

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

Tuesday, December 20, 2016

Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball



Q. Fran, why did you walk off there without shaking hands?

COACH McCAFFERY: I wasn't pleased with how the game ended and the things that happened. I will say this: I have a lot of respect for Brian and certainly Jeff Horner. I don't think they teach that kind of stuff, but I was not having it. That's not the way to play.

Q. What didn't you like?

COACH McCAFFERY: Were you at the game? Well, then you should know what I didn't like.

Q. Have you ever had that before?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yes. I have.

Q. What did you say?

COACH McCAFFERY: I told my guys I was proud of them, but you can't get caught up in it. The game's over. We don't need Pete getting knocked to the floor. We don't need guys getting up in Jordan's face. We don't need Nicholas Baer's head getting chopped off. We don't need it. We won.

Q. Were you concerned about what might happen in the handshake line?

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, I always am. Whenever there is a contentious situation, I'm always worried about that. The last time I did this, that's exactly what it was. I took my whole team in the locker room. I didn't do that this time. I was disappointed in what happened. Like I said, I'm sure that Brian does not teach that. The kid -- when it happens three times, that's disappointing.

Q. Is this a game maybe a couple weeks ago you may have lost this type of game? It seems like defensively --

COACH McCAFFERY: This is a really good team. I told Brian that before the game. I really like this team for a lot of reasons. Number one, they've got the preseason Player of the Year, but they have really good guards. I mean, Bernstine's terrific. He's a point forward, he's a point guard. They've got two big guys that can score inside. They've got athletes. They've got guys that make shots, and every time it looked like we put them away, they kept coming. That's what

happens when you have your top seven scorers back. They won 17 games last year, so they've got a good team. They run really good stuff, whether it's man or zone. They run really good stuff. So I do think that the way they challenged us will help us, because they're big and strong, and it was a physical game like we're going to see in the Big Ten, so it's good that you play games like that this time of year.

Q. Peter made all 10 free throws, it seemed like getting to the free throw line was a real effort in the second half?

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, it was the way they wanted to play the game. They wanted to get Pete to shoot 4 for 15. They were face guarding him. They were switching on him. They were doubling him. If it was a ball screen, they doubled. I mean, they were on him. That's why he got ten free throws. It's also why he missed 11 shots. So, you weigh it from their side. You say, okay, if we can hold Pete to 4 for 15, we'll probably win the game. Well, we shot 34 free throws because it was that physical.

Q. One of the defensive things he struggled with before the Iowa State game, did you see any of that come back tonight or was it more what North Dakota was doing?

COACH McCAFFERY: I wouldn't say that. I would say a little -- we had a few break downs. But their offense is hard to guard for two reasons. Number one, what they run and who is running it. Okay? All that hand off stuff, hand-off ball screen, swing it, ball screen slip, space, and they move the ball. They have a very unselfish team. That's what I like about this team. So, you know, yeah, they've got some guys, but they share the ball.

They had four guys in doubles, another guy with eight. They do that every game. So, yeah, we had some breakdowns, but sometimes you have breakdowns because the team you're playing is executing well and that's why you're breaking down.

Q. Cordell didn't start because he was late to shootaround?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah.

Q. Was that a punishment that they won't start the game?

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah.

Q. Would you say he responded well with nine points and 11 rebounds?

COACH McCAFFERY: I knew he'd respond. He's a great kid. I was not happy because when you've got a team that is sort of putting it together, those are the kinds of distractions you don't need. He has to understand that. There are no academic pressures right now. The semester's over. Nothing else to do but show up for shootaround and get there on time. He'll be on time.

Q. Brady Ellingson had a nice game --

COACH McCAFFERY: Brady was spectacular. He plays the game at his pace. He moves it, he moves without it. He shoots when he's open. He throws the ball to open people when he's covered, and he's playing really good defense. His defense is going to another level this year. I'm really proud of him.

Q. The time that Ahmad has been starting ever since Tyler's injury. What is it about him that we may not see on the stats? What is it that you like about him that we saw a couple backdoor dunks from him tonight?

COACH McCAFFERY: Usually it's his defense, because he can move his feet. He can guard a smaller guy. He can guard a bigger guy because he's so strong. He's sort of active. He'll block a shot. He'll get rebounds out of his area. He didn't rebound that much tonight, obviously. But I thought he was really good until he got in foul trouble, then he was not as effective.

Q. What do you think about Tyler's chances for Thursday?

COACH McCAFFERY: Slim.