

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Fran McCaffery



Q. Overall what are your thoughts? You played 14 guys, got a lot of rotations.

FRAN McCAFFERY: You know, it's an interesting situation because it's probably the earliest we've ever played a game that I can remember. And you're right, I'm trying to get all these guys in, yet I'm trying to keep our cohesion together with our first group. We made a bunch of mistakes early, which I wasn't expecting with our starters, but they got it together, and I thought we spurred it, and it's the reason you play an exhibition game versus a scrimmage is you can put some guys in game-like situations and see what they can do, see if they know where to go, see if they know how to line up, see if they understand time and score. The hard thing is you're trying to get them all in. If you put them all in together, it makes it more difficult, clearly.

But if you only put them in one at a time, two at a time, then you can't get them all in. So you really -- I was really -- at a couple points, I said, I'm just going to put them in and let them play for a while, and if we give up part of the lead, that's what we're going to need to do because these guys have to get some seasoning and get ready and try to figure it out.

Q. Of your five freshmen, how many would you like to redshirt?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I don't know yet. I really don't.

Q. Is it hard because one day maybe two guys look good and then the next --

FRAN McCAFFERY: Absolutely. You know, and then you add that with the positionally what do you need. Obviously we need size, we need another handler, so that changes things, obviously, for some guys. But we'll wait a while before we come to that conclusion.

Q. How about Mike's play, especially at the end of the first half?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think the great thing about Mike is he had three turnovers early that were uncharacteristic for him, and the way he came back and was that aggressive with his jumper, with his drive, with his defense, I mean, I just can't be more proud of him, the way he played, the way he fought.

Q. How much has he talked about wanting to be

more aggressive?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, he doesn't say much, but I think what he's done, he's done it kind of with his play. He worked hard this summer and really, really worked. He's been playing like that in practice, so it's great to see it happen on the floor.

Q. Anthony Clemmons in a nutshell, he helps you a lot --

FRAN McCAFFERY: A couple goofy plays. Other than that, he almost had a perfect line. I mean, he really worked defensively and he shot it in the hole, made the first basket. You know, as you know, everything is better when he's on the floor.

Q. You look at Nicholas Baer, you've been high on him for a little over a year now ever since he's been on campus. He seems to do a lot of things well for you.

FRAN McCAFFERY: There's a lot to be said for guys that are always in the right place, and if you're constantly, hey, you're over here, hey, you're on that side, that takes its toll after a while. We need guys that are going to be in the right place, defensively, offensively, whether they're pressing, whether they're in a match-up zone which they went to, and at the same time, you know, he can dribble, pass and shoot. But when you have a smart guy who can dribble, pass and shoot who's got a body, yeah, I like them a little thicker, but he's 6'7", 200 pounds, and he's effective. He's a tough kid.

Q. Could Baer play 4 or 5?

FRAN McCAFFERY: He can play 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. He can play any position. And as you know, you've covered the game a long time, a lot of guys physically can play five positions, but they can't mentally play five positions. They'll never remember five positions. But he will. He's going to be a very effective player for us, I think, moving forward.

Q. You brought Wagner in early.

FRAN McCAFFERY: He's been playing really well. I mean, I thought Ahmad was a guy that understood what we were doing offensively, defensively, got a couple quick fouls, he got a little handsy, and then I had to take him out, and that affects a freshman. He goes in and he's just starting to get going and then he's out. So he's just got to learn to keep his hands out and try

to do what he's been doing; running the floor, screening for other people, slip, offensive rebound put-back. He did a little bit of that when we put him back in.

Q. Peter Jok looks like he's pretty comfortable out there.

FRAN McCAFFERY: He's really playing well. He's playing at a very high level offensively. Defensively he's got to be a little better. I told him that because I want him to be great. And in order to be great, you've got to play both ends, and he's so much better than he used to be, and he's pretty solid. But he has real good feel, and he can impact the game a little bit more, and if we are going to be small, then he's got to rebound.

Q. How about Fleming coming in and he gets that steal?

FRAN McCAFFERY: The thing about Fleming, you've got to love him. He gets nine shots up in 14 minutes. He's aggressive. He's always going to be aggressive. He's not afraid. Yeah, maybe a couple poor choices on shot selection, but he is going to come at you, and that's what you've got to love about him. He's never going to be afraid in big games. On the road, he'll shoot the ball, he'll make a play for you. Defensively he's got some work to do, you know, because he's always kind of been a floater. He makes a steal and he floats around but he'll stick his nose on the glass. Again, if we're playing small and he's one of our wings, he will rebound.

Q. How did Christian Williams do?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I thought he was terrific. I thought Christian was terrific. He clearly understood our concepts defensively. I played him at the 2, I played him at the 1. Big steal. I mean, he's just a good player.

Q. Is that why you went with him early in the second half or because he was playing well in practice?

FRAN McCAFFERY: A little of both. A little of both, yeah.

Q. How is Isaiah Moss?

FRAN McCAFFERY: He's behind. He's behind, and he's trying to catch up. I love him. He's a great kid, but he is a little bit behind. And it affects you in two ways. It affects your ability to know and understand everything you're supposed to be doing, but then ultimately it affects your confidence level because you know that you want to be where you're supposed to be and you're not always there, then you're a step slow or you stop short. I was glad to see him raise up and shoot those two threes. They were open. He took them. Got a tip-in. He was active. Made a defensive mistake

when I first put him in. Had a time-out, I showed it to him. Went back on the floor; he corrected it. So that tells me a lot about him.

Q. Hutton got in late?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Hutton was in late. He's a little bit behind, and the hard thing for him is he's also trying to learn multiple positions, and I think right now what we need to do with him is, okay, just let him go one at a time, and we'll go from there.