

# Double gut-punched in double overtime

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

MADISON, Wis. – An even longer script was written Wednesday evening at the Kohl Center, yet the plot remained the same for the Iowa Hawkeyes.

Once again, a lead late in regulation evaporated. For the second time in four games, Iowa found itself playing beyond 40 minutes. And for the fourth time during Big Ten play, the same ending took place as the Hawkeyes fell in double overtime to Wisconsin, 74-70. After this one, Iowa sits at 3-7 in the Big Ten and 14-9 overall.

The Hawkeyes also have themselves wondering “What if?”

“I don’t get that emotional one way or the other. That said, I want it for them,” Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said, with “them” being in reference to his players. “I’m hurting for them.”

In a game where Iowa at one point trailed by as many as 11 points following a technical foul called on McCaffery, the Hawkeyes came back and built up an advantage of nine points right back in their favor overall with about six minutes showing on the clock.

Then Iowa’s most recent meltdown began to occur. It started with a 6-0 stretch in Wisconsin’s favor where the Badgers got a 3-pointer from Ben Brust, followed by a 3-point play from Ryan Evans where junior forward Melsahn Basabe picked up his fourth of five fouls on the night.

“We had two breakdowns immediately,” McCaffery said. “We had a

breakdown on the inbounds play when Brust hits the 3 and then a breakdown on the back cut and Basabe fouls Evans. You can't give him that And-1. You've got to foul him. He shoots 40 percent from the line.

"That was unfortunate because that changed everything."

After Wisconsin came back to tie the game at 55-55, Iowa responded with sophomore forward Aaron White stealing the ball from Evans and proceeding to convert a 3-point play of his own to put the Hawkeyes up 58-55 with under a minute remaining.

"With 38 seconds left, we just needed a stop and rebound," White said.

But then came the key moments of this game. First, the Badgers were able to tie the game following a 3-pointer by Wisconsin's Traevon Jackson where the ball hit both the front of the rim and the backboard before falling in. Then on the ensuing Iowa possession, the Hawkeyes had a chance to win and sophomore guard Josh Oglesby got a look from behind the arc that he and everyone else thought was good enough.

The ball sailed more than halfway through the hoop before rattling out.

"It felt good, then it hit the back of the rim, then the front of the rim, then went out," Oglesby said. "I thought it was in, but it didn't go in."

The first overtime period featured a combined eight points total and even that wasn't enough to decide the outcome. Then Wisconsin regained the lead when its freshman phenom, Sam Dekker, knocked down the only made Badger field goal attempt during either overtime with 1:37 left in the second overtime.

Final acts of desperation would transpire for Iowa, but to no avail.

"We just got to continue to stay positive," freshman guard

Mike Gesell said after finishing with team-highs Wednesday of 14 points and four assists. "You know, it seems like the same thing over and over losing these tough games, but we just got to keep battling and keep preparing and keep getting better every day.

"We're right there."

Now the Hawkeyes find themselves in a spot where they badly need to start winning games, if for no other reason than their psyche getting a break from tough defeats. Iowa returns home to play Northwestern on Feb. 9 at 3:30 p.m. Central. The game will be televised nationally on the Big Ten Network. The Hawkeyes won their first meeting against the Wildcats back on Jan. 13, 70-50, inside Northwestern's Welsh-Ryan Arena.