

Hawkeyes continue winning ways

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – As sloppy as Monday's contest between Iowa and North Carolina A&T ended up being, the Hawkeyes found themselves sitting at 2-0 by evening's end.

Behind career-highs from both senior guard Matt Gatens and junior forward Eric May, the Hawkeyes build an early lead and managed to not look back, as they defeated the Aggies 95-79 in what was a preliminary game in the Dale Howard Classic.

Gatens' 27 points on 9-of-15 shooting surpasses his previous career-high of 25 points against Indiana back in 2010. May tied his career-high with 20 points on the evening and also posted nine rebounds. They were two of five players to record double-figures scoring. Sophomore forward Melsahn Basabe finished with a double-double consisting of 15 points and 10 rebounds.

"I thought we got some big-time performances out of our experienced guys in the second half," Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said.

Iowa won this game thanks to dominating two categories in particular – rebounding and second-chance points.

Although the Hawkeyes only had two rebounds in the game's final eight minutes, they outrebounded North Carolina A&T 53-32. Of those 53 rebounds, 33 of them came in the first half when Iowa was in complete control.

"We all got to get in there, especially on defense," Gatens said. "On the offensive end, sometimes we're getting back,

especially against a team like this, and you want to run. On the defensive boards, all five of us have to get in there and crash.

“It’s a total team effort.”

As for the second-chance points, Iowa held a 23-11 advantage, with 19 of those 23 points coming in the first half.

“It obviously helped us,” senior guard Bryce Cartwright said. “We have to keep crashing the glass and get second and third shots to be even more successful.”

Another key stretch in this game according to McCaffery was the start of the second half, which was a portion of the game where Iowa struggled mightily last season. The Hawkeyes took a 50-34 lead into the locker room at halftime and proceeded to go on a 10-0 run to start the second half to move ahead by 26 points.

“I think from that point forward, I was pretty comfortable we were going to win the game,” McCaffery said.

One other story of note was the return of senior forward Andrew Brommer to the rotation. He didn’t start, but played six minutes and had two points and five rebounds for the Hawkeyes before re-aggravating the knee injury that kept him on the bench. McCaffery said in his post game press conference Brommer would be day-to-day.

“It was a press attack and I passed it in,” Brommer said. “I was waiting for the return pass and one of the defenders tried to shoot the gap. He came in and hit me on the outside of my knee again, and it kind of buckled the same way.

“It was a good thing I had my brace on, otherwise it probably would’ve been the exact same thing.”

At 2-0, Iowa takes a momentary break from the Dale Howard Classic to play another home game Nov. 17 against Northern

Illinois. Tip-off is scheduled for 7 p.m. Central from Carver-Hawkeye Arena.