

November 26, 2010



An Interview with:

COACH FRAN McCAFFERY

COACH McCAFFERY: I think the most impressive thing for me with regard to this victory is anytime you go to a place like the Virgin Islands, Paradise Jam, Maui, Alaska, as coaches we often worry about the next game. Are we going to be up to it?

We had a horrible time getting home. Took us two days to get home, and we had a quicker prep than we would have liked. But we were able to process the game plan and come out and execute a great win.

So, I'm very happy. We saw six guys in double figures, forced 29 turnovers, and we felt like we could get them on the glass where we were a substantially bigger team, we should have got them on the glass, we did.

But I think when you go back to all the different contributions that we're able to get, I think that's the thing that has me most excited.

Q. How much of a relief is it to have Cartwright back?

COACH McCAFFERY: One of the first things that I wanted to do after I got here was we had to address that situation. We just couldn't -- think about it, if we didn't go get a point guard and he (Payne) has a sports hernia, where does that leave us?

And I'm happy to have Branden Stubbs, who I think is a quality player at that position. So we got Marble there. We've got Stubbs there. We can play Stoermer there. Got point guard blocking there, but we need Bryce Cartwright.

Q. What goes through your mind when that guy fouls intentionally?

COACH McCAFFERY: It's nerve-racking the whole time you're in that situation. Like when do we get these guys out. I don't want to get anybody hurt. But at the same time we've got some guys that need reps. They need to be out there.

They need to make some mistakes, play through their mistakes and see what this level is. So fortunately we were able to manage without any major injury.

Q. Cully, that was just something that he was trying to gut through the season; it just got too painful?

COACH McCAFFERY: What he told me was that ironically it didn't hurt him that much when he's playing, and that's why he kept playing. But what started happening to him was he started getting more and more pain at night trying to sleep, more and more pain during the day when he wasn't playing.

It was very, very uncomfortable for him and getting hard for him to live. So when you're in a situation like that, you want to get it taken care of. So we had him see two doctors when we got back, and he explained his symptoms and they're going to go in there and fix it.

Q. Six to eight weeks, do you think?

COACH McCAFFERY: It's hard to say. I think it's always a function of what they find when they get in there. It could be shorter, it could be longer. It's really a function of exactly what do they find when they go in there.

Q. Did Jarryd Cole say if his foot was bothering him?

COACH McCAFFERY: We were just protecting his foot. That's all. I didn't see a need to have to go back to him. I thought he played well in the first half. Very pleased with him.

Q. What did you express to the Southern Illinois player after he committed the hard foul on Cartwright?

COACH McCAFFERY: I just -- I just did not feel like we needed to be in that situation. We're not going to have that. We don't need to be chopping people in the head, that kind of thing. So I voiced my displeasure. And the officials did a phenomenal job taking care of it.

Q. How would you describe the role Bryce has played the last couple of games, and now with Cully not being there, and having to go to him?

COACH McCAFFERY: I think Bryce from day one has been spectacular. It was great having both of them, because one could play while the other one was out, or they could play together. We've done that with them. And I kind of like playing Bryce over there a little bit, too, with Cully at the 1. But we won't be able to do that for a while.

Q. Bryce has given you everything you thought when you recruited him? Because you got him in June, as I recall.

COACH McCAFFERY: You always hope you get somebody of that kind of quality. He's got a body. He's got experience. He's not afraid.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Coach.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports