

# Hawkeyes dominate Drake to snap skid

By Brendan Stiles

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IOWA CITY, Iowa – In what has been a rough month for the Iowa Hawkeyes, they managed to turn in one of their better efforts of the entire season on Saturday, defeating Drake inside Carver-Hawkeye Arena, 82-68.

With the victory, Iowa now sits at 6-5 overall, and perhaps more importantly, dodged what would have been the dubious distinction of being the first Hawkeye basketball squad to lose to all three intrastate rivals (Northern Iowa, Iowa State, and Drake) in the same season.

At the forefront of this dominating display was senior guard Matt Gatens. The Iowa City native played all 40 minutes of Saturday's game and finished with team-highs in points (20), rebounds (6) and steals (3).

"We need him to be the steadying influence out there when I have so many young guys alongside him," Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said. "I trust him. I trust his decision-making.

"I don't like to keep guys out there for 40 minutes, but I don't think there was one time where I looked at him and felt like he looked fatigued at all."

Gatens' effort proved to be enormous on both ends of the floor. Defensively, he managed to keep Drake's Ben Simons in check, holding him to just five points on 2-of-8 shooting. Offensively, Gatens had more points in the first half (12) than he had in Iowa's most recent game prior to Saturday, scoring just 11 points in an 86-76 loss to Iowa State on Dec.

9.

"I was a little reluctant I think in the last couple of weeks to get wide open almost," Gatens said. "In a quick second, I need to decide to shoot or pass it. I think I did a better job of that."

Gatens was among five Hawkeyes to score in double-figures on Saturday. Iowa's second-leading scorer was senior guard Bryce Cartwright, who scored all 12 of his points in the second half. Cartwright didn't start (sophomore Devyn Marble started his third consecutive game at the point), but wound up playing 28 minutes against the Bulldogs.

"Even though I didn't shoot it well, I got to the free-throw line," said Cartwright, who was just 2-of-9 from the floor, but a perfect 8-of-8 from the foul line on Saturday. "I'm just trying to keep getting healthy and to the Bryce that you're all accustomed to."

Also posting double-figures scoring were Marble, sophomore forward Melsahn Basabe, and freshman forward Aaron White. All three players finished with 10 points each. Marble also finished with a team-high five assists, while Basabe and White both had five rebounds each to complement their point totals.

White proved to be an early spark for the Hawkeyes, scoring nine of his 10 points and hauling in all five of his rebounds during the first half.

"He came in and was very effective, and he energized me, believe it or not," Basabe said. "I was real happy Aaron played the way he did. I'm glad he came out and gave us a huge contribution off the bench."

After Drake tied the game at 22-22, Iowa finished the first half with a 22-8 run, taking a 44-30 lead with it into the locker room. The second half featured a flurry of fouls, as the two teams combined for 39 attempts from the free-throw

line in the half alone. The Hawkeyes finished 23-of-29 from the charity stripe, including 19-of-24 during that second half.

Now with the in-state foes behind them, Iowa now has to quickly shift its attention towards Central Arkansas, who pays a visit to Carver-Hawkeye Arena on Dec. 19. Tip-off is set for 7 p.m. Central, and the game will air state-wide on Mediacom Connections.