

February 27, 2013



Postgame Interview With:

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY

Q. Was this good defense or bad offense tonight?

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, for us it was good defense. They always play good defense. I mean, you know they're going to play good defense and make it hard for you to score. So yeah, it was good defense.

Q. Can you talk about Mike's injury and prognosis, where things stand?

COACH McCAFFERY: He should be down for about a couple weeks.

Q. Is it a stress fracture?

COACH McCAFFERY: No.

Q. Will you get him back for the Big Ten Tournament?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yes.

Q. You've coached a lot of basketball. Have you ever won a game when you shot 31 percent from the field?

COACH McCAFFERY: Probably. I can't say that I remember one specifically. You know, we out-rebounded them. That's one area that -- they usually out-rebound people. That's staple. They usually win the rebounding battle and they win the turnover battle, and we won them both. So you could say that's why we won.

Q. You didn't have a field goal for the last 13 minutes of the first half and yet you maintained your lead at seven points. Is that defense that gets credit for that as much as anything?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah. I mean, we played phenomenal defense the entire game. We had opportunities in that stretch you're talking about. We had some clean looks at it. We were still running. We got the ball to the right people. We just didn't make them.

Q. Early on you had -- Dev seemed to be in real control of the offense. He's had that position before. What did you think of his performance at that point?

COACH McCAFFERY: He was great. I think he really enjoys having the ball in his hands. You could tell that he was really comfortable. The thing that concerns me, especially with the way that they play defense, it was going to be fatigue, because we're not just asking him to run the offense, we're asking him to go score for us, too. We need him to score for us, too, and that's hard. So we played him, what, 29 minutes? I didn't want to take him out. I took him out for two minutes down the stretch just to make sure he could play those last four.

Q. What led to you putting Josh in your starting lineup tonight and then with Tim hitting the shot down the stretch when you guys --

COACH McCAFFERY: Josh has been great. He's been missing shots in games and that's unfortunate for him, but he is doing everything in practice in terms of making shots, playing defense, making plays. In games he's been playing defense and making plays. He doesn't turn the ball over, he's always in the right place. He's a smart player, and I'm going to keep going to him.

I'm just so proud of him hitting that shot. Not a lot of guys could do that, come in in that situation and just drill it for you. I couldn't be happier for him.

Q. What specifically did you guys have to do in Gesell's absence tonight?

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, anytime you lose a guy of his caliber, everybody has got to step up. It can't be one person. Clemmons was great, Oglesby was great, Olaseni was great, Ingram gave us quality minutes, and I think that typifies our team. We're not a team that is going to play seven guys and one guy goes down, now what do we do. It's really an example of, okay, we feel bad for Mike, we're going to get him back, we'll be happy when he comes back, but right now we've got other guys that can play, let's go play.

Q. You only had nine turnovers tonight. What does that say about your guys?

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, it says we have other guys that can handle the ball. When you don't turn the ball over, a lot of times people only look at your point guard position. We've got other short-handed players. Our wings can handle the ball, our posts can handle the ball. If you want to be a running team you have to have multiple ball handlers, and that's what we do. You look at it, Marble had three turnovers, everybody else had two or less.

Q. You mentioned earlier in the week how you thought Gabe had earned the opportunity to have more playing time and now he gives you 19 minutes tonight. It seemed like he was able to hold his own against A.J. Hammons in the first half.

COACH McCAFFERY: A.J. Hammons is a handful. He's a handful. He's strong, he's long, he's got a great pair of hands. Very few guys can go off either shoulder. He's got a left-handed jump hook, a right-handed jump hook, and the other thing he can do is he can pass. A lot of big time low post scorers when the ball goes in you can send the world because they're not going to pass to anybody. He's a terrific passer. So he is a presence that you have to deal with when you're preparing for this team.

What Gabe did was he moved his feet. You can't wrestle with him. You wrestle with him, you're going to lose, so you've got to move your feet, and that takes great conditioning. I was really going to leave him in, I just thought he was exhausted. I needed to get somebody else in there, and then Woody (Adam Woodbury) comes in and made a huge play for us.

Q. Clemmons seemed like he was having a little more fun, a little more confidence out there. Is that what you saw from the sideline?

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, I thought he was great. He makes the steal and the dunk as soon as I put him in, so I think that got him going in a positive way. I thought he was terrific, and he had been struggling a little bit, getting away from who he is. He's an aggressive attack mentality guy, so to see him make an attack play right off the bat was big for him and big for us.

Q. You got up 14 with about six and a half minutes to go, and Melsahn came down and took about an 18-footer right away. Would you have like to have run some offense there?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah, and I told him, I said, Mel, I love you taking that shot. I encouraged him to take that shot and that's why he took it. But in that situation we could have gotten that later in the clock, run a little bit more clock. All right, so it was in and out. If it goes in, it's a great shot.

I don't want my guys being tentative and think coach is going to get on me if I take that shot right now. I want them to play relaxed, free, and easy. But at the same time have a keen understanding of time and score. That was a time and score situation where he shouldn't have shot.

Q. Did Mike reinjure himself or was that from the Nebraska game?

COACH McCAFFERY: It has nothing to do with the Nebraska game.

Q. So he got hurt in practice?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it has been an ongoing issue for him.

Q. Not a stress fracture but like a stress type of thing?

COACH McCAFFERY: He hurt his foot. That's all I'm going to say. I don't want to get into all the particulars.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports