

# University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

Saturday, December 2, 2017

## Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball

Penn State - 77, Iowa - 73

### **Q. Coach, 18 turnovers, was that a key difference for you guys?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: No question, because they got 22 points off the 18 turnovers. I thought our decision making at times was really poor. Our defense in the first half was unacceptable. But, I thought there were some good things. Second half defense was better. Second half ball movement was a lot better. We made a couple runs. I thought we kept fighting, that was good.

We just have to be better with our execution in a lot of ways, and that's one of them.

### **Q. Frank Carr got away from you guys in the second. First half you could contain him, was there anything you did different?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Well, you knew he was going to come back. We talked about that in the halftime. In the first half, Stevens went off and Shep Garner went off. So you knew Carr was going to come back in the second half. He's going to have it a lot. I thought at times we guarded him well and at times we didn't. They shouldn't have gotten the three off when we were in the zone. That's unacceptable.

### **Q. It seemed like there were guys trying to do too much at times and then maybe dialing it back at times. How tough of a struggle has it been finding that middle ground?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Well, I think that's a good point. I think that's a challenge all the time, because you want your guys to be aggressive. You want them to be in attack mode. We always say you can't play nuts. So you have to know when to go, when not to go. We've got a couple charges in transition. You know they're going to set up shop, so you've got to go around them or you've got to jump stop. So that was unfortunate. I thought Isaiah got a little tentative after he committed the charge, and we need him to continue to be aggressive. He's got to put that behind him and keep shooting the ball, because we need him to do that. They'll get that figured out.



### **Q. What do you think kept your team from getting over the hump? It seemed like you couldn't get a stop?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: We did it a couple times where we got consecutive stops. I thought our defense was much more active in the second half. They made some big shots. A team makes 12 threes, you're going to have a hard time beating them. Then you go back and say, well, we can't give up 12 threes. The guys that made the threes are the guys for them who make threes. It wasn't like it was the guys that typically don't.

So you know, sometimes that's a tough call because all three of those guys can drive the ball, so you want to close out their space, but know that they are capable, all three of them, of going off the dribble. But our closeouts were not good enough, you know, and that's unfortunate. Because even if they go and score, it's only two and not three.

### **Q. With 12 made threes, how much was that a product of them kind of getting into a rhythm early?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Well, they definitely were in a rhythm early, especially Garner. He hits two early and ends up making four early, and that's what he does. If he has that kind of game, then they're a different team. If he has a 1 for 7 day, then they're not the same team.

So now you've got the five guys that they start are all scorers and they can all shoot threes with the exception of Watkins who is always running to the front of the rim, and he's big and strong. So that makes him hard to guard.

So we tried to mix some defenses. We had a little bit of success with our press, a little bit of success with our zone. Our zone was not good enough. It was okay at times, but it needs to be better.

### **Q. Jordan has to get more than the six shots. How do you get him more looks?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Well, they're chasing up on him. We've got to screen more for him. Whether we're running sets or running motion, we've got to free him up, no question about that. He's got to get more shots.

We're a team that is bigger so we typically want to throw it in, and Cordell's going to get shots. Tyler's

going to get shots, Luka, Ryan. And we're going to post Jack some. But J. Bo's got to get more than six shots.

**Q. Without having that do-it-all point guard that everybody feeds off of, how much of a premium is ball movement and where do you think that is right now?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Well, like I said, it was better in the second half. It was non-existent in the first half. It was all throw it to T.C., and he goes to work. That's not a motion offense. That's not ball movement. That's not screening and cutting and getting people open. He was really good, and that's great, but we've got to play off of that and have others do some things.

Now our 3-point shooting was not good. We had some open threes that didn't go. I didn't think the three-point shooting would be a problem for this team. I think we had good three-point shooters, we just didn't make it today.

**Q. Eight games in, four losses, what is your biggest concern right now?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Consistency. We're really good at times, and we're really not very good at times at both ends. So our offense looks really good at times and we have 18 turns and we make four threes. Our defense is really good at times, but they scored 11-2 to start the game. You can't get that 11-2 at home to start the game. We were not aggressive enough. We were not connected together. So I think the word is consistency. We're really good at certain things, and we're not good at all at others.

**Q. As a Coach, how do you coach that?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Well, to be honest with you, that's typical of most teams. You're always trying to get your team to be more consistent and to be more efficient and better in various areas. The disappointing thing, I think, with this group is we had guys, most of those guys have done that. They have been consistent, they have been connected, and they're not right now. So we've got to do a better job of coaching them up.

**Q. What went into the decision to start Nicholas, and did you get what you wanted out of him?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: I just felt like when he came back, the way he's practiced, he's been really good, and he didn't shoot it well today, but I thought he was a special player. He helps you win so many different ways.

Like the play, when it looked like they were going to go up 9 or whatever, runs the ball down and gets the rebound, and we end up with a dunk at the other end. I mean, those kinds of plays are so valuable to a team.

Veteran guy, gives you another stretch player that can, if we're going to throw the ball inside, then we've got to have some guys that can make threes. You put him, and Isaiah, and J. Bo out there, and they can typically give our big guys some space.

**Q. With you guys being at 4-4, do you take the hug approach or?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: A little bit of both, little bit of both. I think you have to be honest. You know, I think you have to challenge them. But I don't think you can beat them up. I definitely don't think you can point fingers. You start playing the blame game and then don't take any responsibility for yourself, that's me, then I think you lose the locker room.

So I love these guys. They'll get it. It's frustrating, but they're good people. They have character, and we'll get it figured out.

**Q. You were in a similar situation last year and you guys were 3-5, and you rolled out 5. Is that kind of what you say to these guys?**

FRAN McCAFFREY: Yeah, I think you've got to stay the course. We'll tweak some things. But, ultimately, I think you have to build some confidence in your guys. At the same time, those guys expect you to hold them accountable. They know if they didn't play well, they know if they made mistakes. So, you might point it out, you might show it to them, but then you've got to move on. You can't just keep beating the same kid up for the same one mistake he made. Hopefully he won't make that mistake moving forward.