

University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Coach Fran McCaffery Men's Basketball Press Conference



Q. Just checking in, looking ahead to this weekend. Have you guys been trying to schedule any replacement games for Nebraska, working with the Big Ten on that?

FRAN McCAFFERY: No, just really focused on Indiana. I'm sure the league is working on that. It's probably doable, but probably a little more complicated than it might appear. It's obviously new territory for all of us, and you're working with a lot of different networks. And then you've got to find out when those teams can play. So I think it's just going to be movable parts, that's all.

Q. So you think it might happen still possibly?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think there's a possibility games could be changed, moved, added. I do. But I don't have any definitive answers for you as to what.

Q. Tell us a little bit about what you think about Indiana. It looks like they're a really good defensive team, as always.

FRAN McCAFFERY: Very good defensive team. They've got a lot of weapons. They're deep. They've got one of the best players in the country in Trayce. I think Race Thompson has really taken his game to another level. I think at the end of last year you saw that coming. But they've got a lot of good players: Franklin, Durham, Phinisee, their young guys coming off the bench. So there's a lot of ways they can go.

Q. I wanted to ask you about your three forwards coming off the bench, Patrick, Jack and Keegan. Have you ever had kind of that skill set off the bench in terms of what they can do with blocked shots, getting to the free-throw line, offensive rebounds, all that they can bring you?

FRAN McCAFFERY: No is the answer to that question. Usually those guys are -- players of that caliber are starting, so it's nice to have them in particular because of I think what you mentioned: Their skill sets are versatile.

They can all guard more than one position. All three of them can make a three. All three of them can put it on the deck. And what's been interesting is they seem to all play well together, when they're out there together.

It's a nice situation to be in, if anybody gets in foul trouble or you want to have a different look out there.

Q. What has impressed you the most about Jordan's play over the last five games?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think his floor game. Obviously he's shot it well, and for him and for us that's important. But he's playing the point, and you want him to be able to make plays for other people, get the ball to the right people, throw it inside. But also we've been able to take advantage of the fact that he doesn't always have to have the ball. We've got other folks that can handle it and kind of move it around a little bit. But even then, he's finding people.

I think the complete skill set that he provides as a scorer and as a passer -- and just leadership and toughness, as well.

Q. I think a lot of people, myself included, would have thought that the home-court advantage would have waned this season without fans. Looking at the conference record, home court is still a pretty potent thing, and it certainly has been for you guys. Why is that?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I just think there's just some innate advantages. You don't have to travel, familiarity. But I still kind of agree with your original premise, that it won't be as much of a factor this year over the long haul. It's not just the same. When we played at Maryland it wasn't the same as it's been when you come out on the floor at that place in years past. You guys have been there. It's a different deal.

Same thing here; people come out on the floor and our place is full. It's a different situation.

But I just think teams are always going to be more comfortable at home, regardless whether there's anybody there or not. Hopefully we can continue to play well here.



Q. Patrick has played, I think, 55 minutes over the past four games, hasn't had a turnover. Seems like something has really clicked with him. If so, what is that? And do you ever just take a moment and think about Patrick's journey and how he's contributing for a top-10 team and do you ever take a moment and appreciate where you guys are at now?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I do, in particular for him, just kind of cherish every moment that he's out there, and when you see him with a big smile, you see him having fun, you see him enjoying his teammates and he loves these guys, and then you see him play well, as you pointed out. He's not turning it over. He's got really good chemistry, like you said, with Keegan and with Jack. Those guys play well together, provide great length.

He's always been a player that puts a premium on winning, so he's not going to hunt shots. He never did. Even when he was the leading scorer at West High he didn't hunt shots. He moved the ball, he shared the ball, he plays defense, he rebounds. He's just going to keep getting better. But I'm just thrilled for him, and it puts a smile on my face when I see him having fun.

Q. I wanted to follow up on the schedule stuff. I know maybe your attitude is hey, tell us when to be there and we'll be there and be ready to play, but how involved are you in this process of trying to reschedule these games?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I'm not involved at all. Mr. Barta is. I spoke to him today about it. It's something that they're working on. It's a unique situation to say the least. We'll get it figured out. We'll get the games in.

It's a little more complicated than it would appear. This isn't a Summer League where you're just moving games around. This is major networks that want particular teams on their network, and they figure that out at the front end, and now everything has to be changed with what other programming is going on.

Obviously safety is at the front end of it; when will Nebraska's team be able to show up, when is Fred going to feel better. Same thing with Tom and his program. We kind of built in a two-game cushion at minimum that if we had games canceled in the non-conference we were going to play two additional Big Ten opponents. It wouldn't count in the league standings. That was decided. But of course we got all of our non-conference games in, but we still could play some of our one-plays in place of another team potentially and play that team twice.

The league is working on that. They're working with the

networks, and as far as I'm concerned, I'll just tell our team, let's get ready for Indiana, and then we'll deal with the next game on our schedule.

Q. Is there any reason to think CJ Fredrick will be limited tomorrow night? I know he had a little ankle or foot the other night.

FRAN McCAFFERY: I don't think so. We'll see today. We're going to practice today. We'll see how he's feeling. He's looked fine, so we'll see with him.

Q. Do you have any thoughts on the NCAA Tournament? They came out with actual dates. I know we talked last week about you wish they could push it back but now there's firm dates. Any thoughts on how they structured it pro or con?

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think it makes a lot of sense how they did it, but again, I still wish we would get the rest of the games in before we play the NCAA Tournament. That's my theory. But obviously there's more to it. Hopefully we'll get our games in. Everybody else will get their games in. You want everybody to be healthy at that time. That may be an impossibility, but I think the NCAA and each institution are doing the best they can as far as testing is concerned.

It may get to the point towards the middle end of February, beginning of March where we're -- instead of having three or four days off you're playing four games in seven days, something like that. If that's the case, that's what we'll do.

Q. There was a report about the Big Ten Tournament may be moving to Indianapolis. Your thoughts on that with kind of the NCAA Tournament being in --

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think it makes a lot of sense. Once you start hearing stuff like that, you figure it's probably just going to happen. But in terms of how it relates to us, if it's in Chicago, we'll show up in Chicago. If it's in Indianapolis, we'll show up there. I like the idea that if it was there, hopefully we'd just stay there.

Whatever they think makes the most sense from a safety perspective, that's what we'll do.

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