

**March 29, 2010**



An Interview With:

**FRAN MCCAFFERY  
GARY BARTA**

GARY BARTA: Well, thank you. I'll just add to Phil's appreciation for everybody coming on such late notice. This is an exciting day, and it's a great honor and a pleasure for me to introduce the new head men's basketball coach at the University of Iowa, Fran McCaffery. So, Fran, officially, welcome. It's good to have you here. (Applause.)

Today is a conclusion of a very focused, intentional, and it seems like it's been about three months but it's been two weeks, a very focused effort to go out and find the very best coach and the very best fit for Iowa.

You know, I'm going to go over a couple of things. Ultimately obviously we want to hear from the coach, but there are several things that I want to address, and then at the very end after Coach is done, we'll certainly be opening it up for questions.

Just to reiterate the process and the way that we went about this, the way that I went about this, the first thing we did and I did was identify the qualities that I was looking for. I did that before I identified the people. And I'll just quickly go over, again, proven winner, a leader, someone who had competed for championships, someone that would continue to do so. I indicated it was likely it was going to be a head coach, current head coach at the Division I level.

I wanted somebody who was committed to student athletes, their personal lives and their education, earning a degree, and then I was looking for somebody obviously who had recruiting background, somebody who would take this group of student athletes that we absolutely believed in and would reenergize all of them, reenergize all of us and then finally have the value system that was

consistent with Iowa, something that all of you and all of us and all lowans would be comfortable with.

After we reestablished that list, then we went out, and the net was wide. We went and talked to people from all over the country, basketball people, lowans, I had several conversations with former players, with former coaches, and we tried to identify anybody who fit those categories, anybody who fit those qualities that we had pre-identified, and we kept narrowing that down, and then ultimately we made one job offer, and that's to the gentleman sitting next to me.

Let me, again, go through a few other things that I'd like to cover before we get to Fran's comments. In the end, it was my choice and my responsibility to pick the new head coach. But there are so many people that were important to the process, all of our staff and just trying to coordinate travel schedules and all those things.

You see here today President Mason and Ken Mason are here. Sally has been an incredible supporter of athletics in general, and from the moment that we set out to do this, she wasn't involved in the early discussions. What she asked me to do is go out, take these qualities that we agreed upon, and go out and find the best coach that fit those qualities, and then if you get down to one or two or three people, she was willing to go with us and meet those people.

And she's been supportive from the beginning. She's been informed from the beginning. And then she did go with me in the end to meet with Fran face to face and just reconfirm what I was believing and what I was feeling.

So thank you, Sally, for all of your help and support.

I had a search committee, and I know some of them are here. I know Bobby Hansen is here. Bobby, we all know he knows Hawkeye athletics, he knows Hawkeye basketball. We also know, and I learned to appreciate, how much

basketball he knows around the country, and so he was an invaluable resource.

Betsy Altmaier, who is not here, has been our longtime faculty athletic rep. She knows the values and what University of Iowa expects out of all of us, including athletics, and she was highly engaged. And then Ellie Herman -- I don't know if Ellie is here. Is Ellie in the room anywhere? She's on the search committee. She's the current chair of the Presidents Committee on Athletics. She was incredibly diligent. We would go through these names and she would research them. She's a big fan, but she's also somebody -- she cares about the student athletes' welfare. She understands the values we need as a campus, and so she was also looking for those qualities in the new coach.

And then finally Fred Mims. You all know Fred, a former athlete at the University of Iowa, somebody who's been with us for a long, long time. He was by my side the entire time as we went through the process. So thank you to all of the search committee.

The terms of the contract that will be put together, we don't yet have a contract. Certainly we've come to an agreement in general principle and general terms. Our goal is to get the contract done in the next few weeks, which I have no concern about. Generally the terms are a six-year deal. The guaranteed salary will start at \$1.1 million. It will escalate up. I think at the end of the agreement it's about \$1.35, somewhere in that zone. In addition to that, bonus structure for competitiveness on the court, bonus structure for academics, so that when it's all said and done, a very competitive salary in the Big Ten and nationally.

I'll just address it, somebody asked me was I going on the cheap. I think I was addressed that -- I had several people in emails giving me all sorts of advice as you might imagine, but here's the way I went about it. I addressed those values. Did we have a budget? Well, everybody has a budget. You have budgets personally at home. We have a budget here. But it was not a number that was established. It was a range. And that range could have gone to varying degrees. It depended on who the person was.

At the end, once I found the right coach, once I found the right person, then we put together a package that was competitive, that he was excited about, that we were excited about, and that's where we're at, and we'll finalize that in contract form here in the next couple of weeks.

To the McCaffery family, you know, when I think about these transitions, I know how easy it is for him or for me. It's crazy, but we just go into our job and away we go. I know how hard it is on their end. And so it's great to have them all here, and Coach will introduce them in a minute.

Just a couple of thoughts I had. You know, I just met Margaret yesterday. We didn't get a chance to meet prior to that. I do know she has Minnesota roots and some of her Minnesota family are here. You can see they're in black and gold, so it didn't take long for them to make that adjustment. I've heard all sorts of stories about Margaret was recruited by Vivian. She ended up going to Notre Dame. I've heard she was a much better basketball player than he was. I also know, and he'll talk about her passion for basketball, we've put seatbelts on your seat in Carver already.

But in all seriousness, I know my wife, Connie, is here, and she met with the family yesterday. Seeing the kids here, and they found out at 8:00 or 9:00 yesterday morning that they're moving, and here they are. And so just talking about what Margaret is doing to keep the family rolling and keep all this going, the one thing I'll say to all the kids and the family, you're going to love it here. I know it'll be challenging for a while, but you're going to love it here.

Last night at about 9:30, we're driving back to the hotel, and Jack, he's the little guy, Jack is sitting in the back, and they're just exhausted, and he's yelling as we're driving in the car, he's yelling, "Go Hawkeyes, Go Hawkeyes." So it's going to be great. It'll also be a challenge.

I want to thank our student-athletes. We've turned their world upside down. I met with them right away. A lot of them are still in class. Some of them are going to try and get here. Fran met with them yesterday. I visited with all the letter of intent signees right after the change. They have been amazing in just sticking together, and we've talked about the special group that they have in place, and if they stick together -- it all started yesterday when Fran met with the team, and they're the ones that are going to make this happen. And so we're excited to keep that moving.

And then just thanks again to all the Hawkeye fans. I know the passion is there. The text messages, the phone calls, the letters, the emails. One thing I know, and that's the pride and tradition of this place is so deep and so strong and people care so much, not everybody might have

agreed the process I was going through. I do know one thing everybody agreed on, and that's that we all want the same outcome. We want to fill Carver again. We want to compete for Big Ten championships, and we want to do it with this guy.

Let me just now move over to the introduction of the coach and tell you a little bit about what I learned about in the process. Some of you might say, you know, I don't really know much about him. And my honest answer is I didn't know a lot about Fran when this process started. I knew of him, I knew of Siena and the things that had happened in the last several years, and I started to talk to basketball people around the country. They started to call me, and they started to tell me more about him.

They told me about him rebuilding three programs. They told me about the fact that he's taken three different teams to the NCAA Tournament, and then, of course, looking into it and seeing what Siena had done -- when he took over at Siena they had won six games. In the last three years they've been in the NCAA Tournament. They lost to Purdue this year. They beat Ohio State this year. They beat Vandy the year before. So all those things started to intrigue me. And then I looked at his graduation rate. The student athletes that come into his program, if they complete their eligibility, they all graduate, every one of them. So all those things started to intrigue me.

So as that net started to funnel down and we started to invite people in for interviews, I had my first meeting with him. In that first meeting, the first thing he said right out of the gate is, I want to be the coach at Iowa. You know, that's something you might say in an interview, but as the interview went along, I could see how serious he was about that particular thing.

And he'll tell you stories about his first experience at Carver and his second experience at Carver and his experience recruiting in Iowa and in the Midwest, all those things. And then the values, I started to talk to people about what kind of person he was and whether or not he would fit, and so those things just kept coming together and coming together, and every time we'd talk -- the second meeting with President Mason, again, just reiterating, I want to be the coach at Iowa.

And then he backed it up. He had two other opportunities in this two or three-day period, maybe more than that, that he could have gone to, and in both cases, he said, Gary, you might be hearing things through the media. You might be

hearing things about other opportunities I might have. I want you to know something: I want to be the coach at Iowa. All respect to any other place that you're hearing about or might be interested in me, I want to be the next coach at Iowa.

So without further ado, the person who wanted the job, the person who's qualified for the job and the person I'm thrilled to introduce as your next head coach, Fran McCaffery. (Applause)

FRAN McCaffery: Thank you very much. This is a very proud moment for me, and Gary is right. I made it clear from minute one that I wanted to be your coach, and I want to thank President Mason and Gary for the confidence that they've shown in me to take over.

I'm leaving a place that I love, and that is not done without a lot of trepidation at some point. We had great people at Siena. We had a terrific president, a terrific athletic director, great players, and I've said many times when asked, will you entertain other offers, are you looking to move, the answer was always, no, I'm not looking to move. I'm happy where I am. And why is that? Because we found things that we thought were great for our family and what I thought was great for me professionally. And I always said if I thought about leaving, it would be a very small list.

And then when Iowa was presented as an option, as a possibility that I might be interviewed and have an opportunity to talk to Gary, I was ecstatic. I talked to my wife about it. She grew up in the Midwest, very familiar with the Big Ten, grew up going to games with her dad, Dick, who's sitting right over there, Williams Arena and they've had tickets for 35 years and they are now officially Hawkeye fans.

I wanted to be here, and I think it's a great fit for so many different reasons. This is where I want to raise my family, and obviously that's the most important thing.

But I also have to be able to evaluate what we have. I want to talk a little bit about my experience here, and Gary alluded to it. The first time I came here, I brought my team here in 1986. I was 26 years old. I was the head coach at Lehigh University, and that's the first time I met Jerry Strom.

We brought our team here, and I will never forget the atmosphere in this building. It resonated with me for a long time. Jerry and I became friends, and we came back in 2005. Let me tell you something that happened when we were here.

We were playing Iowa, George Raveling was the coach, great team, B.J. Armstrong, Brad Lohaus, Ed Horton, Roy Marble, ranked team, we were in a little bit over our heads to say the least, and that's why we came to the tournament. We wanted to try to see how good we were. We wanted to play a ranked opponent. We wanted to play in a facility like Carver Hawkeye in front of that atmosphere.

We lost the game, played very well. I had a sophomore on my team who was a terrific player, ended up 10th in Division I history in scoring when he completed his eligibility. He's probably not there now, but that's where he was then. And I will never forget what happened in that game.

Daren scored 29 points, at some point in the game, George Raveling instituted a box end one on Daren to get us shut down, and of course Iowa went on to win the game. We felt pretty good about how we played. I was proud of Daren, so much so that I took him out right before the end of the game.

And this is when I knew the sophistication level of our fan base. He got a standing ovation for his performance, and I just remember when he came off the floor, I shook his hand, and the building erupted, and I turned around and everyone was standing. And they recognized a young player who they didn't know coming into this facility, a difficult place to play and for what it was and gave him a standing ovation. It really meant a lot to me, and it really, as I said, resonated with me.

Following that experience Jerry and I talked many times about bringing my team back here. We came back in '05, and we were fortunate enough to beat Southern Miss in the first round and play Iowa in the championship game. Again, I remember the atmosphere in the arena and what it was like to play in this facility.

It's something that I think would excite any coach like myself, to one day hope to be in an environment like this and to be able to understand what it's like to be part of the Big Ten.

And I remember talking to Jerry, also, about some other things. He's somebody that's respected in the basketball community, but he's somebody who has stayed here for a very long time, and I asked him, "Why do you stay here? What is it about the city, about the state, about this institution?" And I always remember the enthusiasm with which he responded to me, about how he would not want to live anywhere else. And that is something that I really thought long and hard about as I looked at this decision.



visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

My experience is varied when it comes to recruiting. I've coached in the East, I've coached in the South, and I've coached in the Midwest. I spent 11 years at Notre Dame. And in that period of time, I came into Iowa to recruit, and I recruited some guys that are standing over here, and I remember recruiting Jess Settles, and I'll tell you a little bit about that story, which is kind of funny, because Jess, as you know, is a tremendous person. He was a phenomenal basketball player. We watched him play at the Nike camp and he immediately moved to the top of our list, and he really liked me, and he liked Coach MacLeod, and he loved Notre Dame and really thought long and hard about coming to play for the Irish.

But the thing that I always remember is nobody in his family wanted him to come to Notre Dame. This was an uphill battle from day one.

Now, I thought we had him on his visit, and he'll remember this. We even got Julia Roberts involved. She met Jess on a visit. I said, we've got to pull out all the stops. But his entire family were Hawkeye season ticket holders, and of course followed Jess' career over the years, and I recruited Kenyon Murray hard out of Battle Creek, Michigan, and I remember what they said about the Big Ten. I have a tremendous respect for this conference, the quality of talent, the quality of coaching, and it's something that I come into with full knowledge that we need to be ready every time we take the floor.

While at Notre Dame, I met the love of my life, my wife, Margaret. I think the beauty of Margaret and our relationship is -- she was an all-American, and she fully understands what my job entails. And I think it's one thing to say that she fully understands it; it's another thing to embrace it and be an asset to my ability to get this job done.

I don't like to talk too much about her playing career. She only scored 1,000 more points than I did. I'm not proud to say that. But she was a terrific, terrific player, and it's her passion, I think, and understanding of this business, and it's something that sustains us, I think, through long seasons. I have with me, I would like to introduce them, my daughter Marit, who's right here, my son Connor, my son Patrick, and my son Jack.

I also have Marge's parents, native Minnesotans, native Midwesterners, Dick and Marit.

My two guys can play. They haven't

promised anything, but I think we're in good shape. I think we'll at least get a visit out of them.

I've often asked, what is your recruiting philosophy? It's pretty simple. Recruiting is about relationships, relationships with players, coaches, parents, relatives, and I think more importantly, honesty and integrity. So if I explain my vision for a student-athlete and what we think that will be, it's important to follow through on that promise, and as long as we continue to tell the truth, we can all deal with that.

What will be my first order of business? Well, my first order of business will be to re-recruit the players that are here. I have familiarity with them. I've watched them play some, both in high school and on television. I think we have a great nucleus of young talent. And last year's team was exactly that; it was young, but it was talented. We saw some great things, and we saw some struggles. But that can only be expected with a young team.

And it's my responsibility to then reach out to those who have signed NLIs with us and to see that they honor their commitments so we can fill our roster. Then we can evaluate at that time do we have any remaining scholarships, what do we need? What do we need position-wise? So that's my philosophy there.

Style of play, and I think that's something that I want to talk about and I'm excited about. We're going to push the ball. We're going to run. We're going to press. We're going to change defenses. We're going to disrupt rhythm, and I think that's how you have to play. Some coaches, they lock into one defense, they play half-court basketball, and they run set plays. Well, we're going to run set plays. We're going to run motion. We're going to run ball screen action, and I believe in doing a variety of different things.

You will not have a better prepared basketball team take the floor in terms of tape review, scouting reports, what we show the team, what we show -- what we look at ourselves. We will be ready.

I know how hard it is to win on the road in the Big Ten, and it's important that they have something to hold onto in terms of a scouting report that makes sense, that fits our personnel, and we'll work against the personnel that we're playing against.

The one thing that I can assure you is that we will play the game the right way. A lot of coaches like to sit here in situations like this and say, We're going to play up tempo. Everybody

wants to hear that. Well, we're going to play up tempo, but we're going to play the game the right way. We're going to make decisions on the break that make sense. We're going to press when it makes sense to press, and we're going to play zone when it makes sense to play zone. And that will be based on scouting and hours and hours of tape review.

I'm excited to be part of a very special group of coaches, and I'm excited to get to know them. I haven't met them yet, Kirk Ferentz, Orange Bowl champions, Coach of the Year, Lisa Bluder, Coach of the Year, NCAA Tournament team, and Tom Brands won the national championship for the third year in a row. What can you say about Tom Brands? That's an opportunity that I think every coach wants, to be able to work with coaches of that caliber, get to know them, and it's my responsibility to get this team back into the NCAA Tournament and have everyone proud of what we're doing.

I can promise you this: We're going to compete. We're going to play the game the right way. I'm going to coach with passion, but our players are going to have fun. They're going to enjoy what they do on the floor. And this place is going to be rocking again. I just can't be more thankful for this opportunity, and I'm proud to be a Hawkeye. Thank you very much. (Applause)

**Q. Fran, you had a couple of opportunities your wife speculated about Seton Hall, I believe, was among them. Why Iowa over another school from the Big Six conferences?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, I've done my homework, and I don't want to in any way slight Seton Hall or St. John's. I appreciate the interest that they showed in me and both fabulous opportunities. But as I went through the process and prioritized what I thought was best for my family and what I thought had the most potential and opportunity for growth and something that got me excited, it was Iowa. We just kept coming back to Iowa.

I think because I've been here, because I've been in the Midwest, and I know that I have the ability to utilize my connections not only in the Midwest but nationally to help us continue to grow as a program. I have tremendous respect for the Big Ten as I've already said. It was for me, I thought, the best fit.

**Q. Coach, what about the assistants?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: What about the assistants? Obviously, Jerry will remain with us, Jerry Strom. I'm happy about that. I have some coaches on my staff presently that I would give strong consideration to that I know. They know how to work, they know how to recruit. They're talented. I've given strong consideration to having an Iowa presence on my staff, maybe a former player, for example. So that will be determined over the next few days.

**Q. When you took over at Siena, the team won six games and you were picked for the last in your conference. I think you went 15 and 13 and finished fourth. Now you're in a situation where the team is tied for 10th, won ten games. What can you do similar as you try to take this program up? What did you do at Siena that you can follow here?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, the first thing I did was thoroughly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of every player and made sure that I put them in situations where they could be successful. I got them to believe in what we were doing, and I think you'll see that I have the ability to make sure each and every player understands what his role is, but more importantly accepts that role and then executes that role.

Our preparation and game plans, I think, were instrumental in helping us be a good road team. I think if you look at our record, certainly we haven't lost a home game in two years at Siena, but we've shown that we can win on the road. We've shown that we can win in the NCAA Tournament, and that's supposed to be neutral, but when we played Ohio State in Dayton, it wasn't very neutral. A whole lot of red. Maybe one half of one section in green.

So I understand what the passion is. And I think when you see us play, you'll understand what I was able to do. That team in particular for me was one of my favorite teams that I ever coached because they really battled for me, and we overcame deficits, we keep coming back, and as I said, right at the end, we will compete.

And when you compete, there's differences between -- I always say there's a difference between hustle and the ability to compete. I expect you to hustle. But competing means understanding and carrying out the game plan and understanding where you fit on the team and understanding what's necessary to win,

...when all is said, we're done.®



visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

whether we're behind or we're ahead or whether we're at home or whether we're on the road. And I can assure you we'll fully understand that.

**Q. What did you take away from your meeting with the players last night and just seeing what's here already?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: They're hungry. They're ready to get back to work. They're focused. They want to improve and there's no doubt in my mind that we will.

**Q. How important is that new practice facility out there for recruiting?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Phenomenally important. Again, it's just another thing that gets me excited to know all the hard work that went into making that come to fruition and to see it. I'm so excited about what it's going to look like when it's done, but it's something we can talk about during the process as we move forward.

**Q. What's a reasonable amount of time do you think to turn a program around?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: My expectation would be to show improvement immediately. I think that's what I was hired to do. You know, how much improvement, we'll have to see. We'll have to see where we get our roster in terms of improving our depth. But I think you should expect to see immediate improvement, and I'm sure that's what Gary expects to see. He didn't give me any demands. He's just given me support, and I appreciate that.

**Q. You talked about getting Carver rocking again. Anything specific that you do to get students and fans back into the arena?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: We're going to have meetings tonight directly addressing that. I've been active in doing those kinds of things before, but I think we all know, to really energize the fan base, you've got to play the game the right way, and we're going to do that.

**Q. Does it worry you at all that your predecessor was also highly successful at a smaller school, came here, and for whatever reason wasn't able to get it done? Was that a red flag at all?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: None whatsoever. I've done it at multiple institutions in different parts

of the country. So my experience level I think is a little bit different, and I've been successful everywhere I've been and fully intending to be successful here.

**Q. Did you get a sense from all the players that they were leaning towards staying here from your meeting last night?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, what we're going to do, as soon as we're through here, I'm going to have individual meetings with them. I'll get a better sense at that time.

**Q. When do you plan on reaching out to the four kids that aren't signed?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: I've already done that, and we'll have more phone conversations tonight, and then I'll go see them personally.

**Q. You have a line of former players over here on the wall including Jess. There's been talk that they really want to get involved in this program and be instrumental in helping you turn it around. How would that help you to have former players on your side like that?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, it's something that would be one of the first orders of business for me. I want them involved. I will reach out to them. I want them coming back. I want them at games. I want them calling me on the phone, Hey, I heard about a player you might be interested in. It's that kind of relationship to me that makes a program special, and that's what we're going to build here.

**Q. Gary, do you think that this hire may define your tenure here at Iowa?**

GARY BARTA: I think I answered that last time, but I'll answer it again. What I do every day when I come to work is I take 20-some years of experience, and I give everything I have to Iowa, and my goal is to make every team we have, every sport we have better, to create an environment for student athletes that they have such a great experience that some day they want their kids to come here, those types of things, leave with a degree.

At the end of the day, I want to be defined some day, hopefully a long time from now, Sally Mason, I want to be defined by a total breadth of what Iowa was before I got here, and then hopefully I leave and they say I made it better. I don't intend to be defined by one hire. That's the long answer to -- the answer is no, but it's because I come to work every day wanting to make the

whole program better, not just one team, not just one hire, but everything involved.

**Q. Coach, I see that your teams don't commit very many fouls, and you shoot a lot more free throws than the other team. There's a huge discrepancy there. Is that part of your philosophy, fouling and getting to the line so much?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, it is, but it would depend on a few factors. Number one, our depth. When I first got to Siena, our depth was virtually nonexistent, so we couldn't foul. We had to stay out of foul trouble so we could get to the wire and have a chance. But I just don't believe in excessive fouling. I don't believe in putting teams in the bonus. I don't believe in putting teams in the double bonus early. If you are behind, it's almost impossible to come back if the other team is in a double bonus. You have to be able to foul.

I understand how physical the Big Ten is. We just played Purdue, and I know what that game was like. We were ready for that. I thought we competed well. We got behind, they went on a run on us. We came back, went on a run back on them. But I think I have a pretty good feel for what this league is.

My hope is that we shoot -- excuse me, make more free throws than our opponents attempt. Is that going to be possible? Maybe not, but I believe in position defense and changing defenses and limiting teams to one shot, which will keep people off the free-throw line.

**Q. How important have your AAU ties been in your recruiting?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: They're important to a certain extent. They don't define me, nor should they. There are some AAU coaches who are fabulous and truly in it for their student athletes' best interests. Others are not. I think I've been pretty good at identifying those who are not and those who are.

I think in this state we certainly have had some really good ones, Mac McCausland certainly to name one, but there are different AAU people that are in it for the right reason. We'll deal with those folks. My intention is to interact directly with the student athlete, his parents or his legal guardian. And I think that is what my priority should be. And if I tell those folks the truth and then make sure that happens when they get here,

we'll be successful.

**Q. It seems like you're going to be changing the style of play from what the current players are used to. Do you think that will be a problem for the players that are used to more of a slowed down style, expecting them to change that?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Not at all, and it certainly didn't come across that way at our meeting. They seemed to be excited about it. I think we can play faster because we do have players that are able to make good decisions. They can make plays off the dribble. They can make plays in transition. I have no doubt that we can play faster because we're going to play intelligently, as well.

**Q. What would it take for Iowa to become a regular contender for the Big Ten title and go deep in the NCAA Tournament? How do you get from here to there?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, we have to continue to recruit well. We have to coach the right way. And we have to make this building exciting again so the teams come in here and they have no chance. We all know what it's like to win on the road in the Big Ten. It's not easy.

So you need talent. You need cerebral players, and I think my best gift over the years has been wherever I've been, we've been able to evaluate talent and get them to come and play for me.

And those who play for me will tell you they love playing for me. Am I demanding? Yes. Am I reasonable? Yes. Do I communicate? Do I make sure they have fun? Absolutely. Do we have a plan? Do we have a goal? Absolutely. Do we ever lose sight of it? Absolutely not. Will we do it with integrity? Absolutely.

And when you do it that way, I think ultimately that's what student athletes want to be a part of when they're making this critical choice in their lives.

**Q. How important is having an off-the-court relationship with your players?**

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Extremely. And that's, again, where my family comes in. My players are at my house all the time for a variety of different reasons, whether it be we have a recruit in, whether it be we have the freshmen over, whether we have the captains over, whether we have the whole team over. In the summertime to

watch the NBA draft, just over Christmas break when all the students are gone. It's important that -- I think when parents drop their children off and turn them over to you, they have to know and understand there's going to be a family atmosphere that they can feel comfortable about, and they can sleep well at night knowing that their son is in good hands, and they will know that full and well when they meet my family.

**FastScripts by ASAP Sports**



visit our archives at [asapsports.com](http://asapsports.com)

**McCaffrey PC**