

# Hawkeyes cap OT comeback over Xavier

By Brendan Stiles

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Behind a gutty performance from senior guard Devyn Marble, the No. 23 Iowa Hawkeyes overcame a 15-point second half deficit to defeat Xavier 77-74 in overtime in their opening round match-up at the Battle 4 Atlantis on Thursday.

Iowa fell behind 11-2 in the early going and went into halftime trailing 37-30, but was kept in the game thanks to Marble scoring 16 of those 30 first-half points on 7-of-14 shooting from the floor. After sinking a pair of free throws at the start of the second half following a technical foul called on Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery, the Musketeers padded their lead all the way to 47-32 with 15:56 remaining in regulation.

The Hawkeyes trailed 55-42 when they began to make their run. Iowa scored 10 unanswered points, eight of which came courtesy of Marble draining a pair of 3-pointers and a pair of free throws to make it a one-possession game with 8:09 left.

Trailing 67-63 with 2:06 left, Marble left the game due to cramps and didn't return. He finished with a game-high 30 points, one point shy of a career-high he set during an NIT game at Oregon his sophomore season. Following a pair of free throws from junior center Gabe Olaseni, sophomore guard Mike Gesell – who entered the game for Marble – hit a jumper to tie things up at 67-67 with 1:41 left. After Xavier hit a pair of free throws to grab the lead back, Olaseni made a lay-up in the final minute to tie the game at 69-69, which is what the score was when the game went to overtime.

Iowa's first lead of the evening came in OT when Olaseni made two more free throws and ultimately finished the game with his first career double-double of 10 points and 11 rebounds. The Musketeers would come back to tie the game at 73-73 with 2:21, but the Hawkeyes would quickly respond with a pair of lay-ups from Gesell and junior forward Aaron White to pull away with the improbable comeback victory.

Sitting at 6-0 overall, Iowa will play again at Imperial Arena in Nassau, Bahamas on Friday when it meets UTEP in the semifinals after the Miners shocked Tennessee 78-70 on Thursday. Friday's contest between the Hawkeyes and Miners will start at 6 p.m. Central and be televised nationally on NBC Sports Network. Iowa will conclude the Battle 4 Atlantis playing Saturday evening against either Villanova or No. 2 Kansas at a time to be determined.