

Spartans bounce Hawkeyes from Big Ten tourney

By Brendan Stiles

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INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. – Iowa's opponent at the 2011 Big Ten Tournament was different, but the result didn't change on Thursday.

Despite maintaining a seven-point lead in the second half, a 14-2 run by Michigan State doomed the 10th-seeded Hawkeyes, and Iowa left Consecration Fieldhouse with a 66-61 first round loss, marking the fifth straight Big Ten Tournament loss for the Hawkeyes.

As a result, Iowa finishes its 2010-11 season with an overall record of 11-20. Meanwhile, the seventh-seeded Spartans will play Friday in the quarterfinals against No. 2 seed Purdue.

Even with the 11-20 mark, Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery didn't share regrets.

"You look at our record, and you wonder what it's like every day," McCaffery said. "Every day, these guys came with it. They respected each other, they played with tremendous heart and determination."

The story of this game was the second half, when that determination really began to show. After trailing 33-31 at halftime, the Hawkeyes kept swinging away and looked to take control when a 3-point play by sophomore forward Eric May put Iowa ahead 52-45 with 11:40 remaining.

Then came the Michigan State run.

"When you're up by seven, you got to focus on getting stops,"

May said. "We were not putting stops together, and that's what hurt."

Falling behind 59-54, the Hawkeyes would eventually respond and cut the lead to 59-58. But Spartan guard Durell Summers drilled a 3-pointer to make it a two-possession game with 3:40 left.

A 3-pointer from freshman forward Zach McCabe trimmed the Hawkeye deficit to 62-61 when Iowa called a timeout with 1:33 remaining. The Hawkeyes would get a defensive stop and had a chance to take the lead, but senior center Jarryd Cole made an ill-advised pass that got stolen.

"Looking back at it, I probably should have shot the basketball," Cole said after suiting up in an Iowa uniform for the final time. "You can't get those situations back, and it kind of hurts."

After Summers hit a pair of free throws for Michigan State to make it 64-61, Iowa called timeout with 14.5 seconds left. McCaffery designed a read where junior guard Matt Gatens was the first option, but other options would be available if open.

Gatens got the ball and tried to draw contact when letting his shot go. It missed, no foul was called, and Michigan State managed to ice the game with another pair of free throws from Summers.

"[Cartwright] made a good read. I thought Matt got a good look at it," McCaffery said. "Whether or not it was a foul or not, you have to determine that."

Gatens finished the game with 13 points, while Iowa was led by junior guard Bryce Cartwright, who finished with team-highs in 14 points, seven rebounds, and six assists.

With the 2010-11 season now complete, the Hawkeyes now shift

their attention towards the offseason. Cole is the lone starter from Thursday's contest, and Cartwright is among those who already proclaimed how he needs to step up.

"I'm a senior now," Cartwright said. "It starts now for me. It will be my last year. With that being said, I've got to do everything in my will to get this team better."