

# 1/28/2013: Fran McCaffery teleconference transcript (premium)

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Below is a written transcript of Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery's teleconference on Monday with the Big Ten media:

## **McCaffery's opening statement:**

*"We had an interesting week. Two tough road losses against very good teams. Unfortunately, from our side, we were in a position to win both games. That's always disappointing. But I do feel like there were some positives this week and we just have to get better."*

## **On why free-throw percentage in college basketball hasn't seemed to increase in the last 5-6 years:**

*"I don't think there's anything scientific with that. I think you talk about the athletes and the time they put into it. It's a free throw and you should make a good percentage of them. You're going to have a couple of bad ones and you're going to have some guys miss under pressure and you're going to be around 70 percent across the board."*

*"Obviously, as a team, you'd like to be around 80 [percent] and you try to have 80 percent free-throw shooters in the game at the end. But you're talking about the elite that play high-school basketball that get to play in college. I mean, they should be able to make a decent percentage, I think."*

## **On how often he works on free-throw shooting in pressure situations and whether it's a matter of having the right**

## players in:

"Well, what I believe in – and we have not shot free throws well the last two games, so we're going to try something different. We typically do that if we're in a little bit of a slump – but my theory has always been to shoot a lot of them. We shoot a lot of free throws in practice. We shot a lot of free throws over Christmas break. We have free-throw practices, things of that nature, where they're shooting tons and tons of free throws.

"In terms of specifically talking one individual, if we see a shot flaw, then we'll correct it. You know, typically, it's minor adjustments. You know, Aaron White missed one yesterday in a clutch situation. He pulled a string, as they say. He had been rock solid. I mean, he was 13-for-15 against Wisconsin. I mean, he has been really good. He just missed yesterday. He pulled a string, made a mistake on that free throw.

"He feels bad about it, but it's not like we're making a story of it and trying to become a shot doctor and change everything with his shot. He tends to sometimes do that. We just try to get our guys to finish high, finish forward and I am a firm believer in trying to encourage them and make them feel as confident as possible when they get up there."

## On the play of Mike Gesell against Purdue and the development of the freshmen class:

"The thing about Mike ... I think most people realize, maybe some people don't, how hard it is to do what he's doing. You know, I recruited him to be a point guard. He was playing point guard and then I move him to the off-guard position to create some playing time for Anthony Clemmons and that was good for us and Mike has been a real good scorer.

"But then yesterday, he played a ton of point guard. He got a lot of points yesterday at the point. That's a lot of stuff to remember and he has just really attacked this thing with a

*professional approach. I thought Adam Woodbury was really good yesterday, really expanded his game. I'm thrilled with our freshmen class."*

**On Gesell's positive attitude and whether he gets that vibe about Gesell from being around him:**

*"I do. I mean, he's one of the most consistent people you will ever meet. I mean, he just has an incredibly mature approach. He does. I think he had one A- in the first semester and the rest were As. He's starting on a Big Ten team as a freshman. He's playing two positions. We'll ask him to score, get us into our offense, guard a great player, the guy might be 6-5, he might be 5-8.*

*"He'll make free throws at the end. He'll make shots at the end. You know, we sort of come to expect that from him and he sort of expects that from himself. So I'm not surprised you would say that about him. That's just kind of the way he lives his life."*

**On his impressions with Penn State's D.J. Newbill and Jermaine Marshall:**

*"Well you know, it's interesting because, you know, so much of our preparation last year and I think so much of what everyone's expectation was for this team was in regard to a guy that was clearly one of the best players in our league and that's Tim Frazier. You know, he was a great scorer. He is a great scorer, but more importantly, a leader.*

*"So now all of a sudden, he is gone and the rest of the team has to get adjusted to that. You know, D.J. Newbill's at the point, that's a different position for him. You know, I'm impressed with him there. It puts a lot more pressure on he and Marshall to score. Well, they've handled that very well. Obviously, a team that defends and competes and rebounds.*

*"I mean, every game, they're in it. They're fighting and I've*

*been impressed with them. I've been impressed with those two guys in particular, but I've been impressed with the rest of the team. Other guys have been required to and have stepped up. It will be a real tough game for us."*

**On the hardest part of improving a program when first coming in:**

*"Well, I don't know. I think you hit on something that's important – I don't think you want to look at one particular thing. Your question says it all – How do you build a program?"*

*"Well, you've got to have the right staff. You have to recruit character. You have to recruit talent. You got to coach them. You got to be able to judge when to pat them on the rear or when to kick them in the rear. You've got to sell to the media. You've got to sell to your alumni, your fan base.*

*"But most importantly, you've got to maintain an incredibly positive atmosphere. I think if you look at that, I don't know if there's anybody better than [Penn State coach Patrick Chambers] to pull that. I mean, he just keeps filing forward and staying positive with his kids and that's why his kids play so hard. I know him very well. That's the kind of attitude that you needed to top because that attitude will permeate the rest of the program."*