

January 23, 2011



An Interview With:

COACH McCAFFERY

COACH McCAFFERY: I'm really happy for our guys. We've been working really hard to get our first Big Ten win, I've been real impressed with Tom's team, especially last two ballgames, at Wisconsin; Michigan game; they keep getting better.

I thought from a consistency standpoint today, that was the best we've been. You look at how many guys scored, how many guys scored in double figures, a few too many turnovers, 16. Assists were good, we out-rebounded them, so a lot of good things.

Q. You mentioned the other day how you wanted to get Marble going and he comes out and gets 18 points for you.

COACH McCAFFERY: He was aggressive from the start. That's what we have been trying to get him to do, just be aggressive, and I played him a lot more, too, today, than I had been. Like I said part of his struggles are my fault, the fault of our situation. He's got to play the point.

To his credit he's done a really good job and hasn't complained about it. But being able to get him on the side, from the wing, out in transition, now you see the scorer that he can be, and it really picks up our team.

Now you've got May, Gatens and Marble scoring double figures from the perimeter. We know Bryce can do it and then of course Basabe just keeps getting better and better; and then the emergence of Brommer. I thought Jarryd Cole was excellent today with effort and defense. So, a lot of really good stuff. Stoerner gave us great minutes when we put him in. So everybody came in the game and picked us up.

Q. Melsahn and Marble, does that give you a taste for the future?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think you through McCabe in there, he's a terrific freshman, and Eric May is only a sophomore. So we have got some pieces that I'm really excited about. We have two good ones coming in. Little by little we'll put it together and we'll get it done.

Q. Nice to see May run at full speed?

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't think there's any question that, you know, his struggles of late were a direct reflection of his injury. He got a little rusty and you know, I just keep thinking -- he's too good, great kid.

He's had phenomenal practices, and you see what he can do in the open floor. And you see what it does to his confidence level with the other parts of his game. It's fun to watch. I'm happy for him.

Q. Eric, the dunks there -- after that point, your team relaxed a little and got down to the business at hand.

COACH McCAFFERY: We had a stretch after that where we were kind of trading, you know, you like to see -- once we got up to 20, Bryce hit the big three, put us up 20 and just sort of felt like, okay, we're in good shape for a fair amount of time.

Nice to get a few more stops. A little bit of scrambling in the end, we turned it over a few too many times. Two long passes and made free throws.

Q. Your first Big Ten win, how does it feel?

COACH McCAFFERY: It feels great. Just going to keep plugging.

Q. How important is the payoff? These kids have been working hard; you've been

working hard.

COACH McCAFFERY: It's more important for them. They have worked way too hard to continue to struggle, come close and sort of have to be don't with, well, we played them tough; well, we really came back.

To play from the lead from out in front was something we have not had a lot of experience with this year, so that was good to see. Earned it.

Q. Didn't allow another big run --

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah, I think that's a good point. We didn't allow the big run. Watford had a nice game. They kept going to him. He was really hurting us early. I thought in the second half, it seemed like we did a better job. Maybe not statistically, but we didn't let them get that 12-0 run or the 14-2 run. They hit five in a row I know, the bucket and then the 3, but other than that, we pretty much answered.

Q. Does that change how you defend them when they come out Oladipo?

COACH McCAFFERY: He gives them another scorer, but they have got a pretty good backup.

Q. What did you see in practice from Devon and May, look like a game like this might be imminent?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think with him, he's never got down on himself, even though he's been struggling, he knows he's struggling, I know he's struggling, he keeps plugging and he keeps working and he believes in himself and he's always been a scorer. He just knew a day like this was coming and now I think he'll settle down and have more opportunities to do exactly what he did today.

Q. Can you talk about Basabe's performance, 20 and 10, just seemed sort of quiet.

COACH McCAFFERY: A workman-like double-double. You look up and say, he's got 20 and ten, he didn't get them in bunches but he was a factor. He had two blocks, two assists, they were doubling him. He doesn't have a lot of assists. He hit a few too many turns, but to see him turn and face and read the double team and make two assists early I think really impact the their ability to keep doubling.

Q. The bench in general seemed to contribute more today than they have been.

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COACH McCAFFERY: I look at it like this. We have got Marble who can score, we have McCabe who can score, Brommer who score, Stoermer who can score, and there have been some games where that hasn't been the case. Partly because I stick with my starters a little bit longer maybe.

But to be able to get them the minutes and keep everybody rested with the quality of play we are getting, you know, is evident in our 91 points we scored.

Q. What does it say for you guys to be able to get the ball down low and draw contact?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think we have been working on that a lot lately and I think we have players capable of doing that. And in this league, you have to do it. You're going to have to play through contact. There are going to be big, strong physical athletes, doing it without thinking about it. Just got to play through it.

Q. What does this do for the confidence of your team but more specifically the younger players?

COACH McCAFFERY: The fact that the younger players are such an integral party think will help them. The fact that so many people were involved in the win I think will help us collectively. Just like I always say, you can't get too high or too low.

You know, the other night was not a good one. Can't get too down. What was good; what was bad, let's teach and let's move on and let's be get better the next game and let's be better and practice.

So now we got a win. Now we have to go on the road and play a really good team. This one's behind us now.

Q. Can you talk about Gatens who didn't have a great shooting night but was really able to make up for it by getting to the line and knocking done the free throws?

COACH McCAFFERY: He had some big shots. The big three was really helpful, making his free throws down the stretch. His solid play and the stability that he gives to the team I think is very, very important.

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