

# Hot shooting propels Wildcats over Hawkeyes

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

EVANSTON, Ill. – On a night that began with opportunity for the Iowa Hawkeyes, it ended in disappointment.

Inside and out, offensively and defensively, Iowa proved to be no match for Northwestern on Thursday, as the Wildcats secured an 83-64 victory over the Hawkeyes inside Welsh-Ryan Arena. With this defeat, Iowa now sits at 5-7 in the Big Ten and 13-12 overall.

At the defensive end of the floor, it was Northwestern's vintage 1-3-1 that the Hawkeyes were unable to exploit. Meanwhile, the Wildcats had unconscious efforts scoring with all five starters reaching double-figures in points.

"There wasn't anything good, not tonight," Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said in a curt fashion afterwards.

The game began with Iowa jumping out to a 5-0 lead early. But a 19-4 run by Northwestern transpired and the Hawkeyes found themselves behind the rest of the way.

A 3-pointer at the 7:02 mark of the first half by senior guard Matt Gatens – who had 15 points on the night – cut the deficit down to 24-23. However, a scoring drought of 3:34 ensued and the Wildcats built their lead back up to seven points. Eventually, Northwestern found itself ahead 38-29 at halftime.

Then the game began to permanently shift in the Wildcats' favor. Iowa found itself called for seven fouls in the first 3:21 of the second half. One Northwestern possession featured four Hawkeye fouls – two on sophomore forward Melsahn Basabe

and two on senior forward Andrew Brommer.

"It hurt. You'd like to be aggressive," Gatens said. "Against a team that can shoot it, you don't want to get in foul trouble. They're going to make their free throws, and that definitely hurt us."

Shots continued to fall for a team that shot 15-of-27 in the first half and ultimately finished shooting 27-of-48 from the floor with 22 assists on those 27 made field goal attempts. Meanwhile, Iowa found itself committing 18 turnovers, which led to 20 Wildcat points.

Following a 3-point bucket by Northwestern's Reggie Hearn, McCaffery called timeout with 8:58 showing on the clock and his team trailing 65-44.

"You just got to keep fighting," senior guard Bryce Cartwright said. "I thought we showed some fight throughout, but we've got to continue it for 40 minutes."

Overshadowed by the outcome was perhaps the best evening of freshman Aaron White's young Hawkeye career. The 6-8 forward compiled his second career double-double, finishing with team-highs of 17 points and 12 rebounds. McCaffery called White and Basabe, who had 13 points off the bench, the lone two bright spots.

"It's not like I'm going to point fingers anywhere, because I have just as much blame as anyone else on the team about what happened tonight," White said. "It's a team effort."

With its second bye happening over the weekend, Iowa now has a full week before going back on the road for its next contest against Penn State on Feb. 16. The Hawkeyes beat the Nittany Lions 77-64 back on Feb. 4. Tip-off from the Bryce Jordan Center in State College, Pa., is set for 7 p.m. Central, with the game airing nationally on ESPNU.