

# 2/10/2014: Fran McCaffery teleconference transcript (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

Below is a written transcript of Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery's teleconference on Monday with the Big Ten media:

## **McCaffery's opening statement:**

*"I thought we had an interesting week in the sense that, you know, we played two very good teams at home. Obviously lost to Ohio State and beat Michigan. I thought we did not play the kind of defense necessary to beat Ohio State, particularly in the second half. I think, you know, a lot was said about the shooting, which is obviously very interesting when you look at the fact that we shot the ball very poorly in one and very well in the other.*

*"But I thought the difference in both games clearly was our defense, even more so than the shooting. But obviously when you're making 3s, it changes a lot of things, so it was great to see Devyn Marble in particular play the way he did against Michigan and obviously, we're a much better team when he's playing like that."*

## **On if there was anything specific Iowa did with defending Michigan's Glenn Robinson III over the weekend:**

*"We didn't make any changes from what we did the last time we played them, as far as Robinson's concerned. It's interesting because going into that game, we put Melsahn [Basabe] on him and we were concerned. Melsahn's a traditional 4 and I look at Robinson really more as a 2 than anything else and we weren't*

*sure that Melsahn could do the kind of job that he did on him.*

*“But he did a pretty good job on him both times, I thought, and I think it had something to do with his athletic power and he’s a little bigger than Robinson and he’s also experienced and he played him really well in both games.”*

**On what the focus will be during the week since Iowa’s next game at Penn State isn’t until the weekend:**

*“Well typically, what we do in a week like this is spend time on ourselves. Obviously, we’ll look at film from the Michigan game and try to get better, starting with that. You know, we’ll get a lot of shots up, we’ll do lifting, things like that. We’ll work on some things that we think we need to sharpen up and as we get to the mid-point of the week, we’ll start to focus a little bit more on Penn State.”*

**On if he has ever had a moment in his coaching career where he had to address fan behavior with his players (in light of the Marcus Smart incident):**

*“You know what, I’ve obviously been thinking a lot about that in the last day and as you were asking the question, I’m trying to remember ... I don’t remember anything specifically other than generally controlling your emotions. ‘O.K., this particular game is going to be one where that type of thing is possible. Let’s not let it affect us.’*

*“You know, a lot of times it’s rivalry games. You get there early, they’re there early and they’re on you. They’re personal. You know, they know your girlfriend’s name, family members, things like that. So we will address it ahead of time in hopes that something like this doesn’t happen and quite honestly, I’m shocked that ... you know, I’ve been around a while and I’ve seen a lot of stuff.*

*“I’m shocked this is the first time something like this has happened. Well, it wasn’t the first time, but this one seems a*

little bit different in the sense that, you know, certainly in basketball, the fans are right on top of you. It's not quite the same in football and so they might be right behind the bench, they might be right behind the basket, they might be right on the floor and you know, for a player to go after a guy and you know, I'm actually ... based on what I've heard, I'm surprised it hasn't happened more."

**On if Gabe Olaseni's recent emergence has come as any sort of surprise:**

"It did not surprise me at all and I mean that sincerely. When I go back to the first time I saw him play, it was one of the most ... now granted, you have to temper your enthusiasm when you're watching an open gym because it's just the kids from that high school playing. Now they happen to have a pretty good team at Sunrise Christian Academy. But he was dominant and so fluid and so raw and you know, finished everything, caught everything, blocked everything. You know, he seemed to be in the right place.

"Now you know, as we had conversations with the folks, they're like, 'You know, he's clearly capable of this. He does this a lot. But sometimes, his inexperience, you know, is evident and he's going to have to just be playing.' You know, they played a great schedule that year and of course, he jumps into the Big Ten, which is a big jump and you saw a little bit of indecision his first year and you know, he was unsure a lot.

"Some of that, I think, came from his desire to be perfect and he's such a perfectionist and you know, if you tell him to play ball screens a certain way, he's going to play them that way regardless of what happens and he has figured out that the game is much more fluid and he can rely on his athletic ability and rely on his instincts a little bit more and if you make a mistake, it's something where we're going to make mistakes, run back and do something good. He has figured that out and what you're seeing now is a guy that has really

blossomed, certainly in terms of his impact on the game.

*“But I think you’re also seeing a guy offensively who has improved and that was truly by getting in the gym and working on his game. I mean, he works on his jump shot and his free throw religiously and you’re seeing him shoot that with great confidence now and he’s also finishing plays around the basket with either hand. I mean, he could finish with his left hand when I first saw him play, so like I told you before, I didn’t look at him as a project when we signed him in terms of his physical ability. He just needed to gain some experience.”*

**On if having played Illinois recently will help with preparing for dribble penetration from Penn State’s backcourt:**

*“Well you know, you can pretty much see dribble penetration from everybody in this league. You know, maybe some more than others. I mean, those two guys – [D.J.] Newbill and [Tim] Frazier – you know, they’re experienced players, they’re really good off the dribble, they’re crafty. They both can shoot the ball outside and get by you. I mean, those are the tough covers.*

*“I mean, if a guy’s going quick and he can’t shoot, he’s not as difficult to guard. But when they’re both shooting the ball the way they are, it’s a little bit different. So I think it will help us somewhat. But you know, whenever you look at two quality players like that, it’s always going to be a collective effort. I mean, it has got to be a team defensive concept.”*