

Hawkeyes drop second straight in loss to Hokies

By Brendan Stiles

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The Big Ten/ACC Challenge hasn't proven too kindly to the Iowa Hawkeyes, who have now lost seven straight contests in the event after losing 95-79 to Virginia Tech on Tuesday at Cassell Coliseum in Blacksburg, Va. With the defeat, Iowa is now on a two-game losing streak and enters the month of December with a 5-2 overall record.

In a game where the Hokies led most of the way, the first half began back-and-forth with the teams continuously exchanging leads. Among the players setting the tone early on for the Hawkeyes were sophomore forward Aaron White – who finished with 21 points and 10 rebounds – and junior forward Zach McCabe, who found himself playing minutes at the 5-spot as a result of centers Adam Woodbury and Gabe Olaseni both being in early foul trouble.

Iowa went ahead 37-36 on a bucket from junior guard Devyn Marble before Virginia Tech finished the first half on a 10-1 run and took a 46-38 lead with it into halftime. It would get worse for the Hawkeyes, as the Hokies scored the first nine points of the second half to build their lead up to 17.

Part of Iowa's offensive struggles came from behind the arc, where the Hawkeyes shot just 4-of-22.

"We had ample opportunities to break that defense down and we settled for 3s," McCaffery said in a postgame interview with the Hawkeye Radio Network. "And whenever we missed a 3 – and we missed 18 of them – they would score. They scored off our turnovers and missed 3s and that was a focal point of our game

plan, so that's disappointing."

But then Iowa would go on a 16-2 run to trim its deficit down to 57-54. During this stretch, players such as Marble, White, Woodbury and freshman guard Anthony Clemmons were playing integral parts.

"Dev was really making his mid-range shots and we were getting out in transition," White said in a postgame interview with the Hawkeye Radio Network. "We were in a 3-2 zone and we were getting stops. They weren't a great transition defense team so they were only getting one shot, we were getting the rebound and we were blowing it down the floor.

"That should've been our game plan all along. It was and we just didn't execute it."

However, Virginia Tech would go on another run, one that pushed its lead back up to 69-58 and later turned into a 21-point advantage before the final horn would sound. The Hokies finished shooting 32-of-61 from the floor and the 95 points scored was the most Iowa has given up so far this season.

"A lot of the reason why they shot such a high-percentage was transition," McCaffery said in reference to Virginia Tech shooting 32-of-61 from the floor. "We felt like we needed to utilize intelligent shot selection without turning the ball over."

Iowa plays all of its games in the month of December inside the Hawkeye state, with the next three taking place at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. The first game on the home stand is Dec. 1 when Iowa plays host to Texas A&M-Corpus Christi. Tip-off is scheduled for 12 p.m. Central and the game will air on BTN.com. Be sure to visit *HawkeyeDrive.com* afterwards for complete coverage of the Hawkeyes' game against the Islanders.