

Hawkeyes snap losing skid, down Hoosiers for first Big Ten win

By Brendan Stiles

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IOWA CITY, Iowa – After suffering six straight losses to open Big Ten play, the Iowa Hawkeyes finally cracked the win column for the first time in 2011, defeating Indiana on Sunday at Carver-Hawkeye Arena, 91-77.

The victory puts Iowa in a 3-way tie for ninth place with Indiana and Michigan at 1-6 in league play, and the Hawkeyes are now 8-11 overall.

Iowa had a pair of freshmen that were the catalysts in this win. Forward Melsahn Basabe posted a double-double with 20 points and 10 rebounds, while guard Roy Devyn Marble came off the bench and shot 8-of-13 from the floor en route to a career-high 18 points.

Also scoring in double-figures for the Hawkeyes were junior guard Matt Gatens with 19 points, and sophomore forward Eric May with 11 points.

“I thought from a consistency standpoint today, the best we’ve been,” Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said. “You look at how many guys scored, how many guys scored in double figures. A few many turnovers, 16. Assists good, outrebounded them, so a lot of good things.”

The game began with Iowa and Indiana going back and forth, but the Hawkeyes eventually jumped out to a 20-8 lead in the first half when the Hoosiers called their first timeout of the game. From there, it was all Iowa.

"We had some close opportunities in some games we let get away," Gatens said. "It was nice to see us bounce back, come out here and get the job done. We've really paid attention and locked into the game plan, and just played well throughout the whole 40 minutes."

The Hawkeyes finished shooting 30-of-52 from the field. Even more impressive for Iowa was going 27-of-39 from the free-throw line in a contest that saw a combined 53 fouls called on both teams.

As for Indiana, the Hoosiers shot a meager 26-of-70, and the 37.1 percent shooting was easily the lowest field-goal percentage the Hawkeyes have held any Big Ten opponent to this season.

"Our effort was there," senior center Jarryd Cole said. "If you can get the loose balls, the 50/50 balls, and outwork the other team, then you have a good chance of winning that game."

Iowa took a 43-33 lead into the locker room at halftime. When it appeared Indiana would make a run early in the second half, the Hawkeyes shifted the momentum back in their favor thanks in large part to two dunks by May, the second of which forced a Hoosier timeout as the crowd stood and roared.

"I wanted to show people that I could dunk, actually, after the first half," May said. "Jarryd ran [the second dunk] perfect. He said he was like the fullback there. He just blocked it the whole way down and led it right to the basket."

Now that Iowa is in the win column, its focus moves ahead now to two more road games during the month of January, the first of which comes Jan. 26 when the Hawkeyes visit Penn State. The Nittany Lions are 10-8 overall, and will be well-rested off their bye this weekend following a heartbreaking 63-62 loss at No. 14 Purdue on Jan. 19.

Despite the record, however, Penn State has already won home

games this season against Michigan State and Illinois, both of whom were nationally ranked as of Sunday.

“Now, we got a win,” McCaffery said. “Now, we have to go on the road and play a really good team. This one’s behind us now.”