

Hawkeyes thrash Abilene Christian

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – Much like they did three nights earlier against Maryland-Eastern Shore, the Iowa Hawkeyes semi-trucked Abilene Christian Sunday afternoon, thrashing the Wildcats 103-41 in what was a preliminary game that was part of the Battle 4 Atlantis Iowa will play in next week. The Hawkeyes are now at 4-0 as result of the victory.

At one point deep into the second half, senior guard Devyn Marble led Abilene Christian by himself. Marble finished with 27 points, but was taken out of the game with 15:51 remaining when the entire starting lineup was subbed out because the Hawkeyes were ahead by 35 points.

Before it got entirely out of hand, Marble looked like he might have a career day. He scored 15 of Iowa's first 17 points, six of which came on the Hawkeyes' first two 3-point attempts of the afternoon. When he was pulled from the game for go, Marble had shot 9-of-13 from the floor.

"I just felt like it was supposed to happen," Marble said. "I work on my shot every day. I shoot well in practice, so it was only a matter of time.

"I just need to start getting into a rhythm before we head to the Bahamas and we're playing against top-tier competition."

While his individual performance is what stood out the most, there was the collective effort Iowa gave at both ends of the floor. Marble, along with the rest of the Hawkeyes, took advantage of the height discrepancy that was in Iowa's favor

all afternoon. The Hawkeyes shot 38-of-61 from the floor, including 29-of-40 inside the 3-point arc.

"I feel like they're a good team. They just don't have the size that we have and that's a huge advantage for us," Marble said.

Conversely, the Wildcats were suffocated by Iowa's effort at the defensive end of the floor. Four nights earlier, Abilene Christian had a lead against Maryland it carried into the second half thanks in large part to hitting 10 3-pointers in that particular outing. Against Iowa however, the Wildcats were just 3-of-23 from behind the arc and ended up shooting 14-of-54 for the entire contest Sunday.

A game that was already ugly at halftime with Iowa leading 46-22 got even uglier in the second half, even though head coach Fran McCaffery took his starters just over four minutes into that 20-minute stanza. The Hawkeyes wound up outscoring Abilene Christian 57-19 and were ahead 84-29 when McCaffery began emptying the bench with 8:14 left on the clock.

"We had 16 minutes to go and I'm going to get some of my guys out, I'm going to put the next group in," McCaffery said. "Well, they've got to get something out of it, so they've got to keep playing hard.

"It's kind of like, let's just keep playing hard man-to-man defense, keep running the fast break, keep moving the ball. Don't stop playing that way. We're not going to sit here and dribble out 16 minutes. We might dribble out three minutes and let it go, but not 16."

One player who had a second-half showing worth noting was freshman guard Peter Jok. Playing 20 minutes off the bench (including the final 15:51 of the contest), Jok ended up with 15 points on 6-of-8 shooting, including 3-of-5 from behind the arc. Of those 15 points, 13 of them came in the second half.

“It’s just letting the game come to me, and that’s what I did today,” Jok said. “I was making a lot of shots. That’s what I’ve got to just keep doing.”

Iowa plays one more home game against Penn on Nov. 22 before traveling to Nassau next week for the Battle 4 Atlantis. Tip-off of Friday’s contest against the Quakers, who most recently lost at home to Penn State this weekend, is set for 6 p.m. Central. The game will be televised nationally on the Big Ten Network.