

# Iowa position breakdowns: Forwards (premium)

*In the first of a two-part series previewing the upcoming Iowa basketball season, we examine what the team has to offer at the forward position. To read about [the team's guard play, click here.](#)*

By Brendan Stiles

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For the three seasons Todd Lickliter was head coach of the Iowa men's basketball team, there was more of an emphasis on shooting the ball, particularly from the perimeter. What ended up happening was teams found ways to score inside on the Hawkeyes.

Since Fran McCaffery took over last March, the emphasis is now on playing a more up-tempo style that requires more production in the interior.

What the Hawkeyes lack in height doesn't lack hunger or determination to play better than ever, especially now that there's more of a chance to play better.

Gone is the likes of Aaron Fuller, who transferred to USC last spring after leading Iowa in scoring a year ago. But the Hawkeyes do have a couple of veterans returning, as well as some youth looking to provide an immediate impact.

Highlighting this group is Jarryd Cole, the lone senior on this team and the likely starter at the 5-position when Iowa opens its season against South Dakota State on Nov. 14. One of the few things carrying over from the previous regime is the leadership he has provided both on and off the court.

"He's vocal, he's respected by his teammates, and he's a

talented player," McCaffery said back on Oct. 14 at his press conference during the team's Media Day. "Physically, he looks as good as he probably ever has.

"You can tell that he's really hungry to have a phenomenal senior year."

Cole had his knee scoped shortly after last season concluded, and didn't participate in the Prime Time League this past summer. The Kansas City native not only said he is ready to go, but that he's ready for what's going to be asked of him in the new style of play.

"I probably lost a little bit of weight, but not much," Cole said. "I would say with the conditioning and everything we've been doing, I'm a lot more winded. We'll be ready to run for sure."

Although there was skepticism amongst fans whether Andrew Brommer would stick around after last season, the junior from Rosemount, Minn., didn't bail. In fact, if his play this past summer in the Prime Time League proves as an indicator, Brommer is going to be a bigger focal point for the Hawkeyes this season.

Like Cole, Brommer's numbers weren't the best by any stretch under Lickliter. But McCaffery has spoken highly of Brommer and expects him to play a substantial role.

Knowing that more minutes are going to be there is something that excites Brommer.

"It's kind of a fresh start for all of us, including me ... mostly myself," he said. "I think that's a really good positive."

Meanwhile, there has been buzz surrounding the addition of freshman Melsahn Basabe since he de-committed from McCaffery's former school Siena and decided last May to play for him at

Iowa. Basabe is listed at 6-7, and is expected to start right away for this team.

"His length, his explosiveness and his offensive skill level, while it will get better, it's pretty good right now," McCaffery said. "I think little by little, what you're going to see is a really good player become great."

Basabe has dealt with the pressure before of being his high school team's main focus. The Glen Cove, N.Y., native has found it refreshing to pick up on things from some of the veteran players such as Cole and Brommer who play similar positions and have dealt with playing in the Big Ten.

"It has been priceless," Basabe said about what he has picked up from them. "Coming from high school, when you're one of the more talented players on the court, you start taking stuff for granted. This is college and everybody is good, so you got to take a different mental approach."

"I had to learn that early on in September, and I feel like I have really been getting more comfortable as the weeks go on."

Also listed at 6-7 is freshman forward Zach McCabe, who has a solid outside game to complement what he can also do in the paint.

"Hopefully I'll be able to get on the court and just be working my hardest," the Sioux City native said. "I want to be that player that if I get in, just be that type of player who works hard, helps teammates, and wins games."

The Hawkeyes are also looking to receive some contributions this year from junior Devon Archie, who ended up redshirting last year due to a shoulder injury after transferring to Iowa from Vincennes Community College in Indiana.

Archie described sitting out last year as difficult, but also as "a learning experience." He talked about how the

physicality of the conference stood out to him, and it is something he has worked on preparing for.

“I recognized it’s real physical down there,” he said as he listed off a list of things he learned. “Having a go-to move, which I’ve been working on all summer, finishing around the basket, passing, doing the things to help my team.”

McCaffery made clear that once Archie was 100 percent that his opportunity would come, especially because the 6-9 forward has an understanding of the style of play that will be implemented at the offensive end.

“This is his chance,” McCaffery said. “He’s going to get a chance to play, and I feel good about his contribution.”