

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball



Q. Fran, what's a reasonable workload for Jordan for games these days, 15, 20 minutes?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Might be a little bit more. We'll see how he's doing that week, how he's doing that particular day.

Q. Is he more of a wing guy in your mind now?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Not necessarily, no. I feel very comfortable with him with the ball, and I think he needs to be utilized in both ways. That makes him harder to guard.

Q. Have you made any decisions on redshirts?

FRAN McCAFFERY: No.

Q. Connor really has a knack for getting the ball to other people and finding shooters. Is that something that comes from being the son of a coach or is there more to it than that?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think there's a lot more to it. He has been watching film since kindergarten, so he does have a certain feel. He's played a lot of basketball, so he's traveled with teams, going back to when we lived in North Carolina. I think he's had good coaches growing up. He had a really good high school coach, obviously.

But the most important thing with him, he has a winning mindset, so he recognizes that we have some talented offensive players on this team that need the ball, and not only that, where do they need to get it, if a guy is coming off a screen you have to put it in a certain place, guy is in the low post you've got to throw it away from the defense. You want your big guys to run, you have to get them the ball. You want your shooters to move without the ball, you've got to throw it to them when they are open. That's the only way we're going to score. So he understands that. He takes pride in it. He's not as concerned with his own scoring, but has always been a scorer in his career. I think he can be that again.

Q. He was watching film of your team in kindergarten?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah, he would come to practice every day, and whenever we had a film session he

would be in there watching. Whenever we watched film as a staff, he'd be in there watching.

Q. I think you have four guys who have redshirted in their careers. What does that do for a team? I mean, four guys is a sizable number.

FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, I think the redshirt rule is a good one. Somewhere along the way, it seems to be viewed as a negative if you stay around for five years. Everybody wants to transfer and play right away. Everybody wants to be immediately eligible. Everybody wants to apply for a waiver. It's not a horrible thing to be in college for five years. More education, you can start to work on a Master's Degree, you can be a bigger, stronger, better athlete, a more knowledgeable basketball player, and I think the rule is in there for a reason, for people to use it. It's certainly proved so far to be something very valuable for Jack and for CJ in particular. Obviously in medical situations that's different.

Q. A quiet night for Bakari the other night. What have you seen out of him?

FRAN McCAFFERY: He's been really good. He's been a good player for us, incredibly versatile, understands things. He's a new guy, but he's not a young guy. He kind of knows where to be, does things instinctively on defense. He's a really good passer and a really good shooter. He didn't shoot a ton the other night.

Q. Is he more of a 2 in your mind, not a 1?

FRAN McCAFFERY: He's both, equally.

Q. Signing day is next week the period opens. How many more would you take in this class? You have four verbals so far?

FRAN McCAFFERY: We would take a couple more.

Q. Patrick played a lot at the 4 the other night. I assume that was because Cordell was out?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah. I really don't want to play him there. He's not a 4. You can play him there against certain lineups, against certain teams. As you know, a lot of teams are now going to four guards or three guards and a small forward. He can do that. But he's better out on the wing. He was active, and he always could score inside. It's going to be harder and harder the better teams that we play for him to do that.

Q. Do you take time during the game to kind of appreciate that you have two sons on your team that you're coaching for the first time?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I do at times take that into consideration, but typically not during the game.

Q. What does that mean to you?

FRAN McCAFFERY: It's a beautiful thing to come to practice every day and see them both, to have them out there in the Hawkeye uniform and remember when we first got here they would sit across the way or come to practice and sit with the managers and shoot on the side. It's been like that for a long time. To see them both out there, and then when they're both out there together sharing the ball and making plays together, it's terrific. A lot of these guys on this team are really good friends of theirs and have been that for some time, going back to even when they were in high school. So to be out there with your friends and competing at this level is something very special.

Q. Do you coach them different?

FRAN McCAFFERY: No.

Q. Is that difficult to find that balance, they're your sons but also your players?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I don't think so. I guess it could be in certain situations, but it hasn't been yet. I don't anticipate it being difficult. I typically tell my guys this is what we need you to do, and everybody we have tries to do it that way. They don't always do it perfectly. I don't expect it to be perfect. That's not what this game is. As long as they're out there trying to do the best that they can to help our team win, it's pretty low key.

Q. What was Connor's summer like going off to Albany to play baseball?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, it wasn't what he hoped it would be because it started off well and then when he got hit by the pitch it really knocked him out for the rest of that summer from baseball. He was at least able to get back here and practice with us as long as it was taped up because he couldn't even dribble for about a week. But then he got better, so at least he was here. In particular with the young guys that we have and with Jordan being out in the summer, I think that was really important for him.

Q. You took teams at Lehigh, Greensboro, and Siena to bigger venues and played schools in larger conferences. What would you try to do in those games, like what the Edwardville coach is facing tomorrow?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think what you do is you want to challenge your program to play tough teams on the road in preparation for what your conference is going to be. I've been impressed with the job he's done, with the

talent that he's brought in. They've got some guys that can really play. They have athletes. They defend. And I think he knows that this is the kind of schedule you need to play to get them ready to compete in the OVC.

I would do the same thing. You think you have a good team, you go on the road and you see how good you are. Can we defend, can we rebound, can we run, can we stay true to who we are in terms of what we want to do offensively and defensively. And it gives you more information moving forward as to how good you can become.

Q. I assume Ryan is okay?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah. He could have gone back in the other night. But I wasn't going to do that.

Q. How do you think Jack performed Monday night?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Jack can play the 5. He's really good there because he has a low-post game and he's holding his ground and he's been a force physically inside. But in addition to that, Cordell will come back soon, and that gives us another guy that can play 4 and 5.

Q. But it's kind of new for Jack to be a low-post guy at this level?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah, but most of his life he's played a lot down low. And was always able to get by with it, the fact that he was on the thinner side. But it also helped him to develop the perimeter skill that he has. The fact that he can dribble, pass and shoot, has great range, and we clearly wanting him shooting that thing out there, as well. He and Luke are a pretty good combination.

Q. Toussaint said he got a little sped up on Monday?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah, I think he and Patrick were both nervous, as to be expected. That's what those games are for. They were a little revved up against Illinois State, as well. It'll take a little bit for that to go away. But I thought their energy level was really good, both of those guys.

Q. What do you tell a freshman going into their first college action going into the game? Do you give them a piece of advice or do you just let them --

FRAN McCAFFERY: We take a very businesslike approach to games, and we try to keep it consistent so that it's not something that you're highlighting to make them think -- we don't want them to overthink it. Just want them to, hey, guys, here's the scouting report information, you have to process it and understand it. These are the things we think we're going to be able to do on offense, these are the things we think we're

going to be able to do on defense. Stay true to that and then don't try to overpenetrate. Don't try to get out of who you are and go make a play that's not there because that's when the mistakes come.

I thought Joe went in a couple times, maybe ill-advised but that's kind of who he is. He was really good with that. I want him getting in the paint. I want him attacking the paint because when he does, he typically finds people, either at the front of the rim or shooters around, and he's also a good finisher for a guy who's not that big. So I would prefer to see him driving the ball.

Q. Ryan kind of a similar role to Nicholas last year, your lone senior that comes off the bench. Are you looking for that kind of impact from him?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah, he's had a really good summer, really good fall, I think, Ryan Kriener, as you would expect. He's a senior. He's smart. He's skilled. He was a little heavy coming into the summer but got himself in much better shape physically, and he looks good. He's a cerebral guy on the court, which impacts a lot of things, most importantly the defensive end, with his communication. He's telling people where to go, what to do. He sees the play develop. That's where information is really important, when the communication comes at the right time versus a second or two late.

Q. It looks like Nicholas Baer made the Raptors G-League team from what I can tell. Was that the tryout route?

FRAN McCAFFERY: No, they targeted him. They really wanted him. They watched him play. I honestly thought he would end up overseas and I thought he'd be great overseas, but he found an opportunity. They invited him out and met with him and then invited him back and wanted to sign him, and he was thrilled with that opportunity. He's going to do it. I think he'll be great.

Q. Luka is probably one of those guys on the defensive end of the floor. How have you seen him improve this year?

FRAN McCAFFERY: Well, that's really been a game changer. As you can imagine, his freshman year, he's not like that because he's not 100 percent sure what to say, and we always tell our guys if you're not then don't say anything. That doesn't help. But he now sees it, feels it, communicates it. He's in great shape physically. You can see that he's sliding his feet well, things he didn't do two years ago he's doing now athletically, and I think it's going to make a big difference for him and for our team.

Q. What do you need from him in terms of rebounding? Does he need to take a step there do

you think?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think he will. He's a guy that could be a double-double guy. I think that's going to be the challenge for him.