

2/25/2013: 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 only had one game this week, you know, Saturday against Nebraska, a team that I think has continued to improve and impress. You know, played really well for a half and then they played a lot better than us in the second half and that's a credit to their program and their coaching staff."

On how Jarrod Uthoff has looked in practice while redshirting this season:

"Well, he has looked really good in practice. I've been impressed with him. You know, he's working on his body to get stronger. He has put on a little bit of weight. I don't want him to put on a ton of weight because he's going to be a lean, athletic guy who's versatile."

"The thing that I like about him is you can play him as a long, shot-blocking post player, or you can play him on the perimeter as a guy who can put it on the deck and can hit a pull-up jumper, can hit a 3 and can make a play for somebody else off the dribble. You know, when you put that skill set together, you have a very impressive player and I think with the other players we have, it's something we desperately need."

On what it'd be like to be in Uthoff's shoes having to sit out two straight seasons before playing:

"Well, I essentially did that because I sat out because I transferred. I did get to play three games and then I got hurt and had to redshirt again. So I know what it's like. You know, it's not something that you ever plan for. It's not something you ever want to go through. But I think it comes down to your approach.

"I guess mine was different. I was expecting to play and then couldn't play and that was devastating and then I had to recover. All of my emphasis went into recovery. He just has focused everything on to improving his game. He is constantly in the practice facility working on his game.

"You know, I try to give him as many reps as I can in practice and treat him as, almost like a starter in the sense that he's going to get as many reps as possible. Sometimes, you know, we're getting ready for somebody, I won't play him as much. But you know, he's always either on the scout team or he's on one of the teams we're scrimmaging and he's playing a lot. I think that's important because we expect him to be an impact player next year."

On if he does anything outside the box during practice whenever his team has struggled with turnovers:

"You know, I would say the general answer to that is no. But you know, any time you're trying to address a specific area like that, what I tend to do is break everything down. So, you know, what drills are we doing? Who has the ball? Make sure those guys look at film of themselves. Make sure they look at film of us collectively. Put them in as many situations in practice where they might see what is plaguing them in the games.

"It's just like if anything goes wrong, if something goes wrong in recruiting, if something goes wrong in any aspect of

this program, you break everything down. From what the assistant coaches are doing to how much time the guys are putting in extra, all of those factors combined and I don't know that there's any other formula to try to address something that might be plaguing us at that particular time."

On the play of Devyn Marble during Iowa's last four games, all of which he has scored in double figures:

"Well, we knew we had our offensive struggles. That's obvious and for us to survive in this league, we need Roy Devyn Marble to play the way he has been playing. I mean, he almost ... we shot 28 percent in the second half and that's a credit to Nebraska as well, but he was the guy down the stretch that was making key baskets for us. It has been he and Aaron White in particular."

"When we have our guys making shots, we're pretty impressive and when that's not happening, then we tend to struggle and that has put us in a number of close games. So for Dev, it's not only that he's getting 20 points, but he has got to make shots late as well."

On what areas Purdue has improved since the last time Iowa played it last month:

"Well, I don't know. I mean, they played pretty well against us that day. I've just been impressed with them. I mean, I don't know if they've gone up or down. A lot of times, it's a function of who you're playing against."

"In their regard, [A.J.] Hammons is a handful. I think Ronnie Johnson is a guy who continues to get better. You know, they've got Terone Johnson. I mean, he's playing as well as anybody in our league right now. [D.J.] Byrd is a guy that you have to prepare for. You know, maybe the one area to specifically answer your question, the Hale kid [Donnie Hale]. I mean, he had a big game against us and he just seems to keep getting better and really impact their team."

"[Sandi] Marcius is getting better. I mean, I've been impressed with him. He was a guy that last year, I didn't think had much impact at all. I've watched him on film this year and I think he's a guy that you have to deal with. He's running the floor, he's much more aggressive offensively. He has been impressive to me and that gives them two big guys that can run and score and make some plays. It's a team that I always consider as one of the best teams in our league."

On if there is any comparison between Hammons and Adam Woodbury or whether they're just two different players:

"Well, I think it's natural that you compare the two and look for the reasons you just mentioned. But you're right. They're dramatically different in terms of who they are and what they bring to the table and so I think what we tend to do sometimes is look at numbers."

"You know, they're going to go to Hammons a lot more for baskets and I think that will come for Adam over time. But what we need Adam to do is defend and rebound, be a post presence in terms of his ability to score and pass and just be an active participant out there at 7-1. He's a different kind of player."