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An interview with:

COACH McCAFFERY

Q. When you look at the way you've been shooting the ball and moving it in the half court, going there from wing to wing, is it as easy as that or is it a conscious effort? Why have you been shooting the ball so well?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it's a combination of things. We're moving the ball. We're going in and out. We've got, I think, some guys that are shooting it well. They're shooting it with confidence. We're recognizing when guys are playing well and shooting it well. We're getting the ball to those guys. But we're getting productivity from the point, the wing, and the post, I think that's always a good thing.

Q. Were you surprised when you saw those numbers when Kirk wrote them down? How wide ranging they were? Did that surprise you?

COACH McCAFFERY: No, you know why? I think if you think back to the Wisconsin game on the road and how inefficient we were that day and what we were doing, we were quick shooting the ball, putting our heads down and driving into packs of people. We weren't effective at all in terms of execution. And therefore you get down nine, next thing you know, you're down 17 and you're down 30. The only thing you can do then, like I said, is try to make it a learning experience and say, okay, we've got to share the ball. We've got to move the ball. Sometimes it's a one-dribble kick. Sometimes you can get all the way to the rim. Sometimes you can go to the post even if he's not shooting the ball. It's basic offense. Not scientific there. It's getting five guys to understand that and execute it on the floor, and that's what they're doing.

Q. Is it a light bulb moment for those guys now?

COACH McCAFFERY: It's always easier, Tom, when you get your ears pinned back like we did that night. If there's ever a good example of this is how not to do it, and you can continue to try to do it that way or you can say, okay, what do we have to do to fix it? And to a man, they remained committed to doing that, and I think it's a credit to them.

Q. What kind of changes do you expect from Minnesota from the last time? They threw Andre Hollins on Uthoff. He made them pay with a lot of shots late?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think with them, you look at how Hollins is playing now. He's playing as well as anybody in our league, maybe as well as anybody in the country since we played them last. But they're going to come after us with pressure. They're going to mix man and zone, and it's going to be aggressive. They're going to push it hard. I think Walker's playing well. I've been impressed with him. They have a lot of guys that can score and can make plays both defensively and offensively. We're going to get great effort, and it's going to be to a different kind of game in the sense that we're going to have to deal with that kind of intense defensive pressure.

Q. Dealing with the pressure in the full court; you did handle it well against Maryland. Got sloppy with the ball. Was that part of the game was out of hand or you just didn't execute?

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't think it was that. I think it was what you said initially. We didn't handle it well. I don't care what time of the game it is or what the score is. You're getting pressed, you've got to execute your press offense, whichever one, either I or Mike calls at that

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particular time. Just execute it, get the spots.

A guy might make a great read and make a steal, you might cough it up. But for the most part, you just can't -- just put the ball on top of your head and throw it away. This is a team that they turn you over in some respects, but what they do is they steal it from you. They get it and go and go score it. It's one thing to throw it away. It's another thing to make a pass that they read and steal it, and next thing you know there is a two on one and they're dunking the ball and back into the press. It's different.

Q. As a coach, what is it that you like when you share the ball? You mentioned you have all five guys in double figures, against Maryland, sharing the ball so well. What do you like about that as a coach?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it's a complete understanding of how to play together. It's a complete commitment to winning. Nobody's thinking about themselves. It's obvious. I think if you're going to have a good team and a team that's capable of winning a championship, you better be unselfish, and I think we have that quality.

Q. As a byproduct of that you shoot a lot less three-pointers. Is it a conscious effort to be more selective?

COACH McCAFFERY: There always has to be a conscious effort there. But I do think you're right, that recently it's been better. Sometimes the ball swings to you and you're open at the three-point line, doesn't mean you should shoot a three. Depending upon what your strengths and weaknesses are as an individual player. I think we've had some guys turning some shots down even though they're open and making a play for somebody else. I think that's what you've got to be able to recognize. Obviously, we want to know what we want to do as a team. But you should know better than anybody what your particular skillset is and how to maximize that.

Q. You talked a lot this year about managing wins and losses similarly. What's it been like in the locker room the past couple days after the big Maryland win?

COACH McCAFFERY: I feel really good about the fact that they, I think, looked at a three-game losing streak and said let's make some adjustments. Let's play better. Let's play better as a team and commit ourselves defensively to being

better. It's not that we weren't doing it before, but I think we're doing it better. That's what you have to do. Okay, it translated to some wins. Well, we've still to the a lot of games to go, and we want to continue to do that.

Essentially, Minnesota did the same thing. We beat them that night in a tough game for them. They nullified the bucket. They were 0-5. They're 4-2 in the last six. Easily could be 5-1 or 6-0. So that's what they did. So you have to really respect the job that Richard has done and those guys getting together and figuring it out and playing better themselves.

Q. It's no secret you have the post game -- one of the best post games in the Big Ten certainly in the country, and you went more to the inside game in the last two games. Was that a function of match-up or just the style that you want to play and emphasize the last couple of weeks?

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't think it was match-up. I think it was, like you said, it was we need to play that way and we need to understand that we need to play that way. Whether it's feeding the post or hitting a screen and roll or driving the ball in there and throwing it back out because it closed down on you, we have to be able to get the ball inside near the rim, whether we shoot it from there or not, and that softens up the defense and creates opportunities where if a guy is shooting a jumper, he's going to be more open.

Q. With Adam, he's probably playing some of the best he's ever played and with more confidence?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it is. He's moving well. He's doing a great job, I think, of mixing his passing, his shooting. Where is he getting his shots from? What kind of shots is he making? He's catching and finishing. He's scoring with an angle, he's hitting open shots, otherwise he's moving it on. That's the key for him.

Q. Hasn't he done a lot of that well? It seems like he's scoring more.

COACH McCAFFERY: I just think he's doing it more consistently. He's always done it, you're right. But he's doing it more consistently. He's feeling better about himself, and it's great to see.



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Q. He's not above the rim necessarily the way Gabe plays, so some of the shots aren't necessarily up high like that. How has he worked through that since he's become better and more consistent as a scorer inside?

COACH McCAFFERY: He's never been a big dunker or above the rim guy. He's always had to kind of figure it out. It was easier in high school when you're just bigger than everybody. Now the game is more physical and there are longer arms and bigger people that make it harder for you so he had to really work at it and figure out, okay, how can I get to the rim? If I'm not getting to the rim, can I move it on? Can I move without it? Can I get my teammate open and force a switch?

But he's a really bright young man, and I think his basketball IQ is very high. So I think as he studied film and he's gotten acclimated to this level, he's obviously continued to improve.

Q. You look at how your 2-3 zone has played in the last two games how effective it's been, would you consider using that more down the road?

COACH McCAFFERY: Always consider using it more. But you never know. You might get into a game and use it less. It really depends on a variety of factors. How are they shooting it? How are they attacking it? What is the score in the game at that particular time? What do we want to do in terms of tempo. So it's a game by game thing.

Q. When you had Zach as your center sophomore year, and then Adam came in the next year, what did he immediately bring other than just five or more inches?

COACH McCAFFERY: It was hard for Zach at 6'7" playing the center position against some of the guys in our league. Obviously, for Woody from a post defensive standpoint it was a dramatic change. But it also was a change in terms of overall rebounding. We gave up, if you remember, a lot of people looked at percentages and our defense and our lack of defensive execution. Well, a lot of times it was because we were giving up second shots. It's not that we couldn't stop them, but they'd go back and get it so the numbers are way up. Doesn't really matter.

Obviously, you're not being effective if they're scoring the ball. It doesn't matter. So we're limiting teams to one shot more often after Adam arrived, which always translates to the other end of the floor. You can run your break.



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Q. You have one scholarship left of the 15. Are you leaning big, guard, best player?

COACH McCAFFERY: Best player. Sometimes you need a big, sometimes you need a point guard and you go that direction. But most of the time you go best player.

Q. Has Josh Oglesby recovered from his illness?

COACH McCAFFERY: He'll be fine. He looks good.

Q. He played 12 minutes against Michigan. Certainly he's going to a more limited role, at least that's the trend.

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it will be a game-by-game thing there. Peter's been playing really well, so that might limit his minutes. It depends on how Mike and Pete are playing, how Clemmons is playing, and what kind of lineup they have on the floor. Obviously, Josh played way more against Purdue, and we needed him more that day.

Q. Josh has had some of his best games against Minnesota. Is that some of the reasons why he's only sometimes getting off one shot, two shots a game?

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, I keep saying he's not a guy who will hunt shots. So if they're guarding him closely and they mark him, he's going to move it on. He's going to feed the post, he's going to shot fake and throw it to somebody else. That is just the kind of game that he has. Sometimes you'd like him to be a little more aggressive, and I'll tell him to do that at particular times.

But I think, I don't know if you ever want anybody to be something that they're not. He's just not one of those kind of guys that's going to go hunt shots. He's never going to be 0 for 8. If he starts missing, he's not going to keep firing and keep missing. He's too team oriented. You have to respect that about him. We all know some shooters, they can be 0 for 25, and they'll shoot the next five times down the floor. That's not who he is.

Q. What's his progression defensively?

COACH McCAFFERY: It's been phenomenal. You know, I think a lot of times that's overlooked as is his basketball IQ on the offensive end in terms of, okay, you're the two, you're the

three. Okay, lineup in the four because we're going to run a play for our four man but we're going to put him in the three spot. He just knows where to go. Whether it's a press offense, a side out of bounds play, out of bounds under, set offensive play, he just has that kind of instinct. That's critical, especially late in close games.

Q. Has the adjustment for Trey been harder than he thought coming from junior college to this level?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah, I think it's probably been a little harder for him. I think he's worked at it. I think he's competing hard. It's a lot. It's a lot for him. He's always been kind of a scoring one, go get buckets, break the defense down, and that's a good thing. Both of those things are good.

You know, but understanding how everybody else fits on the floor and engineering victory and then also defending a killer or whoever he's guarding in this league is an absolute assassin on any given night, and you have to understand how to defend while at the same time, figuring out changing defenses and what are we running? Are they in zone, are they in man? What offense are they running. And making sure everybody's lined up in the right place. It's a lot of information. Even though he's a sophomore, he's really a freshman in terms of this level, this place.

Q. You've looked at Adam over his career. He appears to be a resilient, thick-skinned, tough. But he's also a highly sought after recruit and loved by everybody. How is his personality maybe transformed over the last few years because he's had, whether it's locally and nationally now or has he always maintained the same personality?

COACH McCAFFERY: I'll be honest with you, I haven't seen a change at all. I mean, you guys know when he was a sophomore is when I got here. It was the end of his sophomore year. Obviously he was a priority from that point on. And I got to know him really well and his family, his coaches. Then, of course, he committed to us and he came here. I've had him now for this is his third year. He's the same guy. There is no difference at all in terms of his approach. He's going to study. He's going to absolutely have the scouting report memorized. I mean, he's unselfish, always been that way. He's going to compete.

For the most part he keeps his mouth shut and goes about his business. We have very little

conversation. Obviously I have tremendous respect for him, and I love the fact that he does for our team what he does. So I encourage him. We'll have periodic meetings, but for the most part he's just one of those guys that shows up and does his work and goes home. Takes care of his business academically, never in trouble. From a program standpoint, he's a coach's dream because he just shows up and gets the job done with no fanfare at all.

Q. As it panned out this week, I think you ended up getting more negative national attention.

COACH McCAFFERY: I'd much rather people be upset with me. I get paid. For the most part, I don't care what people think or what they say. I am who I am. You guys know me well. It's interesting that people could be upset about somebody that they don't know or have opinions about people they don't know.

I won't give an opinion about somebody I don't know. But others get paid to run their mouth, and I guess that's what they have to do. But trust me, I didn't lose one wink of sleep about anything. All I'm doing is trying to figure out how I'm going to beat Minnesota, a team that's really impressed me.

Q. Maybe in hindsight do you wish you didn't do that and maybe take away some of the positive of what your team did last week?

COACH McCAFFERY: No. I guess the only thing I would say is to me I come into this room and expect you guys to know and understand that I can't talk about anything as it relates to officiating. I get frustrated after a while when you keep trying to back me into a corner to say something that's only going to get me in trouble. I would be respectful -- I would hope that you'd have a professional respect and not put me in that position, which repeatedly happens to me and everybody else that sits in this chair. Don't ask me about officiating.

Now the bottom line is you want an answer and a thorough answer. You can't get it. You're not getting it, stop asking. If that hurts your feelings, that's not my fault. That's not my problem, but don't put me in that position. It's nothing personal.

Q. The question that was asked, was it related to officiating?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yes, it was. It was

what did the official say to you? What do you think about this? And they want to jump to conclusions about what happened on various plays, and I can't talk about that.

Q. Can you talk about -- I don't want to skirt around officiating. But Adam has now poked someone in the eye three times.

COACH McCAFFERY: There wasn't a foul call anytime, all right. So I'm through. I'm done. Move on. I can't believe you'd even ask me that question today. I mean, this is ancient history now. I don't want to talk about what happened three weeks ago.

Q. Are you aware of his reputation in terms of being labeled a dirty player? It seems that that's out there now?

COACH McCAFFERY: He's not a dirty player. All right? You're talking about three plays where there wasn't a foul called on any one of them, and they went back and looked at it and thought that they should call (a flagrant one), which is certainly in their purview, and I'm good with that.

It's like anything else. I would hope that your reputation and my reputation wouldn't come down to it. The kid has been playing a long time. He's played a lot of games, he's played a lot of minutes. Everybody wants to lock into a couple of plays that they thought after they slowed it down and looked at it in slow motion a million times. I mean, if you drive the ball to the basket and I'm guarding you, there is a good chance I'm going to swipe down at the ball, otherwise you're going to get by me and score.

Q. Do you think it's a strange coincidence what's happened?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it's absolutely ridiculous. It's beyond strange. It's unfortunate because it's the world we live in that people would be talking about that. To think that Adam Woodbury would deliberately poke somebody in the eye -- let me tell you this: if I thought he poked somebody in the eye on purpose, you wouldn't have to ask me if somebody was going to suspend him. I would suspend him immediately, and he knows that. There is no place for that. Who does that? Who encourages that? Nobody.

I've been in the game 32 years. My playing days, nobody has ever done that. So all of a sudden, everybody wants to wake up one morning and convict Adam Woodbury for something like

that. That's just ridiculous. But everybody's an expert.

Q. In 30 or 32 years have you ever had any run-ins with Dean Smith or Jerry Tarkanian?

COACH McCAFFERY: Very limited. I played against Carolina and coached against Carolina as an assistant coach. The best memories that I have with regard to Coach Smith is when I worked with Jimmy Black. He was the point guard that threw Jordan the ball for the game winner in '82. The way he talked about him, and I said this on the Big Ten Network the other way, the way he talked about Coach Smith and how much he loved him and respected him, it was continuous. It was like if anybody said anything negative about him, it was a fight... that's how much he loved him.

I always said to myself when I become a head coach, I hope my guys feel that way about me. If you remember, when I was a young coach back in the old days it was old school. Coaches yell and they yell at their players and they make them run. I've never been that kind of guy. I want my guys to respect me and love me. I want them to play hard for me. I'm going to hold them accountable, and I think that's with regard to Coach Smith, I think that's probably the thing that I remember. I think it goes further than that with him.

I remember talking to Butch Estes who was a good friend of mine who played at Carolina in the late '60s. When I was in elementary school I remember watching Charlie Scott. We played the same position. I'm from Philadelphia. This guy is unbelievable. I hope I can be like Charlie Scott. I'm talking to Butch Estes, 25 years later and they're on the same team and they couldn't go to the same restaurant.

He was telling me the story that Dean said, come on, Charlie, we're going to go to lunch. I want to go to lunch. It's going to be lunch. So, okay, you walk in. Everybody's looking at him funny and they sit down. Charlie what do you want? And they wouldn't serve him because he was with Coach Smith. We look back and say I can't believe that ever happened, but it did, and it happened in our lifetime. He was an innovator on the court with the motion offense and the four corners and things like that, but he was a guy of unbelievable integrity.

Now with regard to Coach Tarkanian, I know Danny, his son, well... great guy. We have a

mutual friend, that's how I got to know him. As a result, I got to know Coach Tarkanian a little bit. I love their style of play. The Runnin' Rebels and all that stuff. I always enjoyed watching those teams. One of the best games I ever saw was when they lost to Duke that one year after they won the National Championship the year before. So I always liked those running rebel teams, but I didn't know him that well.

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