2/28/2014: Iowa plus-minus data and observations (premium)

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Prior to the start of Big Ten play, I assembled a post looking at plus-minus data not only for individual Iowa basketball players, but plus-minus data for each lineup used in games this season by Fran McCaffery and his coaching staff.

Four follow-ups – after three, six, nine and 12 Big Ten games – have since been published and with the 20th-ranked Hawkeyes entering the final sixth of their league slate, now is a good time to publish the fifth part in our six-part series between now and next month's Big Ten Tournament.

Prior to the Hawkeyes' home game against Wisconsin, they had used a total of 150 lineups through 25 contests. That number has still continued to increase and is now at 162 different lineups through 28 games, so 12 new lineups have been used in the last six days. Every game still to this point in the season has featured McCaffery and his coaching staff introducing at least one lineup for the first time all season.

What's intriguing is that of the 12 new lineups introduced in the last three games, 11 of them feature Marble, nine of them feature White and eight of them include Oglesby.

Also, this stretch has forced McCaffery to introduce different starting lineups with Basabe not being able to start against either Wisconsin or Minnesota as the result of an illness he had been dealing with. Against the Badgers, it was McCabe starting in his place. Against the Golden Gophers, it was

Oglesby.

Before getting into individual plus-minus, below are what proved to be the most effective and least effective lineups for Iowa in its previous three games against Wisconsin, Minnesota and Indiana.

Wisconsin (2/22/2014):

Best lineup: Marble-Oglesby-Uthoff-McCabe-Olaseni ***(7-0) (+7)***

Time on court together *– 1:35 (12:30-10:55; second half)*

Iowa had got within six points of Wisconsin when McCabe entered the game for White. This lineup scored seven unanswered points and gave the Hawkeyes their first lead since the early minutes of the first half.

Worst lineup: Marble-Oglesby-Uthoff-White-Olaseni ***(14-23) (-9)***

Time on court together *– 8:38 (3:24-0:41 first half; 15:31-12:30, 3:18-0:24 second half)*

This lineup was used in three different instances, so it wasn't as though there was one stretch where this group was awful. But this is the lineup that couldn't get any points going late in the first half when Wisconsin started missing shots and this is the lineup that gave up 19 second-half points to the Badgers, nine of which came in crunch time when Wisconsin took the lead from Iowa for good.

Minnesota (2/25/2014):

Best lineup: Gesell-Oglesby-Uthoff-White-Olaseni ***(6-0) (+6)***

Time on court together *– 1:49 (15:21-13:32; first half)*

Following the first TV timeout, Uthoff and Olaseni entered the game in place of Marble and Woodbury, respectively. Iowa had climbed out to a 9-7 and proceeded to score six unanswered points off a 3-pointer from Gesell and a 3-point play from

White, prompting Minnesota head coach Richard Pitino to burn a timeout with his squad trailing 15-7.

Worst lineup: Marble-Gesell-Uthoff-White-Olaseni ***(0-8) (-8)***

Time on court together *– 1:22 (3:12-1:50; first half)*

At this point, White had just sank a pair of free throws to put Iowa back ahead 41-40. Then the Golden Gophers proceeded to score eight unanswered points (in large part because of their success shooting from behind the arc). Iowa head coach Fran McCaffery then proceeded to call timeout and took both Marble and White out of the game. Even more startling here is that this was one of two rotations to muster a -6 in the previous meeting between these teams last month in Iowa City.

Indiana (2/27/2014):

Best lineup: Marble-Gesell-Uthoff-White-Olaseni ***(16-11) (+5)***

Time on court together *– 4:30 (10:25-8:18, 5:04-2:41; first half)*

This group accumulated the best plus-minus over combined stints, which both came during the first half. The first stint allowed Iowa to hang with Indiana after the Hoosiers had taken the lead. The second stint is what sparked the Hawkeyes' rally near the end of the first half.

Worst lineup: Marble-Oglesby-Uthoff-Basabe-White ***(3-8) (-5)***

Time on court together *– 3:23 (6:22-5:04 first half; 14:34-14:20, 3:13-1:22 second half)*

This group was used three times and wasn't really effective at any point while on the floor. The one time it was used in the first half, it allowed Indiana to extend a four-point lead to eight points and forced McCaffery to burn a timeout. The second stint was very brief (14 seconds) as Iowa's second-half lead began to slip away. The final stint came in the final

minutes when Iowa needed offense and couldn't get any going.

INDIVIDUAL PLUS-MINUS:

I have the following listed with each player here – the number of different lineups they've been part of thus far in 2013-14, their plus-minus and minutes played for the entire season, their plus-minus and minutes played through Big Ten play, and plus-minus and minutes played in the last three games played.

A few observations: Obviously with Iowa having lost all three games being examined in this installment, the plus-minus numbers aren't going to be too solid across the board. The Wisconsin game specifically appeared misleading because one of the players to tally a plus was Basabe, and he barely played.

On the rotation front, Uthoff had been featured in the most lineups of any Hawkeye all season. That is now no longer the case. Eleven of the 12 new looks thrown out there by McCaffery during this particular three-game stretch featured Marble, who now has been featured in a team-high 86 lineups this season.

One player who has tallied plus-minuses that appear somewhat misleading is Clemmons. He didn't record any pluses, but the thing that needs to be factored into his tally is that in crunch time, there are instances where he's only used for defensive purposes and if it's a situation where Iowa's fouling, his plus-minus gets affected in a negative manner.

The player who has impressed of late in this category is Woodbury. He had the lone head-scratching plus from the Wisconsin game and followed that up with one of only two pluses from Iowa's loss to Minnesota. Basabe's minus-11 against Indiana was partially the result of that being his first game even remotely close to fully healthy in nearly three weeks. Oglesby's lone plus during this 3-game stretch came when he started in place of Basabe against Minnesota.

In terms of minute distribution, Uthoff moved ahead of Basabe

in minutes played as a result of Basabe not playing against the Golden Gophers. Also, Olaseni and Woodbury moved back ahead of McCabe in minutes played since our previous installment. Oglesby might not end up playing as many total minutes as Clemmons this season because of the foot injury he had during non-conference play, but he's getting closer to Clemmons in that regard.

Devyn Marble: 86/162 rotations

Season: 1,748-1,438 (+310) (827:45)

Big Ten play: 1,013-888 (+125) (494:02)

Last 3 games: 233-240 (-7) (107:42)

– vs. Wisconsin: 67-68 (-1) (35:36)

– at Minnesota: 83-91 (-8) (36:20)

– at Indiana: 83-81 (+2) (35:46)

Aaron White: 82/162 rotations

Season: 1,608-1,329 (+279) (768:27)

Big Ten play: 946-833 (+113) (465:56)

Last 3 games: 202-216 (-14) (97:42)

– vs. Wisconsin: 49-61 (-12) (28:59)

– at Minnesota: 80-80 (0) (34:20)

– at Indiana: 73-75 (-2) (34:23)

Mike Gesell: 78/162 rotations

Season: 1,360-1,137 (+223) (657:22)

Big Ten play: 789-726 (+63) (389:51)

Last 3 games: 174-172 (+2) (77:57)

– vs. Wisconsin: 42-42 (0) (22:18)

– at Minnesota: 71-71 (0) (29:14)

– at Indiana: 61-59 (+2) (26:25)

Jarrod Uthoff: 84/162 rotations

Season: 1,084-918 (+166) (524:32)

Big Ten play: 461-462 (-1) (251:34)

Last 3 games: 98-120 (-22) (52:25)

– vs. Wisconsin: 50-53 (-3) (25:40)

– at Minnesota: 10-21 (-11) (7:02)

– at Indiana: 38-46 (-8) (19:43)

Melsahn Basabe: 62/162 rotations

Season: 997-866 (+131) (510:37)

Big Ten play: 514-491 (+23) (277:56)

Last 3 games: 38-48 (-10) (22:11)

– vs. Wisconsin: 3-2 (+1) (1:14)

– at Minnesota: DNP

– at Indiana: 35-46 (-11) (20:57)

Gabe Olaseni: 56/162 rotations

Season: 940-767 (+173) (459:13)

Big Ten play: 477-464 (+13) (248:47)

Last 3 games: 116-128 (-12) (55:15)

– vs. Wisconsin: 43-53 (-10) (22:17)

– at Minnesota: 34-39 (-5) (18:36)

– at Indiana: 39-36 (+3) (14:22)

Adam Woodbury: 52/162 rotations

Season: 895-725 (+170) (455:00)

Big Ten play: 437-391 (+46) (238:58)

Last 3 games: 101-93 (+8) (51:13)

– vs. Wisconsin: 29-22 (+7) (17:19)

– at Minnesota: 49-48 (+1) (21:14)

– at Indiana: 23-23 (0) (12:40)

Zach McCabe: 61/162 rotations

Season: 1,015-752 (+263) (452:34)

Big Ten play: 494-403 (+91) (247:00)

Last 3 games: 94-98 (-4) (55:03)

– vs. Wisconsin: 33-31 (+2) (17:46)

– at Minnesota: 32-35 (-3) (13:04)

– at Indiana: 29-32 (-3) (14:13)

Anthony Clemmons: 71/162 rotations

Season: 712-572 (+140) (340:16)

Big Ten play: 172-200 (-28) (101:14)

Last 3 games: 27-39 (-12) (14:31)

– vs. Wisconsin: 7-8 (-1) (3:32)

– at Minnesota: 11-14 (-3) (7:24)

– at Indiana: 9-17 (-8) (3:35)

Josh Oglesby: 65/162 rotations

Season: 619-569 (+50) (300:13)

Big Ten play: 576-534 (+42) (279:22)

Last 3 games: 155-164 (-9) (70:53)

– vs. Wisconsin: 47-55 (-8) (24:38)

– at Minnesota: 71-65 (+6) (29:32)

– at Indiana: 37-44 (-7) (16:43)

Peter Jok: 58/162 rotations

Season: 440-345 (+95) (214:33)

Big Ten play: 42-60 (-18) (30:50)

Last 3 games: 7-12 (-5) (5:00)

– vs. Wisconsin: 0-0 (0) (0:41)

– at Minnesota: 4-9 (-5) (3:10)

– at Indiana: 3-3 (0) (1:09)

Kyle Meyer: 18/162 rotations

Season: 73-93 (-20) (49:52)

Big Ten play: 2-8 (-6) (3:07)

Last 3 games: 0-0 (0) (0:00)

– vs. Wisconsin: DNP

– at Minnesota: DNP

– at Indiana: DNP

Darius Stokes: 17/162 rotations

Season: 62-87 (-25) (40:43)

Big Ten play: 4-13 (-9) (4:31)

Last 3 games: 0-5 (-5) (0:08)

– *vs. Wisconsin: DNP*

– *at Minnesota: 0-2 (-2) (0:04)*

– *at Indiana: 0-3 (-3) (0:04)*

Kyle Denning: 14/162 rotations

Season: 70-80 (-10) (42:01)

Big Ten play: 0-4 (-4) (1:48)

Last 3 games: 0-0 (0) (0:00)

– *vs. Wisconsin: DNP*

– *at Minnesota: DNP*

– *at Indiana: DNP*

Okey Ukah: 6/162 rotations

Season: 33-46 (-13) (25:43)

Big Ten play: 0-0 (0) (0:51)

Last 3 games: 0-0 (0) (0:00)

– *vs. Wisconsin: DNP*

– *at Minnesota: DNP*

– *at Indiana: DNP*

Looking ahead:

Iowa’s final three Big Ten games are as follows: The Hawkeyes return home to play their only regular season meeting with Purdue on March 2. Then they play their road finale at No. 18 Michigan State on March 6. Finally, the last game of the regular season takes place March 8 at Carver-Hawkeye Arena when Iowa plays host to Illinois. Once again, I’ll update this data in 3-game increments, so the next plus-minus update will come March 9 following Iowa’s regular season finale against Illinois. Given what is known, here are some things to keep an eye on in each upcoming match-up.

March 2 vs. Purdue – With this match-up against the Boilermakers, three names stand out. One player I can see having a big game for Iowa here is Basabe because he’ll be needed to help inside with defending A.J. Hammons. Along those same lines, this is the kind of game that suits Olaseni, who was a combined +17 in two games against Purdue last season. Then there’s Marble, who along with Olaseni also recorded pluses in both meetings last year against the Boilermakers.

March 6 at No. 18 Michigan State – The first time around when Iowa played Michigan State last month, there were three players who had pluses. Two of those players were White and Oglesby, who both charted +2. This is the kind of game where both are going to be important for the Hawkeyes. White’s role only becomes greater with Branden Dawson back in the Spartans’ lineup. Additionally, Marble will be big here because he’ll be spending most of the night guarding Gary Harris.

March 8 vs. Illinois – It might be Senior Day and Marble will likely have another big performance here. But two juniors look primed to continue the ongoing success they’ve had against the Fighting Illini. One is White, who is a match-up nightmare for Illinois, period. The other is Olaseni, who played the best game of his career when these teams met in Champaign back on Feb. 1.