

# 2/20/2012: Fran McCaffery teleconference transcript (premium)

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Below is a written transcript of Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery's teleconference on Monday with the Big Ten media:

## **McCaffery's opening statement:**

*"Well, it was an interesting week for us because we had one loss, one win. Obviously did not play well in the first half at Penn State, but very well in the second half and very well against Indiana. Primarily, I think it was a result of the play of Matt Gatens, who I think right now is playing as well as anybody in our league. You know, his performance at both ends of the floor yesterday was as good as any that I've seen since I've been here and I think that will make a big difference for us as we go down the stretch."*

## **On handling redshirts:**

*"Typically, I have not been a big redshirt guy. I've done it periodically. There are some coaches that are big believers in it. They do it a lot. I typically look at it this way – if you're on my team, I want you ready to play. You know, in certain cases, I think it makes a lot of sense at times physically. In the case of Darius Stokes, it made perfect sense for him because of where he was physically and because he had some injuries in high school that I think precluded him from developing maybe as quickly as he could have and I think it has really paid off for him."*

## **On the students not rushing the court after Sunday's win over**

## **Indiana and what it says about fans' expectations:**

*"I think it does and I think you're right. I mean, I think it happens too often. You know, I think you have to get to a point where, the old saying, 'Act like you've done it before.' There has to be a certain expectation level. 'Yeah, O.K., they were ranked. But it was a conference game and there's a good chance we're going to win a conference game at home.' But that said, in light of the fact that we had just gotten beat on the road by a team that we had beaten, to come back and beat a ranked team, I think it says a lot about the character of our team and I think our students recognized it. But every time we have a win, I don't think we need to run on the floor."*

## **On whether home-court advantage or things like effort and execution contributed to contrasting results against Indiana:**

*"Well, you know, I would say this – there's a little bit of all of that. I don't think our effort was poor down there. I think our execution was horrendous. We score 89 points, we ran the break, we ran on offense extremely well. Defensively, we were working hard. We just didn't keep people in front of us and didn't rotate effectively and then we tended to ball watch when the shot went up."*

*"Obviously, they were the focal points of our defensive game going into this game. I think you could see a difference right off the bat. We kept guys out of the lane. You know, we didn't let [Cody] Zeller get behind the defense and just have a dunk-fest. The same with [Victor] Oladipo. He wasn't on the baseline as much this time. He had the ball out in the front court."*

*"But we played ball screens better, we rotated better and then we put bodies on people and limited them in terms of their offensive rebounding, which if you remember down there, we got them to miss a few times, but every time they missed, they just got it back and it's just hard to make a comeback when"*

*that happens."*

**On Melsahn Basabe's shot-blocking ability in the win over Indiana last Sunday:**

*"I think you could look at that as the big difference in the game and in our team. You know, he was a legitimate force inside at both ends of the floor. But I think you're right. I think the shot-blocking, when you remember how many lay-ups they made against us down there, he erased five of them right off the bat. What does that do? It gives our defense an energy level, it gives our offense an energy level, it triggers our fast break, it ignites the crowd. It did so many things that happened as a result of the fact that he blocked five, he contested more and he had guys thinking about him. That's what he's capable of doing and I'm really happy for him."*

**On how much the win at Wisconsin last December showed what Iowa was capable of:**

*"You know, it's interesting and I think a lot of people go back to that game. They have been defensively as good as any team in college basketball the last 12 years and they're nearly unbeatable there. So I think we knew we had to kind of go in there and play a near-perfect game, and that's kind of what we did. If you remember, we shot it, we defended, we rebounded. We did all those things. We didn't turn it over."*

*"All the things that have to happen if you're going to beat Wisconsin, we did, and I think it's an example of what we're capable of. Now, we've done it again, but we haven't done it as consistently as they have since that time and I think that's the challenge for us as we move forward."*

**On if that win over Wisconsin raised eyebrows around the Big Ten and nationally:**

*"Well obviously, that's what we hoped would happen and I think to a degree, it did. We certainly got a lot of publicity at*

*that time. Now, we stumbled a little bit after that in some situations, but I think that's the result of our use and I think it's the result of the quality of this league. But I do think, when you look at where we stand, that was a win that I think gave us the confidence to know that we can compete regularly in this league and I think into a position where we're right in the mix here if we can finish strong."*

**On seeing Gatens play as well as he has down the stretch and what it means to see that in today's game:**

*"Well, especially for him because his ride has been so unique. He committed when he was a freshman in high school and then I'm his third coach. There was talk of him leaving after playing for his second coach. He has just stuck with it and has been the model of consistency, not only in terms of performance, but I think more importantly the work ethic and the example for our young players on how to prepare and how to work and how to do it on a year-round basis, is something that I think any new coach in particular can really appreciate. So to be able to turn around and watch him perform at this level, it gives me great feeling because you know he has really earned it."*