

# University of Iowa Basketball Media Conference

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Iowa City, Iowa, USA

## Coach Fran McCaffery

Men's Basketball Press Conference



**Q. Does it maybe make you guys more challenging with all the different stories you may have?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: Yeah, I think it does. From game to game, it presents opportunity for a number of different guys who could be in double figures that day, what lineup is clicking at any particular time. Last couple years we were pretty set with our top seven or eight guys, and that could change from game to game.

I do think there's a couple that stand out that we certainly hope are at or near the top pretty much all the time, but it's nice to be able to know that you have some other guys that are ready to step up when you need them.

**Q. Patrick has had so many issues with stamina and things like that. Is all that behind him now?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think so. He was pretty much there until he had the sprained ankle situation, and that set him back. He's pretty close to being back to 100 percent now.

**Q. If he starts making threes consistently, how much is that going to help his game evolve on offense?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think a tremendous amount. In some ways you could probably say that about everybody. If they're making threes, it sets up your drive. It creates more space for other players because they're going to be chasing you more rather than be in the gap. He's a good 3-point shooter. He was never a volume 3-point shooter. He was always a scorer. Even in high school when he averaged a bunch of points, he made some threes, but he was back-cutting and getting out of the break and shooting pull-ups and leaners and floaters. He has a knack for being able to make those kinds of shots.

But he's really worked on it, his 3-point shot. This summer he shot about a thousand every day, and that's going to make a big difference for him.

**Q. He seems to have a real joy for the game; is that something that is because he's more outgoing or is it a**

**little different than some?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think it's a combination of that. He has a lot of personality. But loves the game. He loves to play. He enjoys it.

When you work the hours that he does, it can't be work. It has to be what you love.

I think he loves his teammates, too, and recognizes that we have a different group. But we have a chance to come together and be really good. He wants to be a part of that.

**Q. Besides the obvious questions about rotations and where players fit, et cetera, what long-range questions -- what questions do you have unanswered about this team that you might know in January?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: With the roster that we have, we have a lot of options. I think we're settling into what we think is going to look like a normal rotation, but you get into January and you're dealing with does anybody get injured, is anybody in foul trouble, can you absorb that over the long haul in this league. It's so physical, it's so grueling, you need all your weapons.

It is going to be somewhat different when you look at what we've had the last three years with Cook, Garza, Bohannon, Wieskamp. Those guys were big-minutes guys, going to be on the floor at the end of the game. You put Connor in there, of course we had Isaiah Moss and some other guys. But those guys are going to be on the floor at the end of the game.

I trust a lot of these guys. It's not like -- I'm looking and saying, okay, I trust this group, those guys can get some minutes, but I don't know that I would trust them at crunch time. I don't think that's the case.

I think over the course of November and December, we'll see where things end up.

**Q. Filip said in the postgame presser that over the last two weeks y'all have been emphasizing getting up into people's faces and that translated into the game. Was there maybe a specific moment that prompted that type of message, and how did you see that play out in the game?**

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FRAN McCAFFERY: No, it's more a function of we've got a lot of guys that can play, so if we're making substitutions and those guys are fresh, then I think you have to apply defensive pressure. If you're playing the same six or seven guys for 40 minutes, as much as you want the same pressure, the reality is they're not going to be able to apply the same way as if they're rested.

I do think we also have, in conjunction with that first point, you have length and speed, and you have some guys coming off the bench. While they don't have a ton of experience, they have been here, Ahron and Tony and Kris, Josh, that group in particular. They can provide some things that -- they've been through a really good season. They've watched really good players in front of them compete. They've competed against them. They can come in and impact the game and do it in a way that -- again, in conjunction with what Joe Toussaint is capable of doing at the point of pressure is really going to be impactful.

**Q. Have you had other teams even at other places, Siena and Greensboro, that you put as much defensive pressure as this team is going to do?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: My Siena teams were really good. They had the ability to do that. They would clamp you. But I had a very special starting five. They were elite. What they had the ability to do was score in the 90s and pretty much get a stop whenever they wanted it. Okay, we need two or three stops in a row, now -- but they were playing heavy minutes.

It's really hard to do if you're playing heavy minutes, especially if you're playing fast the way we do on -- we're running on makes and misses and we're pushing and driving and the running motion. We're not walking up, running a set, everybody slows down, half the time guys walk down the floor, and the teams that play that way -- we don't play that way. If you're going to really be exerting a lot of effort on offense and you've got to turn around and do it on defense, then you need bodies.

**Q. In terms of looking at Longwood's roster, how they're built, very similar to Slippery Rock, how much maybe the small ball rotations, the two 6'9" that you're talking about, how much of that will we see on Tuesday?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: You'll see that a lot, not just necessarily for this game. Obviously, Longwood is on another level from Slippery Rock. They have some talented guys that produced last year. They have some new faces. They're much more physical, have much more

size and experience.

So I think in terms of matchup size-wise, we could go with a smaller lineup if we wanted to and wouldn't have to play our 5 men as much, but at the same time you want to get those guys some opportunity and experience, as well.

**Q. Looks like you have games roughly every three days from now through quite an extended period. Is that a good thing?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think so. You get to a point where you bring them in in June and you're going against each other every day for a long time, and it gets to the point when we had our closed scrimmage with Bradley, it was good to see some new faces. Same thing with Slippery Rock, and now it's time to play other people. I think everybody pretty much gets to that point.

**Q. Is there a player what maybe sets the tone defensively and in practice or is that kind of a collaborative effort?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think it's collaborative. When you talk about that, it starts with the point of attack, so you're thinking Joe and Ahron in particular, but it doesn't do you any good if Joe and Ahron are applying pressure and there's no pressure on the next pass or the next pass. I think our activity level has been really good, and it's been emphasized and guys are buying in.

**Q. These are probably the worst people to ask about preseason rankings, but do you think you're going to be better than maybe the world thinks?**

FRAN McCAFFERY: I think we have a really good team. We recognize how tough this league is. But I don't think anybody in our business, and that's players and coaches, really put much into that because everybody has got different opinions, and it doesn't matter.

I mean, that's what people get paid to do, and it can be fun for some folks, but the reality is what's going to end up happening is what matters.

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