

# 1/4/2013: Fran McCaffery teleconference transcript (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery held a teleconference with the local media on Friday prior to the Hawkeyes' game on Jan. 6 against No. 2 Michigan at the Crisler Center in Ann Arbor, Mich.

Below is the complete transcript from the interview:

**On how different he sees Michigan guard Trey Burke from last year:**

*"You know, he has just improved a little bit. I mean, I thought he was great last year. His role on his team, I mean obviously, it's his team. He has got terrific players around him and I think he has shown an amazing ability to just, you know, engineer victory every time out. You know, there are games where he shoots it a lot more than others. Other games, he passes it a lot more.*

*"He kind of knows exactly what to do depending upon what type of game they're in. He has the ability to get off to great starts, typically. I mean, last year, he just got in foul trouble. He played well. He just got in foul trouble and he has got them going now."*

**On whether he believes Burke has exceeded what he thought he could do at Michigan:**

*"Well you know, it was strange because you know, I got the job and we go on the road and I hadn't even realized he had*

committed to Penn State. So the word was, 'O.K., he has re-opened his recruiting,' so everybody was going to go look at him. You know, a lot of schools in our league were looking at him. A lot of other schools were looking at him.

"I was kind of surprised. You know, I figured he'd be pretty good. I mean, to me, he was elite at that time. I mean, when I watched him play in competitive situations, you know, he was always the best guard on the floor. I mean, every time I watched him, he was the best guard on the floor and he had the ability to run an offense, make plays in transition, make plays in half-court and he was a tremendous scorer. Those guys are hard to find. You have scorers and you have play-makers, typically. But when you have a guy that is exceptional at both areas, that changes everything when you're preparing to play that team and that's what I saw in him.

"I mean, I saw a guy who was going to be a superstar and I remember how disappointed people seemed to feel about Darius Morris' departure from Michigan and how it was going to affect their team and I knew last year it was not going to affect their team at all. They were going to be just fine, which they were, and they're even better this year."

**On whether Burke has exceeded expectations in general:**

"I thought he was a star. Yeah, I mean, his numbers right now are borderline ridiculous. I mean, if you look at them, his percentage from 3, from the field, from the foul line, his assists/turnovers. He steals the ball. I mean, across the board, his numbers are just phenomenal. But you know, not that I was ever trying to predict his numbers down the road, but I knew that kid would be, I knew Trey Burke would be an elite player. I knew he would be an NBA player and that's what he'll be."

**On how much of a challenge Michigan will be for Iowa defensively:**

*"Well, it's funny because they may be better defensively. I mean, they really defend. I've really been impressed with them with how they guard. Obviously, they have tremendous weapons offensively. You know, rarely do you have a point guard that great who shoots 3s that well and then you have three other 3-point shooters in the starting lineup as well and a fifth-year senior who is finishing everything around the basketball.*

*"And then, you know, they have very effective players coming off the bench. The guys coming off the bench are young, but they're really good. So you know, it's a very difficult team to prepare for on both sides essentially."*

**On how he approaches this week with his players between playing Indiana and now Michigan back-to-back:**

*"I approach it the way I approach any other two games. We lock in on, in this case, you know it's a unique situation because we play Monday, Sunday as opposed to Monday, Wednesday or Monday, Thursday. So we got a lift in. We gave them a little bit of rest. We did a lot of shooting, and then the last two days, we've just worked on ourselves and then today and tomorrow, we'll prepare more for Michigan.*

*"So it's no different than if we were playing our previous two games, South Carolina State and Coppin State. We just, we lock in on what we need to do to get better and then we lock into what we think we need to do to beat that team. In my estimation, there's no other way to do it."*

**On how Melsahn Basabe has looked after leaving the Indiana game with an injury and if he'll play Sunday:**

*"He'll play. Yeah, he's fine, and that's the other advantage of going Monday, Sunday. We were able to give him a couple of days. Yesterday, he only went through half the practice. We'll see how he looks today, but he looked good yesterday, I thought."*

**On what he wants his younger guys to take away from the Indiana game moving forward:**

*"Well, what we've got to be able to do is after we broke the film down and showed it to them, understand the things that we didn't do, the things we should've done, and understand how we can make those changes, both individually and then collectively. I was really impressed with our ability to consistently stay in the game when we were struggling on offense in the first half and we made probably more mistakes than we would normally make and you have to give Indiana some credit there.*

*"But it was frustrating because we had a number of opportunities to take the lead and would make a mistake. But when we were making mistakes, they were kind of aggressive mistakes. You know, we were attacking and I'm obviously more comfortable with those kinds of mistakes. But you've got to eliminate those if you're going to beat the fifth-ranked team in the country and that's what we have to understand and as we move forward, we're going to play other ranked opponents and other teams that aren't ranked who are really good.*

*"So we've got to be able to take those mistakes out of our game, improve game-by-game. When that happens, then what you end up doing is getting more and more confidence and when you have a young team, confidence is important and what affects confidence is mistakes and fortunately, we have a pretty resilient group."*

**On if playing up-tempo might be playing into Michigan's hands on Sunday:**

*"Well you know, I don't know about whether or not that would concern me. I mean obviously, you have to be careful, especially when you're on their floor, to push the tempo to the point where they end up on a run and not us. A lot of times, just because you run doesn't mean you'll shoot it*

quick. But you've got to be able to attack their defense early because their half-court defense is that good.

"You know, they lock in. They put pressure on the ball. They put pressure on the passing lanes. They fight the post. They do a real good job on ball screens. So it's a challenge to know and understand, you know, when to go really fast and when to not shoot the ball quick, even though we're pushing it with an attack.

"We're always going to be in attack mode. But you've got to be intelligent, when to shoot it, who's shooting it, and you know, keeping them on defense a little bit because teams that want to run, if they can play defense for 10 seconds or less, it makes their transition game that much better."

#### **On what makes Michigan so efficient offensively:**

"Well, they have four guards out there and then they all can make plays and what has impressed me about them is they're a very unselfish team. So you know, they move the ball, they share the ball. You know, they always have multiple guys in double figures. There's no selfishness that I can see.

"So when you have a number of guys who go off the dribble and throw the ball to the open man, you know, what you're going to have is fewer turnovers, fewer mistakes and they're going to be shooting open shots. Like I said, you've got four drivers, four ball-handlers, but four really good 3-point shooters around a traditional center who really is playing the best basketball of his career.

"He's a guy that people don't really talk about that maybe everybody should be talking more about, [Jordan] Morgan. Because Mitch McGary is playing extremely well and he's coming off the bench behind Morgan. So they've got two guys where they can go one behind the other or they can play them together and go with two posts and then rotate their other perimeter guys, so it's a challenge pretty much any way you

look at it."

**On if having gone up against Indiana's Cody Zeller allows everything to click for Adam Woodbury:**

"You know, you have to let experience kind of take its course and I think that's kind of what you're referring to. I mean, you can't rush that. You just got to go through it and that was his first Big Ten game and that was his first game against a consensus first-team all-American. So, he'll learn from that. He'll benefit from that tremendously.

"Now we've got to go on the road and do it in an environment where it's not going to be easy and that will only be his second time through. So what we have to do is to keep coaching him up, keep working with him and get him to understand that. I think he's, by nature, a confident person. But he also recognizes that he has things to learn and is willing to learn. He's willing to listen and most importantly, he's willing to work."

**On what impresses him about Michigan's Nik Stauskas and what has to be done guarding someone like him:**

"The thing about him is he's a player. You know, he shoots it well. But he puts it on the deck, he drives it dunks it, he drives it and makes plays for other people. You know, it's funny to hear people talk about him. He really has gotten stereotyped, in my opinion. I mean, that kid's just a player. That's what he is. I don't know if he still is, but going into last night, he was No. 1 in the country in 3-point shooting and that's what makes them good.

"You know, a lot of really good 3-point shooters, if you chase them off the line, you neutralize their effectiveness. It will not neutralize the effectiveness. You've got to stay locked in on this guy and guard him like the complete player that he is. So you know, he's that much more difficult too because of who's he playing with and that's what taxes your defense in a

*big way because everybody who has the ball can shoot, can go off the dribble and make a play."*

**On whether Michigan is the best team Iowa has faced so far this season:**

*"Uh, they appear to be on film. I wouldn't be able to answer that question until I see them in person."*