

# Hawkeyes eliminate Flyers from NIT

By Brendan Stiles

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IOWA CITY, Iowa – The Iowa Hawkeyes provided their fans with an evening inside Carver-Hawkeye Arena that won't soon be forgotten.

Playing in front of 13,190, Iowa manhandled Dayton on Tuesday in the first round of the NIT, defeating the Flyers 84-75 and advancing to the second round for a date with Oregon, who defeated LSU 96-76.

The Hawkeyes received monster performances from a trio of underclassmen forwards that combined for 60 of Iowa's 84 points. Freshman Aaron White scored a career-high 25 points and added 11 rebounds to record a double-double.

There was also one particular instance in the game where White played like the best player on the court, as he scored 11 of Iowa's first 12 points in the second half, most of which came after Dayton tied the game at 49-49.

"I'm always confident in my abilities," White said. "But when you get a couple of easy baskets, couple of offensive rebounds, couple of defensive rebounds, you just feel confident. Especially when you have a point guard finding you when you're open. It really feeds into the energy of the game, and feeds your energy on defense.

"It just makes it a lot more fun."

Sophomore Zach McCabe tied a career-high of 20 points by shooting a perfect 9-of-9 from the floor. It was the third time this season McCabe has scored 20 points in a game, doing

so in consecutive contests against Michigan and Purdue last January.

“He’s just playing smarter,” McCaffery said. “When he’s able to do that, he’s a terrific player. The only time he ever really gets jammed up is when he gets in foul trouble. Then he’ll get sideways and then he’ll make a turnover or two.

“But he’s a guy who thinks out there. He’s not afraid. He’s not afraid to shoot the ball. He’s not afraid to bang and he just keeps getting better.”

And then there was sophomore forward Melsahn Basabe. While only playing 14 minutes off the bench, Basabe scored 15 points while going 6-of-9 from the floor for the Hawkeyes.

“I think we all fed off each other,” Basabe said. “One person’s confidence, when I see them score and stuff, boosts my confidence. When I was in rhythm, I just had more confidence to get back in the game.”

One other performance of note came from senior guard Bryce Cartwright, who recorded a career-high 11 assists Tuesday in what was his fourth straight start at point guard.

“His passing in the first half, in transition, was a thing of beauty,” McCaffery said. “That’s what I’m thankful for. He had everybody running and the pace of the game was a benefit to us.”

And while senior guard Matt Gatens didn’t have the best shooting night by any stretch – seven points on 2-of-9 from the floor – he did nail a 3-pointer late in the game that McCaffery described as a “dagger” to the Flyers.

“I know Coach has a lot of confidence in myself,” Gatens said. “He called a play that we run a lot and have executed a lot in the past. I was confident that we were going to do it. I had only hit one up to the point, but I knew that he was sticking

with me.

“It felt good, but the other guys were making big plays as well.”

The Hawkeyes will now travel to Matthew Knight Arena in Eugene, Ore., for a second-round bout with the Ducks that has been set for [March 18 at 4 p.m. Central on ESPNU](#). Oregon finished third in the Pac-12 this season and currently possesses a 23-9 overall record.

The Ducks feature a pair of players Iowa will be familiar with. Guard Devoe Joseph transferred to Oregon from Minnesota last season, while forward Olu Ashalou transferred from Louisiana Tech, who he had 18 points for during a game against Iowa back on Dec. 21, 2010.