

# 2/11/2011: Fran McCaffery teleconference transcript (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery held a teleconference with the local media on Friday prior to the Hawkeyes' game on Feb. 13 against Minnesota at Carver-Hawkeye Arena.

Below is the complete transcript from the interview:

**On how big rebounding will be on Sunday after what occurred against Wisconsin last Wednesday:**

*"Well, it's even different now because with [Al] Nolen out, they've played with a big lineup a lot. You know, they play [Blake] Hoffarber and [Rodney] Williams with the three big guys. So they're even a tougher team to rebound against now. They're clearly one of the best rebounding teams we will face with that kind of size. It's absolutely going to be critical, of course, with [Trevor] Mbakwe at the 3 and Williams at the 2. Not too many teams in the country are that big, if any."*

**On if there was any progress taken away from the overtime loss to the Badgers:**

*"You know, I'll be honest with you. I view every game that way. I mean, even if we have what you consider to be a bad game, and clearly, we did a lot of good things in the Wisconsin game, I thought defensively we were good. A couple of breakdowns in key spots. We've learned from that. I thought we ran. You know, it was unfortunate that we had a couple of opportunities with alley-oops that didn't go, and that would have been nice. But it's one of those things where you look at*

it and say, 'We didn't play as well as we are capable of playing, and we were right there.'

"Defensively, I thought we locked in to [Jordan] Taylor. We give him 6-for-18, that's pretty good. But then the flip side is he made big buckets late, which is what he always does, so that's disappointing. You know, if you think about the biggest buckets made in the game, [Tim] Jarmusz made one, and we were willing to live with that, but [Jon] Leuer and Taylor made buckets, and they're going to make some. They're just too good, both of them. But you would like to get a stop there.

"The biggest thing we into that game from a personnel standpoint was could [Melsahn] Basabe come back against a big, strong, physical team with veterans, and have the kind of game he had coming off a great game at Indiana? To me, that was a big thing for us, and I thought he was great. With three blocks, 13 [points] and 11 [rebounds], he was getting mugged and still had a good shooting percentage, made his free throws. I was really proud of him."

#### **On the importance of Basabe having good games back-to-back:**

"Yeah. You know, we've been talking about that. You know, sometimes it's a function of foul trouble for him. He gets in early foul trouble, he kind of gets sideways, so we try to keep him out of foul trouble and just tell him to go rebound and be solid. We didn't put him on Leuer, so he was able to stay out of foul trouble. Now in this game here [against Minnesota], he had a good game against those guys up there. I think he can play well against them again, but when you play [Colton] Iverson and [Ralph] Sampson and Mbakwe together, it puts a lot of pressure on all of our post players to rebound and defend and defend the high-low, and all of that.

"For Melsahn, I think it was a real step in the right direction. I think what you're seeing is a guy who just, every game, is learning how to play quality, veteran players at this

level. You just don't have a night where you can coast and still get your 15 and 10. You just can't do that. You go to work for every basket and every rebound that you can get. It's fun to watch him grow and develop."

**On how much rebounding is technique as opposed to willingness to get the basketball:**

"You know, I think it's always more a function of willingness to go get the basketball than it is technique. At the same time, if you have a situation where you feel like you have to double, like if we're doubling Taylor on a ball screen, or doubling Leuer in the post, and a missed shot goes, well now you have an uncontested running rebounder that has to be accounted for. That becomes a matter of technique then. So somebody is going to have to slide over and get in front of that guy, so he doesn't have a free run right to the rim. They got a bunch of those in the Wisconsin game, so that was a technique breakdown, specifically in that game."

**On whether Minnesota having a bigger lineup this time impacts more than just rebounding:**

"Well, it impacts what Tubby [Smith] does. He might play more zone, but he may not. But he has played zone, so we'll have to score against zone. It may be we play more zone, depending upon who's on the floor. But the interesting thing is what he has also done is he has gone small. So now all of a sudden, he'll play Mbakwe and Williams, [Chip] Armelin, [Austin] Hollins and Hoffarber. So he does both, and he'll do both in our game. We'll see all kinds of lineups."

"The area that I think has changed mostly for them is Hoffarber is one of the best shooting guards in the country, and he has had to assume a great deal of the ball-handling responsibilities, which he can do. He's intelligent. He's talented. He can play the point. But it changes everything for him in terms of his responsibilities. When you go into this

*game, it's really dramatically different than the last time we played them."*

**On getting points from more than four players like the last time Iowa played Minnesota:**

*"Well, you know, that was rare for us. We've been getting pretty good play off the bench. There were times where we'd get a ton of points off the bench. I don't really think that will be the case again. I mean, I always remember that. I was amazed that we were as close as we were late in that game with only four guys scoring the ball. We're going to need more of that to beat this team."*

**On Zach McCabe's current play and whether he's in a slump:**

*"It's nothing he's doing wrong. You know, they're guarding him differently. They're up into him because they know he can shoot. I think he's doing a lot of good things. He's putting it on the deck. I felt bad for him. He had the bunny close and he missed it. He rushed it. He has done that a few times. But I think Zach has been a real, real solid player, and I think his point production is really more of a function of how people are paying attention to him when he comes in, more so than anything he is doing wrong."*

**On whether Devon Archie will be able to play on Sunday after missing the Wisconsin game:**

*"I have to see. We did not practice yesterday. So we'll see today when we get to practice has he been headache-free. Yesterday was a good day for him to see. If he didn't have a headache, then we could put him through the test to see if he can perform and pass those tests, then he'll practice and he'll play. But we've got another day, so if we can't do it today, then we'll see if he can do it tomorrow. Actually, if he was headache-free on Saturday and could pass the test on Sunday, then he can go ahead and play. We've got some time yet."*

**On how beneficial it would be to have Archie back on the floor against Minnesota:**

*"Well, we can use him. We really could. He has been playing well, and they're so big. He gives you a shot-blocker and a rebounder and a runner, because we want to run. And he outlets the ball. So I'm hopeful that he can play. He wants to play. But again, concussions are such a funny thing. You try to determine the level of seriousness. Some are worse than others. But the reality is different people react differently to them.*

*"Again, I keep going back to it. Until he doesn't have any headaches, he's going to be on the side, and then he still has to pass the mobility stuff. We'll see. We're monitoring him. He was in much better spirits on Wednesday, and I didn't see him yesterday. But on Wednesday, he was feeling like he was improving. That was, to me, the encouraging thing. He was feeling a lot better. He had one of those steady headaches, and now, they were kind of off and on. I think he's making progress."*

**On whether Bryce Cartwright has become more aggressive offensively or has always been by nature:**

*"You know, it's interesting. He's just one of those guys that takes the ball and goes, and he's good at it. He has probably always done it his entire life, and we've kind of given him that role. He has made a number of shots at the end of the shot clock, at the end of the half, at the end of the game at IU. I thought that shot [end of regulation against Wisconsin] was in. We called the play for him, and he did a great job with it. I was happy with the shot. We were all disappointed it didn't go in. But I would not be afraid to go to him, and he would not be afraid to take that shot, by any means."*

**On how Devyn Marble's performance against Wisconsin could help him in the long run:**

*"Well, it's going to be immeasurable. It's one of the things that we've talked about. He was in that group of guys that was trying to figure out if they still want to come. I told him, 'You're going to get a chance to play, you're going to get a chance to play through your mistakes, you're going to get a chance to be on the floor.' And that's what it's all about. Everybody in recruiting, they want everything wrapped up neatly. It's not always exactly what you hope it can be, but I felt like the scenario he was walking into was as good as any situation possible for him.*

*"If you think about it, it wasn't only this game. He has been out on the floor a lot of games at the end. He was on the floor a lot of games at crunch time, whether it's the very end or not. He's seemingly involved in a lot of our runs and a lot of our lineups that seem to click. I think he would probably, to be honest with you, be playing a lot more. He's a freshman whose strength and conditioning are really put to the test every night. You'll see him sometimes when he is just shot, and we got to go get him. He's playing great, we don't want to take him out, but we sort of feel like we owe it to him and to the team to get him out, and then put him back in.*

*"I put him back in the other night because he had gotten a rest, and Eric May was out running around chasing Taylor. He's a little bit stronger, but he was getting winded himself, so it ended up being a great substitution for two reasons: Number One, He ends up making plays off the dribble that really impacted our chance to win the game, but he was also fresh in terms of guarding Taylor. But also, his length. Guarding somebody who is that talented at the point guard position, his length is clearly a factor."*

**On whether Archie's injury came in practice or during Iowa's game at Indiana on Feb. 5:**

*"It was the Indiana game."*