

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball



Q. What's the latest on Joe Wieskamp's injury?

FRAN McCAFFERY: We'll see today. We'll see what he can do. He didn't do anything yesterday.

Q. How optimistic are you? Is it getting better?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah, it's getting better. Just there isn't a lot of time between games. Would be better if there was a little more time.

Q. Is it sprained?

FRAN McCAFFERY: It's not broken, so that's good news.

Q. That means probably more Nicolas then?

FRAN McCAFFERY: And others. Nicholas is obviously a logical guy, but Connor, Maishe, et cetera. We're down some bodies, so everybody has got to step up.

Q. Who do you think you would start if Joe can't play?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Probably Nicolas.

Q. Looks like Tyler is locked in and going maximum minutes this season. How do you feel about this?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I feel good about it. I think he can handle it. With Jack redshirting and Cordell having been hurt, and then Luka and Ryan were in foul trouble the other night, so he pretty much has to stay out there. I think he wants to stay out there. I would, if I was him. I never wanted to come out when I was playing. I don't think he wants to come out. Occasionally he'll ask for a blow, and he's one of those guys that you see the kind of shape he's in, so he doesn't need long, so if he has to come out, I can get him back in there in a minute, minute and a half.

Q. What have you seen from the Iowa State team this year?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I've been really impressed with their team. I think in particular their ball movement. They've got a lot of weapons, and they have some new guys, some that were there last year but didn't play because they were sitting out. But when you have that many weapons, you've got some freshmen, you've got transfers, they play together. Jacobson has looked

really good, Shayok has been terrific, Horton-Tucker, Weiler-Babb has always been really solid. He kind of goes and scores when he has to and then moves it, keeps everybody involved.

But they're getting great play off their guys off the bench. They've got some guys healthy and some guys I guess were suspended, now they're back. So that gives them more depth. I think the other guys benefitted for a little bit of that period of time when the other guys were out, they got a chance to play more. Jacobson's numbers are really good, playing with great confidence. He's a fourth-year player now, played two years in our league.

They present challenges. They can go big if they want to now with some guys back, but they can also go small, play four guards. Anybody can take it off the glass and go. So you know, they've got drivers, but they've also got shooters. But most importantly, seemingly it's an unselfish group.

Q. Will you lean on the zone a little bit more in this game with their ability to dribble drive?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Not necessarily but potentially. I think what we do, we're going to change defenses throughout the game and kind of see what's working. Sometimes you think it's going to be a big zone game and it's not, and you think it's going to be a big man game, and it's not. We'll see how it goes. We'll do both.

Q. You mentioned Iowa State's ball movement. How would you assess your own right now?

FRAN McCAFFERY: It's okay. It needs to be better. It's been good at times. I think we've got a lot of different players who can score, so sometimes they take it on their own. It is a fine line there because you want them to have the confidence and the freedom to do that, and sometimes you're better off just moving it, maybe get something better. But I'm always going to be a guy that kind of gives my guys some freedom to play because I think anything short of that and they'll never play to their capability.

Q. How about with Jordan? Is there anything he's doing in terms of just from a technical standpoint that hasn't shot off, or is it just a bit of a slump?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think with him, he started a little

banged up, started the season -- he had that injury, wasn't himself. I mean, you could tell he's more like himself now. I thought he came out aggressively the other night, hit the three early and hit another one later. I think he's looking for shots that are good shots. I don't think he's putting up bad shots. He's also running the point, moving for the off guard position a little bit now that we have Connor. That's been helpful to him at times.

I'm not really worried about him. I think he'll be fine.

Q. He's taking it inside a little bit more; is that part of the game plan?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think it's a function of how people are playing him, yeah.

Q. Last week you talked about not getting too high because you're ranked and everyone was talking about how great you were. But it seems like you're just the same, that nothing changes for you. Is that fair to say?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I don't think you can. It's a long season. We talked before, it starts way before everybody thinks it starts now, and you have to temper your enthusiasm, and then also you might have a bad practice in September, might have a bad workout in June. You can't get too down. You've just got to keep grinding with it, and if you overreact to a difficult loss, there's nothing productive going to come out of that, and you try to keep your guys on path to continue to be hungry and want to get better. What can we do to get better individually, what can we do to get better collectively, and I think for the most part, you've got to stay positive for that to happen.

You don't want to be unrealistic. You've got to accept defeat, and you shouldn't feel good about it. None of us did. But you don't want that feeling to linger and say, okay, let's go back to work and try to sort out what things were good in that game. There were some good things in that game.

Yeah, the end of the first half we didn't make our free throws, it got away from us a little bit, start of the second half was not good, couldn't make a shot, a couple live ball turnovers, did some good things later on in the half that you didn't realize because the game was maybe out of reach. All right, different team, different game, different day. Let's be better in the next one.

Q. Is Nicholas' shooting kind of right back where he was as a sophomore?

FRAN McCAFFERY: He's been shooting the ball well all summer, all fall. I think he's a good shooter. With him, it's really just a function of if he's taking good

shots, he's going to make him. We have supreme confidence in that. I think last year he felt some pressure to maybe shoot more than what he should be shooting. We were struggling at times, and we were struggling when he was out. He comes back, wants to pick us up. That's the kind of person he is. You've got to love that about him. But as long as he's taking good shots, he'll make them.

Q. Given the long season and the depth being what it is on your team now, is there going to be a spot in the rotation for Till?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Almost has to be, yeah. And I feel good about that because I think he's really worked to that point. It's not like it just kind of fell to him because of the circumstances. He kind of earned it anyway. He's an athlete. He's in his third year. He's physically ready to do some things that maybe he wouldn't have been two years ago.

And I think you're around it as much, you know what's expected, okay, what are we running, what are we in, who's on the floor for them, what's the scouting report. He's got all that. He's smart, and he's got that kind of savvy.

And he can score. I mean, he's not a shooter, but he can score. He can go baseline and finish. He can score in transition. He'll take it and dunk it. Yeah, I'm not afraid to put him out there.