

# 12/11/2013: Iowa men's basketball notebook



Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery discusses the 23rd-ranked Hawkeyes' upcoming game at No. 17 Iowa State during his press conference held Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2013, at Carver-Hawkeye Arena in Iowa City.

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – The hottest ticket on Friday not only in the state of Iowa, but in the world of college basketball, is Hilton Coliseum in Ames.

It's not just because Iowa and Iowa State are playing one another. After all, the Hawkeyes and Cyclones meet on an annual basis as is. But Friday's match-up might be the biggest in the history of this intrastate rivalry. For only the second time ever (and the first time since 1987), this rivalry features a match-up where both teams come in ranked.

Iowa is ranked 23rd for the second consecutive week in the AP top 25 and is 10-1 after downing Fairleigh Dickinson 92-59 on

Monday. Meanwhile, Iowa State is ranked 17th, is currently undefeated at 7-0 and already has impressive victories on its résumé over teams such as Michigan and BYU.

“I think it legitimizes everything. You know, you have two really good teams going at it.” Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery said. “I think when you’re a player, you want to play in meaningful games. You want to play in a game that it means a lot to a lot of people.

“This game means a lot to a lot of people. It’s an important game. It’s why you work so hard. You know, it’s an opportunity that you cherish and you’ll remember. You want to play your best. You want to prepare your best and that’s what we’re trying to do.”

Another reason validating the build-up for Friday night is the efficiency both the Hawkeyes and Cyclones have offensively. As of Wednesday afternoon, Iowa State leads the nation in scoring, averaging 91.7 points per game. Iowa is sixth nationally with an average of 89.5 points per game. Both teams also rank top five nationally in rebounding and top 10 nationally in assists.

“People have been waiting for this for a long time,” senior forward and Sioux City native Zach McCabe said. “We’ve got equal teams. Very good up and down. It’s going to show how our defense does.”

### **The transfer impact**

McCaffery and Iowa State head coach Fred Hoiberg were hired by their respective schools one month apart. Both have established enough success to the point that both the Hawkeyes and Cyclones are nationally ranked. But it’s no secret how the methods the two have used to reach that success are considerably different.

While McCaffery has built his foundation through recruiting

high schoolers, Hoiberg's route to success has centered around being able to bring in transfers and having them blend in with everyone else in place. In doing that, Iowa State has managed to reach the Round of 32 each of the past two seasons.

Sure enough, one of the Cyclones' top players this season is a transfer named DeAndre Kane, who came to Iowa State this offseason after playing the last three years at Marshall. Through seven games, Kane leads the team with an average of 5.3 assists per contest and is second in both scoring (15.4 points per game) and rebounding (eight boards). In fact, Kane is one of five Cyclones to currently average double figures scoring.

"He can do a lot of things," McCaffery said. "He can score, he can post. He can play more than one position. He can have the ball, has great vision, finds people. Plays at a great pace.

"You know, he just affects the game when he's out there."

But there's another transfer that could factor into how Friday unfolds. In fact, he's someone Hoiberg attempted to recruit to Iowa State, but lost out on to McCaffery – Iowa sophomore forward Jarrod Uthoff.

Uthoff described Hoiberg as someone he had "the utmost respect" for and said he established a good relationship with him despite choosing to transfer to Iowa after leaving Wisconsin in 2012. With this being the first true road game he'll play in as a Hawkeye, the anxiety level to take the court is high for Uthoff, who is third on the Hawkeyes in scoring (10.3 points per game) and leads the team in rebounding (seven boards per contest).

"Honestly, I couldn't be more excited about it," Uthoff said. "A chance to play in front of a lot of people on a big stage, it's exciting for all of us."

**What a win could mean for Iowa**

For a game that will have zero bearing on where Iowa and Iowa State each finish in their conferences, the stakes seem higher than usual with both teams being ranked. This game might not affect the Big Ten standings, but there's no secret that a victory at Hilton Coliseum on Friday could have a ripple effect on how the remainder of the Hawkeyes' season plays out.

One thing Iowa failed to do in 2012-13 that factored into the Hawkeyes missing the NCAA Tournament was win road games against ranked opponents. Even the year before when Iowa wasn't nearly as good, it was able to win at Wisconsin.

Consider some of the teams the Hawkeyes play on the road during Big Ten play – No. 4 Wisconsin, No. 3 Ohio State, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, No. 5 Michigan State. These teams are either ranked, have hostile atmospheres or fit under both categories like Iowa State does.

"We know this is a huge opportunity for us," McCabe said. "We knew a game like Villanova in Atlantis [was a huge opportunity], we let it slip away a little bit and we know that from those mistakes, that will help us in this game.

"Hilton is a huge venue and it's going to be a hostile crowd. I think our guys, we have experience and we know what we need to do."

Uthoff concurred with what McCabe said and specifically made mention of what leaving Hilton Coliseum with a victory might do for the Hawkeyes come Selection Sunday, a day Iowa hopes to hear its name called for its first NCAA Tournament in eight seasons.

"That's going to be a huge key win for us if we do win," Uthoff said. "It would be big for us."

### **Oglesby update**

Junior guard Josh Oglesby spoke publicly Wednesday afternoon

for the first time since having foot surgery last month after breaking his foot during practice just two days before the Hawkeyes' season-opener against UNC-Wilmington.

McCaffery called Oglesby "doubtful" for Friday's game at Iowa State, but the timetable given earlier this week about the Cedar Rapids native returning for Iowa's last non-conference game Dec. 22 against Arkansas-Pine Bluff is still very much in play. Oglesby said he did a workout Tuesday that went well, but due to his foot bugging him Wednesday, he wasn't going to attempt practicing until Thursday at the earliest.

He also said he currently felt out of shape, thus the strenuous workouts he has put himself through recently.

"I was doing pool work and the bike, but it doesn't simulate running up and down, especially how we play with a fast-break game," Oglesby said. "The first workout I did with Coach [Kirk] Speraw on the court, jogging up and down on the court, I was winded."

Perhaps the most interesting thing to be revealed Wednesday was that there was dialogue between the two about Oglesby redshirting this season, depending on the severity and how difficult the recovery would actually be.

"In the beginning," Oglesby said about when that discussion took place. "But Coach hasn't said too much about it. My foot's feeling good and I want to play."

When Oglesby does return to the hardwood, the question becomes what type of role he ends up playing. Iowa already utilizes a 10-man rotation now and McCaffery made clear the rotation will simply expand to 11 players once Oglesby returns.

"We'll need him," McCaffery said. "I don't disagree 11's a little bit harder than 10, you know, when you're trying to figure out playing time. But it's a long, intense season and he'll figure in prominently."