

December 28, 2011



An Interview With:

COACH McCAFFERY

Q. Did it feel like an offensive fast-paced first half but both teams buckled down defensively the second half?

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't know. I mean, I don't know about that. I just thought it was a hard-fought game both halves.

Q. Can you talk about the changes that went on today with the Big Ten and the Pac 12 and whatnot? Did you have any thoughts about that?

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't know what you're talking about.

Q. I think the last 10 field goals were layups made right at the basket; were you guys trying to take away the 3?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it was disappointing the way we defended in the second half. I think it was disappointing how we defended the entire game, very disappointing.

Q. Did you feel otherwise, though, offensively, you guys played well enough to win? Was it just your defense?

COACH McCAFFERY: I thought our crowd was spectacular. I can't thank the Hawk fans enough for the effort they brought to this game. Just phenomenal. And I thought offensively, we played well enough to win. But you can't give multiple players 5-for-7, 2-for-3, 6-for-9, 3-for-4, 2-for-4, 2-for-4; no matter who they put in, it was just drive and score.

And okay, I think the point you made is a good one. You worry about Hummel, you worry about Smith and I thought we did a pretty good job

on Hummel. He just fought and fought to get 16. I thought, Smith makes one three, you figure Smith makes one three, Hummel goes 5-for-14, you have a pretty good shot to win.

We got pounded on the glass in the first half. Made up for it the second half; didn't really have a problem there. It was all defense. And I think the concerning thing for us, it's a pattern of behavior that we have consistently tried to change with a variety of things, and it's just not sinking in.

We have just got to keep working at it and working at it until we can stop somebody. This is obviously a quality team. Everybody we play from here on is going to be high level. If you don't buckle down and get after people and stay after them -- but I mean, our offensive rebounding numbers were not good, either.

So we have got to get the ball back. There's some things that were very encouraging and there are some things that were very disappointing.

Q. The defense, is it position on the floor, are the guys capable of playing --

COACH McCAFFERY: That's part of it. It starts with guarding the guy in front you. Whoever that is, whoever you are. Now, we know what that individual's tendencies are. Sometimes they will go away -- typically they stay within their tendencies.

So, guard that guy. Get our help over and now we'll talk about what we are going to do with ball screens and then we are going to talk about isos and all those factors, but this is very simple. You guard the guy in front of you. Keep him in front of you. Contain him. And just driving the ball to the basket, laying it up. And foul, block his shot, get over.

Maybe I had tired guys out there. Maybe it's my fault. Maybe I needed to get more people involved. I went with my key guys because I needed those guys offensively, but you have to be

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able to buckle down, especially at home with that kind of energy.

Q. Do you need to foul a little bit more in that game?

COACH McCAFFERY: Absolutely. Put them on the free throw line a little bit, especially the guys who are not good free throw shooters, and they have got a couple of them. We know who they are. Make them go earn it. Make them go earn it at the free throw line, don't let them lay it up.

We are a team, you look at our stats, we try not to foul. We try to defend. Our goal is to make more free throws than the other team takes and tonight we made 21, they took 11. So I mean, that's kind of our style.

So part of it is kind of how we play. But at the same time, especially at crunch time, like the last play of the first half, unacceptable. We have two fouls to give and we have got a guy laying the ball in with four seconds to go in the half, and that's unacceptable. Very disappointing.

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