

Wolverines bury Hawkeyes in Crisler

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

ANN ARBOR, Mich. – The first 16:30 of Sunday's game at Crisler Center couldn't have been scripted any better for Fran McCaffery and his Iowa Hawkeyes. Iowa jumped out to an early 7-0 lead on the home floor of the No. 2 team in the country and while Michigan was clawing its way back, the Hawkeyes looked like they'd be able to hang with the Wolverines for 40 minutes.

But then came the final 3:30 of the first half. Michigan broke a 29-29 tie and then shifted momentum completely in its favor with a four-point swing that started with sophomore forward Aaron White getting stuffed on a dunk attempt by Mitch McGary, immediately followed by a Trey Burke score in transition at the other end. McCaffery called a timeout, but the giant had awoken.

What was once a tie game suddenly became a 46-35 lead for the Wolverines at half and ultimately ballooned into a 95-67 Michigan rout of Iowa that looked every bit of a 28-point differential. The Hawkeyes now sit at 0-2 in the Big Ten and 11-4 overall.

"We just took our minds off the game plan," freshman guard Anthony Clemmons said. "We came out strong, but that's one of our weaknesses – we've got to sustain.

"We told everybody the last four minutes is going to be the key and it just got away from us."

Michigan's shooting numbers Sunday were startling. The

Wolverines started the game shooting 8-of-19, including 1-of-5 from the floor. In the final 6:10 of the first half, Michigan made its last eight buckets. In the second half, the Wolverines remained white hot to the tune of making 13-of-14 shots, including 6-of-7 from behind the 3-point line. They finished the game 36-of-62 shooting, which includes making 28 of their final 43 attempts.

Not only that, but Michigan also held a 41-26 edge on Iowa in rebounding and managed to run Iowa out of the gym despite the Hawkeyes only committing seven turnovers the entire game.

"They're ranked No. 2 for a reason, especially when they've got their fans behind them," junior guard Devyn Marble said. "They showed why they're one of the premiere teams in the country right now."

Marble led the Hawkeyes in scoring with 14 points, while Clemmons – who did receive praise from McCaffery afterwards for how he handled Michigan's Trey Burke – had 12 points and a team-high seven assists.

But make no mistake, the good was outweighed by the bad for Iowa. Three minutes into the second half, Michigan extended its lead up to 16 points, which prompted McCaffery to bench all five of his starters and ultimately question his team's defensive toughness.

"I don't like to do that because I think it tends to highlight the players," McCaffery said about benching his starters. "What was upsetting to me was the focal point of our halftime discussion was the first 3-4 possessions defensively to start the half. That's why I made the change."

Iowa returns home for its next game on Jan. 10 against No. 18 Michigan State. The Spartans sit at 1-1 in the Big Ten after beating Purdue 84-61 over the weekend. Tip-off is set for 6 p.m. Central and the game will be televised nationally on ESPN2.