

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Fran McCaffery

Men's Basketball Press Conference



Indiana - 81, Iowa - 69

Q. What kind of happened in the second half there where it just didn't seem like you were able to hit shots? Was that due to shot selection or was that just due to just the ball didn't go in for awhile?

FRAN MCCAFFERY: You know what, a little bit of both. Our defense wasn't good and our offense was a little bit stagnant, I thought, a little bit too relying on Luka. We did get it into the bonus. We did out-rebound them. But our defense, no matter what we were in was not good and I think it all stemmed from there.

You're right. We did have some good looks at it. We had it at point blank range a couple times and we missed some free throw. It was a combination of errors there.

Q. What happened to CJ and how was his absence felt in the second half?

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, it was felt in the first half too because he wasn't ready to go. It seemed like it was going to be okay, but he was not himself. I think you could tell that. So he's got a lower leg injury that he's going to have to take some time to get better with.

Q. Obviously, want to talk about the late drought. Was there any buttons you thought to push when the team was struggling there that you wish you would have pushed, I guess, looking back?

FRAN MCCAFFERY: No, I thought we were mixing our motion and our sets. We got some good looks, I thought. Like I said, we got it to point blank range a couple times. We ran some late game stuff and got it to the rim. We got to the free-throw line. We were in the bonus pretty early.

I think when you talk about pushing buttons, you're talking about personnel. We gave Tony a shot, which I thought made sense with CJ being unavailable. And then we had foul trouble with Keegan and Jack and Connor, so we kind of rotated those guys as best we could. I could have gone

back to Joe T, I guess, because he was pretty good coming down the stretch. But I thought with CJ out, we needed J-Bo out there as another threat to help protect Luka. And shots weren't falling for anybody, except for Luka.

Q. Jordan had had such a good stretch here and then couldn't seem to do anything tonight. Was there anything in particular they did to stop him?

FRAN MCCAFFERY: They did what everybody does. They got up in his face and they chased him around and he had a couple in and outs early and just never really got comfortable.

Q. Ultimately, what is the lesson for your team here? Obviously it's just one loss in January. I know they're disappointed. But what did you tell your guys?

FRAN MCCAFFERY: I think we have to understand a little bit better what this league is and the quality of the teams that are coming in here that we're going to face on the road. I thought up until now we did a pretty good job of that. I thought they were tougher than we were tonight, I thought. And that's disappointing. Our execution wasn't sharp. As I said before, we became a little too reliant on Luka. And, I mean, he gets 28. But we really I think became too reliant on him.

To beat good teams you have to play better defense than that. I think you can talk about a lot of things, but it starts with that. They were able to move the ball, give them credit. They executed and they moved it, they shared it. I thought they played harder, and we still had a shot. So we did not play well, we got outplayed, and that happens. And you're right, you got to learn from it. You don't want to let it linger. I'm not in there blaming individuals. You didn't do this and you should have done that and, it's we and us. We didn't execute and didn't complete the game plan, didn't fight hard enough tonight.

Q. You have eight days until the next game, as it is now, and that's an unusual amount in this time of year. How do you make good on those eight days?

FRAN MCCAFFERY: Well, I think we obviously got to get CJ healthy. Hopefully those eight days will help him. We need to stay healthy. We have to be smart. We've just got



to go back to work. We got to understand, break the film down and look at what we -- we did some things well, like I said. A lot of times when you lose it's, like, we were horrible at everything. We weren't. We did some things well. We executed well at times. We were up at half. But I think we had a few too many uncharacteristic turnovers. I think 12 is too many for us. That number has to go down, so we got to take better care of the ball. We did outrebound them, so that means we fought on the glass. That's good. But our slides in the zone weren't good. Our man-to-man early wasn't good. Our press was fair.

There were times when we executed really well and got good shots and sometimes the ball doesn't go in and that happens, but there were times when we didn't execute, and primarily in our motion offense in the second half we didn't execute well at all.

Q. You referenced that you thought the team wasn't, I don't remember what the wording was, but not ready for this type of game in the Big Ten, which is surprising to me from a veteran team. Did that surprise you? Did you see signs of that and why do you think that happened?

FRAN MCCAFFERY: I think it was a little surprising because we had been up for the challenge pretty much in every other game. We played a pretty tough schedule up until now and I thought we fought pretty hard. Even Gonzaga, we didn't shoot it well but I thought we fought hard.

I thought, at Minnesota, we did some things down the stretch, but we still scored 95 and the game was still into over time, we came back and took the lead.

So there were also some good things today, but we needed to be sharper, we needed to be better, we needed to execute better than we did and if you don't you're going to get beat in this league.

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