

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball

Iowa - 76, Indiana - 70



Q. What can you say about Jordan's clutch shooting?

COACH MCCAFFERY: I've been doing this a while, Pat. I haven't seen that much. You know, it's funny, I remember when we signed him, I said he's a lot like Steph. And what I meant was that he has that quick trigger. Steph Curry pulls right in your face and that's what Jordan does. And everybody's like, he's not like Steph. But he kind of is with those shots and his ability to make those shots look easy. And the great thing is we've got a group of guys that will get the ball to him.

Q. He wasn't playing very well. He doesn't let that bother him. He just keeps playing.

COACH MCCAFFERY: He just keeps grinding. Give Indiana credit. They came in and fought hard. Their defense was really good throughout the entire game on him, on everybody else. We just had to keep fighting. And we didn't lead the entire second half. Never led. So picked a good time to tie it.

Q. How about the three that forced overtime. Your thoughts?

COACH MCCAFFERY: Great execution and a big shot by a great player.

Q. Out of bounds with seven seconds on the shot clock, the dagger 3 with about 20 seconds to go. Was that just great execution?

COACH MCCAFFERY: It was pretty good execution, but it was also pretty good defense. To be fair to Indiana on that, we had action on both sides. You've got to get a shot up quick. There's only seven seconds. So you gotta have presence of mind to get it off and make it. And he did.

Q. You guys held Romeo Langford to a 3-point attempt at the end of regulation, it hit the front of the rim. Is that something you view as a win?

COACH MCCAFFERY: He's really good. You don't really want him to do either. But I think a contested 3 in that situation is probably a better choice than letting him get all the way to the rim.

Q. Bohannon had nothing at halftime against Northwestern, he finished with 15. Nothing at halftime tonight. What he did here, is that abnormal or how would you describe that?

COACH MCCAFFERY: Yeah, I would say that's not normal. But we're going to keep going to him, Mike. And we're going to run stuff through Connor sometimes. I think it was real helpful. Because sometimes he was at the 1 spot. Sometimes he was at the 2 spot. We move him around in our sets, and we make sure that we screen for him.

Q. Do you think all the close games -- this team has been four straight come down right to the very end. Is that maybe experience the team banks on? They never seem flustered under pressure.

COACH MCCAFFERY: Yeah, and it's certainly not perfect. But I think that's a good assessment. We're not flustered. The ball gets poked, run back. You have a bunny you think is going to go in and it rolls off, run back, get a stop.

Q. Was it good to get Luka going again?

COACH MCCAFFERY: That was big. He's been practicing really well. Took a huge charge. He was great tonight. Got us going early.

Q. What's it take for a guy to be able to come through in clutch moments like that. It's almost like he's not really fazed by the moment at all?

COACH MCCAFFERY: It's an expectation of himself that he's always had. He's always done it. He's always been good at it. He knows we believe in him. He knows his teammates believe in him. We're running stuff for him. He knows we're going to him. And he enjoys the moment, no question.

Q. Defensively Indiana pushed their defense out a little bit more than they did in Bloomington for like 35 minutes before Bohannon got hot. Looked like you guys were struggling to get the 3-point shots early.

COACH MCCAFFERY: I thought we had a couple of decent looks in the first half that didn't go in. But they were pushing up on him and they were fronting the post hard, pressuring the high-low hard. You're right, they were up.

But Arch has got them fighting and that was part of the

game plan obviously: Come in and we're going to establish ourselves defensively and make it hard, and they did. So give them credit for that.

Q. Do you think your defense kept you in the game when in the first half? You were not hitting from 3?

COACH MCCAFFERY: No question in both halves. I think we had good success with our changing defenses and we played two different zones. We played our press a couple different ways and then we played man.

And the zone was really good. Then they solved it. Then the second half, the man was really good and then they solved it. Went back to the zone. So we got really good performances from those guys in those situations.

Q. Was Joe's back bothering him again?

COACH MCCAFFERY: No, I think he was fine.

Q. You guys made a run to get back into the game in the first half, and you had the backups in there with Luka.

COACH MCCAFFERY: Kriener was great, wasn't he? Kriener, Baer, Connor. I thought Maishe Dailey was great tonight. I thought Connor and Maishe both gave us the depth we needed in the back court, especially when the other guys were struggling and then they came back and got through later.

Q. You had a 9-0 run, the biggest lead in the first half at four. How important was that in the big scheme of things?

COACH MCCAFFERY: It was critical, because then they put Fitzner in, and he made a couple of foul line jumpers. They weren't scoring, getting the ball there, and then they put him in and he made a couple of buckets. Nice to have a lead at that point.

Q. How does everybody feel? After two weeks of this, this has been four amazing games in some regards.

COACH MCCAFFERY: I think it's part of the fun of it, isn't it? I mean, that's -- that's what you sign up for. You come to the Big Ten. You know you're going to play, at Indiana, at Ohio State. Tuesday. Indiana comes here. Maryland. You're playing against great teams, great coaches, national TV audience. I mean, that's what you want. You want to be in those situations. And enjoy it. And I think that's what they're doing, they're enjoying it.

Q. Some of your best crowds have been on Friday nights, which is kind of an abnormal night in college basketball. But in your case, tonight's atmosphere was as good as I can remember.

COACH MCCAFFERY: It was phenomenal.

Q. What do you think of Friday night, and what did you think of tonight?

COACH MCCAFFERY: I think Friday nights are here to stay, clearly. I think TV likes it. I think our fans like it. I want our fans to be pleased, have opportunities. I think they like weekend games. They consider this a weekend game. Friday night, Saturday night, Saturday afternoon. I think they like Friday night games more than they like Saturday night games. I think everybody does.

I wish I could have gone to Patrick's substate game tonight. But I think -- I've said this before -- I prefer, if you ask me to make a ruling, I would leave Friday nights to the high schools and we play on Saturday. But TV's going to dictate that. And there's no reason for me to be all in on this crowd because it was fabulous. It made a big difference in the game.

Q. How good is this Iowa team and how far can they go into March?

COACH MCCAFFERY: I think what we have this year is a mature team. We've got size. We've got depth. And we've got a team that's together and that shares the ball. So those teams can -- it's not like you look and say there's nobody we can't beat. But I think we're also respectful of who we play in the rest of the season, great teams. We play in the Big Ten, great teams, play in a tournament great teams. Any of those teams can beat us. So you've got to just keep grinding and recognize that we have a chance to do something special and we've just got to keep focusing on making it happen.