. They were really tentative in taking time. We got a couple of steals, which, if you steal it in the press, you're going to get a run out.

We got a couple of easy baskets, and then we got fouled because we were in the bonus early in the second half. When you're up and you get into the bonus early, that's huge. Then we got into the double bonus, and that's really hard to come back.

**Q. He seemed to play with a lot of tension. He was really going after --**

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah, until he ran out of gas. He ran out of gas at the end. But you're right. His energy level and his concentration, and I think that's been the difference with him. He's been really good in those areas where before he was a little bit inconsistent, you know? He got locked in defensively, and being in the right place offensively, and getting there when he's supposed to get there and not late.

He kind of moseys around sometimes and we're ready to go when he's not ready to go, and that screws everything up. He's getting more and more locked into that kind of stuff.

**Q. Along the sideline there was a really nice pass.**

COACH McCAFFERY: It was a great read. He made it look open and then he took it away. He should do that more with his length and his athleticism. That's a guy that's locked in now that wouldn't have made that play a year ago.

**Q. (No Microphone) what's it say about the team?**

COACH McCAFFERY: It says that I think we recognized there was a sense of urgency in the game. It says that we're reacting appropriately, and when you get behind, you can't be turning the ball over. You've got to come down, you've got to get a shot.

If you get a shot, it might go in. You might get the rebound. Two good things happen when you shoot the ball. If you turn it over against this team, it's typically a dunk. That was, you know, clearly a point of emphasis for us this week.

You can't turn the ball over, and you can't take crazy shots that go wrong and they go and then all of a sudden, Williams and everybody's dunking the ball on you.

**Q. The way you responded today, are you hopeful this sets the tone for the rest of the season?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Absolutely. We're playing well. We're playing better. We've got a lot of different individuals contributing to what we're doing. This is the time of year where teams tend to tire and feel pressure.

For us, we've got so many different players contributing, everybody's ready to go. Nobody knows who is going to get it done tonight, and it's a beautiful thing.

**Q. There is a sense of urgency, but you look and you're down 21-5. The team could have collapsed and felt the pressure of the moment. Just talk about that?**

COACH McCAFFERY: You've got to remember, they came into this game with a sense of urgency as well. And you have to give them credit for how they played at the start of the game. They jumped us. They went on the road and they jumped us. That's a really good basketball team, one of the best coaches of our generation.

Lot of times, like you said, our team could have wilted right there. We haven't shown that we're going to do that any time at all this year.

**Q. Is this an emotional second win for you guys or is it just a continuation of a season long progression?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think the latter. It's a big win today. It was the next hurdle for us. At some point you have to stop talking about what happened up there. That happened two weeks ago. That's ancient history.

What's going to happen today? How do we prepare tomorrow? How do we prepare to go up and play Nebraska? That's all we're thinking about is Nebraska.

**Q. A lot of teams hit walls this time of year, two-thirds into the conference season. Why have you not?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Because of our depth. It's a great thing for me personally, because I have typically played a short bench. I've said that over and over. My head coaching stops, I've played seven. Like I always say, sometimes I play seven and a half. They'll play one guy a little bit depending upon the situation.

But I'm playing ten every night, and I am

not uncomfortable going to 11. So I think when you talk about Mike hitting that wall, when you've got ten guys ready to go, you're not going to hit that wall because they're all playing half the game or there are a few guys that might play -- like for example, the other night, Basabe played 34. He hasn't played 34 minutes with that level of effectiveness in a very long time, but he did it on the road in a very difficult environment.

That was a game where he played more than somebody else, but there might be a game when he plays less. Like today he played 22 minutes, but that's the kind of team we have.

**Q. Is Devyn officially out of whatever he was in?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah, I think so.

**Q. What did you say to him on the court?**

COACH McCAFFERY: What did I say on the court? Well, he talked about the start and how we overcome the start. We talked about the press. We talked about the zone. I don't remember what the second question was.

**Q. What did you say to Devyn?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Oh, right before I got interviewed? Oh, my bad. I told him that's who you were, and I told him I was proud of him. It gets to a point sometimes where you just keep getting asked over and over what's wrong. And he was in a little bit of a slump. For the first time I thought he was playing -- he's never been a tentative guy. He's not a tentative person in anything he does, and he was a little tentative at Minnesota, at Wisconsin I thought.

I just said, look, you're my guy. I'm staying with you. I'm going to keep running stuff for you late. I'm going to have you on the floor late. I want you to shoot the ball. I want you to attack the basket. Only thing I'm going to say to you is sometimes when guys get into shooting slumps, they overanalyze the shot. Sometimes you're shooting when you're covered. And he had a tendency to do that in that stretch. So, therefore, your percentages are going to be lousy.

I said shoot the ball when you're open, drive the ball in your space. Move the ball when you're covered and just be who you are, and we'll be fine.

**Q. Looking at the scoring, 14-2 Minnesota, and here we go again. What are we doing?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, you know, I don't think I would look at it that way. I would look at it more like what do we have to do right now against this team? What were they doing to us? Why were they up by that much? And they were up and it's good. And they were doing some switching and they were making the next pass difficult, and we were kind of catching it not facing the basket.

So we went to some sets and tried to, you know, put people in positions where we'd get a better shot. We changed the defense. We changed the lineup, and little by little we just crept back into it.

So you're thinking about what happened two weeks ago, what happened against somebody else. But what do we have to do right now? That's what's going through my head.

**Q. Coach, Aaron White really got aggressive to score that run in the first half. How big was his play today?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think what was great about it in particular was how he was driving the ball to the basket. I mean, you know he's going to get rebounds. You know he's going to attack occasionally and dunk the ball. He's going to shoot the ball a little bit. He's going to get some poke-aways. But he was making a clear effort to drive the ball to the basket. Get to the free-throw line, get us into the bonus, stop the clock and allow us to press, and that impacts the game dramatically.

**Q. Talk about Nebraska?**

COACH McCAFFERY: They're playing very well. We're going there. Talley's playing well. Gallegos and Ubel is one of the best rebounders in the country. Timmy's done a great job. I really like their team. They're going to challenge us in a lot of ways, and we just have to be ready for them.

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