

# 3/10/2014: Kirk Speraw teleconference transcript (premium)

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Below is a written transcript of Iowa assistant coach Kirk Speraw's teleconference on Monday with the Big Ten media:

## **Speraw's opening statement:**

*"The guys had a day off yesterday. We get our preparation started for Northwestern here today and I think our guys are excited and looking forward to the Big Ten Tournament. I really respect Northwestern and the job Chris [Collins] has done the entire year and really respect Drew Crawford and the leadership he has provided to his team. But I'm really looking forward to a week in Indianapolis."*

## **On where the players are at mentally after losing five of six:**

*"Well, I think youth of today, they're a really resilient group of people and our guys are resilient. Certainly, the last two weeks haven't gone the way we'd all like it to go."*

*"But you know, we're right there. It's just a couple of possessions here or there and I think any time you move from one phase of the season to the next, whether it's practice into your pre-conference, pre-conference into your Big Ten season or now moving into the tournament season, you kind of have a fresh outlook and a fresh start. So I think our guys will look forward to practice today and come with renewed energy."*

## **On the issues Iowa has had of late playing its 2-3 zone:**

*"Well, I think anything defensively, whether it's man or zone, is containing dribble penetration and I think we're giving up some dribble penetration in both areas and we've got to tighten that up. We've got to sit down in our stance a little bit better. We've got to guard our guard a little bit better."*

*"But our rotations are a little bit slow, but I think that's something that we can get back to practice today. We haven't really been able to practice and work on some things here in the last couple of weeks. It's always game prep, game prep, game prep and you know, I think if we can get back to some fundamentals and refocus ourselves in those areas."*

**On if having beaten Northwestern twice by 26 points makes it concerning about getting the players up for Thursday's game:**

*"No, I don't think it will cause us any problems getting their attention. We've got great respect for Northwestern and how hard they're playing and how hard they're competing and you know, our guys will have their full attention on Northwestern."*

*"It's not easy to beat anybody three times in one season. We know that, we understand that, but I don't think it'll be a problem with our guys. They've done a great job all year long at being mentally focused on the task at hand and I think this will be the same on Thursday."*

**On Northwestern's Alex Olah and how much of a difference he has made for the Wildcats since Iowa last played Northwestern in January:**

*"Yeah, I think Alex is really playing a lot better, you know, certainly. You know, Tre Demps has always played very well against us and of course as I've mentioned about Drew, I'm really so happy for him in regards to him staying there and providing leadership to that program. I think that really speaks to his character as an individual and I have great respect for Drew and what he brings to the table and he's playing awfully good basketball right now, too."*

**On what he believes Devyn Marble has done better this year in terms of turning his game up:**

*"You know, I think it's just the maturation process for Dev and the confidence that Dev always has, you know, in his game and his ability to make plays. He's a gym rat. He works on his game. That has never been in doubt, never been in question. He's not afraid of tough situations. You know, he always steps up to the challenge. He doesn't always complete the play, but he's never afraid to make the play and you respect that out of Dev."*

*"The thing I think has been, you know, great from his standpoint is if he has an off half or an off game, he has that ability to bounce right back. His failures never really linger very long and he can bounce it right back. I just think he has continued to get stronger. That has helped him and has continued to work on all facets of his game. I think he has played outstanding basketball this entire year."*

**On if being able to step out of his father's shadow at Iowa has been a testament to Marble's game:**

*"No question. He has been his own man and it never bothered him and he never shied away from what his father did here at Iowa and he was just going to be Devyn Marble and play the game the best way that he could and didn't worry about trying to meet someone else's expectations. He had high expectations for himself and it has been a credit to him."*

*"He has just played the game and taken what the defense has given him. He has always been unselfish. He has always had a good assist-to-turnover ratio. We've had to move him around to different places that we needed him and it all started when we needed him as a back-up point guard his very first year. He stepped into that role and we played him at the 2, played him at the 3 and wherever has been best for our team, he has stepped into that role and that's not always easy to do and he*

*has handled it with ease."*

**On how last year's run to the NIT Championship Game could be on benefit to Iowa now making a March run this year:**

*"Well, we certainly hope so. You know, our guys played with high energy. You know, we played great defense. Our defense created great offense for us and we were able to do that consistently and won some tough games on the road to get to New York.*

*"So it was a great experience and one that we thought was going to pay big dividends this year and certainly this is the time of the year where you would hope an experience like last year's run can pay dividends right now at this time of the year. So we'll see how that turns out."*