

COMMENTARY: Marble continues his roll (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – On a night where “thunder-snow” was scattering across the state, there was Devyn Marble raining down bucket after bucket inside Carver-Hawkeye Arena Wednesday night, leading the Iowa Hawkeyes to a 90-46 shellacking of South Carolina State.

Four days after dropping 30 points in a seven-point win over UNI at the Big Four Classic, Marble picked up right where he left off. He found the corner early and often and just started draining 3-pointers. The Southfield, Mich., native shot 8-of-13 from the floor Wednesday, with six of those eight field goals coming from behind the arc.

Marble ended up with 27 points, but here’s what made his performance so incredible – he only played 22 minutes. When he was taken out of the game by head coach Fran McCaffery, Marble’s 27 was five more points than what South Carolina State accumulated as a whole.

Yes, that’s right. Marble was outscoring the Bulldogs by himself when he went to the bench for good. Part of that is playing an atrocious opponent, but it also takes a special kind of talent to be able to pull off something like that.

Other individual performances from this night are going to garner attention and rightfully so. But the headliner is Marble and quite frankly, it should be.

Right now, it’s fair to expect that Marble is going to have another performance that makes you raise your eyebrows when

Iowa plays Coppin State on Saturday. But just like everyone else on this team, the challenge for him is going to come when the Hawkeyes enter Big Ten play here after the holidays.

I don't know if he's going to end up being someone who has such a monster season that he warrants enough NBA interest to possibly leave a year early. But if you asked me right now if I think he has the potential to get there someday, I'd say he absolutely does. It's another discussion for another day, but as long as he stays on this current path, there's no reason to think he can't do it.

Jumping back to the present though, he has established himself as the guy on this team, much like Matt Gatens had been the past few years. Marble has not only taken that role, but has done so in stride. We're seeing someone who can showcase his skills playing three different positions on the court as opposed to being forced into playing point guard like he was most of last season.

Maybe he doesn't have to be scoring 25-30 points a game every night out. But if Marble can be that tone-setter for this team, that guy who provides the early spark that everyone else manages to feed off of, that's the sign of a leader and someone who can guide their team to the NCAA tournament, which I know he wants to do as badly as anyone else on this team.

And if he can consistently be that tone-setter, it not only makes for a promising future for the Hawkeyes this season, but a promising future for him individually long-term.

Iowa fans, take the time to appreciate what he's doing right now. Because if it keeps up beyond this week, he's only going to become more of a household name, as will the Hawkeyes.