

Big Ten Conference Men's Basketball Championship

Wednesday February 28, 2018

Fran McCaffery

Luka Garza

Jordan Bohannon

Iowa Hawkeyes

Iowa - 96, Illinois - 87

THE MODERATOR: We'll start with questions for Jordan and Luka.

Q. Jordan, Coach Underwood said you must love to see orange and blue because you blew these guys up in Champaign as well. But to play against them obviously you must have a certain comfort level wherever the looks that they're showing you and plus also playing this well in this building, I was wondering if there's anything maybe a little special about coming here to Madison Square Garden and playing real well?

JORDAN BOHANNON: Obviously anytime you get to play in Madison Square Garden and first time being here and something new. Always want to do when you grow up is play at Madison Square Garden. And think about all the people that played here before and currently playing here.

But Illinois is a really tough team. That was a really tough fight for us to play them tonight. We knew it was going to be a tough first round, and you've got to give them a lot of credit because they worked their butts off on the defensive end and made it really tough for us.

I struggled first half, turned the ball over, had a couple of bad turnovers. But gotta give a lot of credit to my guys especially him right here. They really stepped up tonight and made big-time plays.

Q. You have Michigan tomorrow. What has to happen differently to reverse the two results you got earlier this season?

LUKA GARZA: You know, we're going to get into the film room and watch more film on them. And last time we played them, but we've got to come in here with the same mindset we did today and get the rebound, get to the glass and keep defensive intensity.

They're a great team. They move the ball really well, have a lot of 3-point shooters. We've got to know and



get to the corners and get to different areas on the floor where their shooters are a threat.

Just gotta execute the game plan that our coaches give us.

Q. Jordan?

JORDAN BOHANNON: He said it all.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Questions for Coach McCaffery.

Q. Luka mentioned getting to the film room in preparation for tomorrow's game. What else do you guys have to do on such short notice to reverse the results from earlier in this season?

COACH MCCAFFERY: You know, we have to play better. That sounds very simplistic. But when you get beat twice, we played a little better I thought at home than up there. It's not uncommon.

But you can be a little better defensively, whether we're man or zone. We've got to move the ball a little better. We've got to execute a little bit better. They're not an easy team to guard. They share it. They spread you out. They have multiple 3-point shooters, like Luka said, but they also have multiple drivers. Incredibly unselfish team.

The one guy that I've been incredibly impressed with this year has been Abdur-Rahkman. And nobody talks about that kid. And he's one of the best players in our league.

I thought he had as good a year as anybody in our league this year. I think one of the big reasons why they had the success they had, among a lot of other people. But he's a senior that has been through a lot and has been a really good player for them.

I thought he was a star this year. I really did. But, again, they've got a lot of weapons. They've got depth. They've got speed. They've got size. So they can downshift and go small.

They can play big. But everybody can score. Everybody they put out there can score. You've got to be impressed with Duncan Robinson, starter, and accepts his role coming off the bench. Sixth man of

the year in the league. Tells you about that team.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the resilience of the team that you guys led all but for 20 -- well, 26 seconds and eight second tied. So just talk a little bit about that for this year.

COACH MCCAFFERY: I was really pleased with that aspect. I think you make a great point, because you know, when you're playing Illinois, they're going to keep coming. They fight you.

It seemed like every time we got what seemingly was a comfortable lead, it was not a comfortable lead. They hit a 3. Get a steal. Get a put-back. And it was a game right up until the last possession, seemingly.

So to be able to hold the lead -- we had goofy turnovers that were obviously upsetting at the time and you can't do that. But you gotta give them credit for how they played, and they were up into us and they were challenging. They were anticipating.

But we made the plays that were necessary to win. We got to their free-throw line. We got to the bonus. We got to the double bonus early.

When they're playing physical like that, and the X is on the O, and they're denying the next pass, you've got to put it on the deck. I thought in the second half our decision-making and our passing and our catching and shot selection was really good, much better than the first half.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.