

# 20th-ranked Hawkeyes impose will on Wildcats

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – Between being minus their head coach on Thursday, as well as having four days to stew over letting a game against No. 4 Wisconsin slip away this past weekend, Iowa looked ready to return to action when it hosted Northwestern.

The 20th-ranked Hawkeyes got out to a 10-0 lead in the game's early minutes and continued to go full throttle against a lowly Wildcat squad, as they defeated Northwestern 93-67 inside Carver-Hawkeye Arena. Iowa moved to 2-1 in Big Ten play and 13-3 overall with a victory that was pretty much expected, including assistant coach Kirk Speraw, who filled in as head coach Thursday for the suspended Fran McCaffery.

Because of his one-game suspension handed down by the Big Ten for his antics that led to an ejection from Iowa's previous game against No. 4 Wisconsin, McCaffery watched Thursday's game from his office after being with the team earlier in the day for its pregame shoot-around and team meal.

"We were excited to get back out there and play for Coach Speraw and get one for Fran as well," sophomore center Adam Woodbury said. "We knew he was with us in spirit and we came out excited and ready to play."

Although the Wildcats were able to get back within four points after falling behind 10-0, the key to victory for the Hawkeyes came in two areas, 3-point shooting and free-throw shooting.

Behind the arc, Iowa shot 8-of-14, but was 5-of-7 in the first half when the 3-pointers were necessary. The Hawkeyes were

able to build their lead back up to double figures in the first half thanks to a couple of 3-pointers by sophomore guard Mike Gesell and another by sophomore forward Jarrod Uthoff. Also going a perfect 3-of-3 shooting 3s on Thursday was senior guard Devyn Marble, who credited Iowa's success to what it was able to do defensively.

"We picked it up defensively," Marble said. "We just expanded that lead and Coach Speraw was getting into us, wanted us to make sure that we played for 40 minutes because we didn't do that against Wisconsin."

As for the free-throw shooting, no one personified it more than junior forward Aaron White. The Strongsville, Ohio native shot a perfect 10-of-10 from the foul line, with all 10 of those points coming in the first half. He finished the game with a double-double of 18 points and 10 rebounds.

White wasn't the only Hawkeye to post a double-double, however. Iowa also received a 16-point, 10-rebound performance Thursday from senior forward Melsahn Basabe. Adding even more significance was that with a pair of made free throws late in the first half, Basabe became the 43rd Hawkeye in school history (second this season along with White) to reach the 1,000 career point milestone.

"Today, I knew," Basabe said. "If my daughter could talk, she would've told me. Everybody around me wanted to tell me I was seven points away, so I knew that those two free throws were the seven points I needed."

For the second time in as many weekend, the Hawkeyes now prepare for yet another top 5 team on the road when it visits No. 3 Ohio State on Jan. 12. Tip-off from Value City Arena in Columbus is set for 12:30 p.m. Central and the game will be televised nationally on CBS, marking Iowa's first CBS appearance since the 2006-07 season.

"Obviously, we're in this to win the Big Ten title and they're

going to be one of the teams in our way," White said.