

# Hawkeyes dunk Coppin State for sixth straight win

By Brendan Stiles

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IOWA CITY, Iowa – The 3-pointers weren't falling Saturday afternoon, but the Iowa Hawkeyes had their way inside the arc against Coppin State, pounding the Eagles 80-50 to complete their non-conference slate with a 11-2 record.

Iowa won this game with offensive numbers that were a statistical anomaly, yet that proved to be enough because it also played suffocating defense, particularly in the first half. The Hawkeyes shot 31-of-60 from the floor despite missing all 17 of their 3-point attempts. They also held Coppin State to five points in the final 12:54 of the first half.

But what started out as success inside evolved into Iowa putting on a dunking clinic for the 13,060 in attendance. Leading the charge was sophomore forward Aaron White. Playing without his wrist taped for the first time in five weeks, White scored 20 points on 7-of-8 shooting, with all seven of those buckets coming inside the arc.

"I had been shooting with Coach and I haven't been wearing the tape," White said. "The wrist thing's not really going away, but that's fine. I just feel a little more comfortable without the tape on."

He also had his moments where he got above the rim. One in particular came early in the second half when sophomore guard Josh Oglesby – playing his first game since suffering a minor shoulder injury – lobbed a full-court pass to White, who proceeded to finish the play off with a dunk.

"I was just hoping that he'd catch it," Oglesby said. "I didn't want it to be too long or too short. [Coach Fran McCaffery] tells us to throw it when it's open. I saw it and I had trust in Whitey that he'd catch it."

With the game starting to get out of hand, bench players were getting in the game and looking to make the most of their opportunities. Senior forward Eric May missed out on a potential dunk in the first half and was determined to make up for it. That second chance to ignite the crowd came with just under 12 minutes remaining and May proceeded to complete a one-handed slam that also drew contact in addition to putting Iowa up 60-26.

"I got a chance in the second half and I wasn't going to pass it up and shoot a 3 for it," May said. "It's a little easier than a 3."

In the game's waning moments, it was sophomore center Gabe Olaseni – coming off two of his better showings as a Hawkeye himself – who got in on the fun with a pair of dunks, the second one being off an alley-oop from senior walk-on Christopher Rickert.

"I think the first dunk, I was kind of cold and I barely got it in. It kind of rolled over the rim," Olaseni said. "My teammates got on me, so I knew the next time I'd get it, I'd try to put some power to it, some flare to it. That was the thought-process behind that."

After a mini-break for Christmas, Iowa will find itself shifting attention to the Big Ten. The Hawkeyes open up conference play at home on New Year's Eve against conference favorite Indiana, who is currently sixth nationally. Tip-off from Carver-Hawkeye Arena is set for 3 p.m. Central and the game will be televised nationally on ESPN2.

"We've got some work to do between now and then, without a doubt," McCaffery said. "But we've got great character, great

camaraderie on this team and our guys will be ready.”