

**January 12, 2012**



An interview with:

## **COACH McCAFFERY**

**Q. When you went back and watched the tape of the game, were you disappointed in reevaluating things as you were when the game was going on? Were there one or two ultimate teaching points that you wanted to get across to your players?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, I don't think you can look at that game and see it as one or two things. We were down 40 at one point. That is a lot more than two things.

I think when I watched the game I sort of got what I expected to see, breakdowns. I think we should have been a little more physical. We talked about that, and some other things in that game that I was not happy about. So there are a number of things in there that we needed to evaluate.

**Q. The video of you with the chair kind of went viral on line. It got mentioned on ESPN and a few others. After going back and looking at it, do you have any regrets or anything or what do you think about it?**

COACH McCAFFERY: No, not at all. If anybody thinks I'm going to sit there with my hands crossed when we're down by 40, they got the wrong guy, okay. I was brought in here to change the culture. I'm going to coach with passion, and my players know that. They also know I'm going to fight for them.

So as far as that's concerned, a lot of people like to infer what was going on or what was being said. Nobody knows what I was saying. Nobody knows what we were discussing during that timeout except for me and my players.

I have no regrets, I have no apologies, none whatsoever. I'm going to continue to coach

the same way, and we're going to keep working, improving, and battling, and fighting until we're up by 40.

**Q. Do you ever worry about officials holding that against you?**

COACH McCAFFERY: The good ones don't.

**Q. When you mentioned the officials or --**

COACH McCAFFERY: First of all, I didn't have much at all towards the officials, to be honest with you.

**Q. Is the message more toward the players?**

COACH McCAFFERY: In this case, it was toward the players to take care of what was happening in the game. Now you can infer whatever you want to infer from that, because when a game is physical like that, and it's being officiated that way, then we have to adjust. We didn't adjust.

**Q. Did you receive any kind of communication from the Big Ten?**

COACH McCAFFERY: No, nor should I have.

**Q. Do you think that your players can feed off that in a way? Your goal is to use that as a positive, isn't it?**

COACH McCAFFERY: What I'm going to do, is I'm going to challenge them to compete. All right. We have to compete on every possession, every game. We didn't do that.

**Q. One thing that was interesting is after talking to Aaron White the officials were allowing a lot to go on and you guys didn't take advantage of that the way Michigan State did.**

COACH McCAFFERY: That's exactly what happened. Aaron's a very bright, very astute player. I don't think it's easy sometimes to realize that as it's going on. You sort of think that they would. That's my job to make sure that they do. So at the front end we prepare them for it, then as it's going on, deal with it.

We weren't dealing with it. We addressed it. We talked about it, and then it was time to take care of it, and we didn't take care of it. That won't happen. Not on any team I coach, that's not going to happen. I'm telling you right now. It will not happen.

**Q. So like they were bullying you and you weren't fighting back?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I don't know if it was that. It was physical: Two hands on you when you're trying to cut, those kinds of things. Well, we've all seen it. Some games are reffed tighter than others. Well, that wasn't.

So it's time for us to then adjust and do the same things. I don't think they would have called it against us either. I don't think it was an unfair thing. I'm not saying that at all. Not at all. You have to make sure, okay, this one's getting called tight, this one's getting called loose.

**Q. Was it fair to say though your team needs to be tougher?**

COACH McCAFFERY: We needed to be tougher that night. I think we have gotten tougher. We've been tougher, but we weren't tougher that night.

**Q. What do you expect from Michigan regarding that?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I expect us to play better. I expect us to play better in a number of different facets of the game. We have to. They're 13, they won last night and they'll probably move up unless we knock them off. So we have a really good team coming in here.

**Q. How has Trey Burke affected Michigan, and how is he different than say what Morris was last year?**

COACH McCAFFERY: With all due respect to the guys in the NBA, I think they're better. I'm a big Trey Burke fan, always have

been. As good as Morris was getting to the rim, Trey's a better shooter. With that team and all the other shooters they have and with the improvement of Morgan, you know, it really gives you cause for concern.

Okay, what do you do? Well, they've got a great point guard who can penetrate. They've got one of the best players in college basketball in Hardaway who can drive and shoot it. They've got other great shooters on the perimeter, including one of their post players. And they have a legitimate big man now who is not only rebounding and being physical, he's rebounding, being physical, and scoring. So that's going to test your defense in a lot of different ways.

**Q. And yet they almost lost at home to Northwestern. What's that say about this conference?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, it was a very interesting game. I don't know how much of it you saw. They started and missed the first eight shots, I think. They missed the first eight shots and go 7 for 30 from three, well below their average. I thought Northwestern defended them. I thought Northwestern executed. They had that one stretch of eight minutes where they didn't score.

So you give Michigan credit. On a night where they didn't play particularly well offensively, they still gutted out a victory. To me, that is the impressive thing about that game.

**Q. You talked about Aaron White's fatigue and energy level as games go on. Is he improving in that area?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Yeah, he's improving in that area because he's getting more minutes and he's working on it. The more comfortable you get doing that, the better off you're going to be. He's still going to make some mistakes from a fatigue standpoint at some point in time if I leave him out there too long.

But he's such a good player, he'll go make two or three other good plays, and ultimately be a positive.

**Q. Did you see Matt Gatens drawing Hardaway in the game quite a bit?**

COACH McCAFFERY: He'll be on him. Maybe not the whole game, but he'll be on him, yeah.

**Q. You threw out a different lineup to start the second half just to get a spark offensively. Are you going to change that to open this game, or is it going to be what it was?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Still haven't decided that. There is a good likelihood there will be a change, but I haven't discussed it with any of our players yet. So before I would say anything to anybody else, I also haven't definitively decided if we're going to do it, but I'll tell everybody first.

**Q. What factors will go into the decision making?**

COACH McCAFFERY: The performances recently. Who is playing well. What team I think has the best chance to win. Nothing more than that.

**Q. Cartwright's hamstring. How is he doing?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Fine.

**Q. Did you try to recruit Trey Burke and what did you like about him at the time?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Uh-huh, yeah. Pretty much everything. He doesn't really have any weaknesses that I can see. He's obviously playing at a maturity level unlike most freshmen point guards. But I think if you watched him, you could see it coming. I mean, I saw it coming.

I remember at the Big Ten meetings, everybody was saying, boy, it's a shame. They were really primed to be a Top 10 team, and the guy goes to the pros. I said, no, they're going to be better. Why do you say that? They've got Trey Burke. Coach Beilein's not talking about him.

Well, I understand that. But he's going to be playing them. He rarely comes out. John knows what he's doing.

**Q. The first seven games you played topnotch competition in the conference. How are the guys going through this early stretch?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Oh, they're fighting. To a degree, they're learning, you go game by game. Obviously, we had two really good wins. We had a tough loss at home. We got drilled twice by two really good teams. That's upsetting, but it's part of the process. You've got to go through it. Those teams are phenomenally talented, and we didn't do what we needed to do.

So, again, you look at our schedule and you figure you've got what, four or five ranked

teams out of the last five games we've played? That's pretty impressive. So we've got another chance. We've got another chance to play against a team that is ranked, and play better, and focus harder. You know, those moments in the game where we didn't -- the game starts to get away from us a little bit. All right. You've got to bring it back.

We did that against Wisconsin. We did that against Minnesota. We've done that at various times throughout the season. We didn't do it against Creighton. We did it a little bit at Iowa State, but we got it to eight or whatever, but we never got it back to even. You can't let it get to 23 at Iowa State.

You can't let it go, for example, the last four minutes of the first half, we got it 30-22. We did a lot of things early that were not conducive to winning. But we sort of clawed back in, 30-22. They go on a 16-0 run. There is the game right there. You can't spot a team eight and then let them go on a 16-0 run.

You've got to get the next five. Even if we get five and they get two. We go into halftime and you're down six or seven, whatever, that's a maturity that we have to develop and the only way to get there is to go through it.

**Q. You did the same thing up in Minnesota. You were down 21-1. What was different other than the competition?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think a couple things. You know, we were playing in the zone at the end of the half. They were struggling against it. So they got a little bit sideways, but we had some guys make plays. Gatens jumps up and makes two threes, R.J. makes the big steal, and Aaron White with the great finish.

Somebody's going to have to make a play there. Collectively we played better defense there, and that is kind of how you do it. I can't point to one person who is going to do one thing. It's a collective understanding that this is the situation we're in. It's 32-21. Is it going to be 40-24? Are we going to erase this?

Because we go into halftime with all the momentum, they don't have any, and now we played pretty well coming out, and now they're tight. Now they can't attack the zone. They're struggling with threes. They're not getting second shots. Sampson's not being a factor. All of those things.

We settled down offensively. We were executing offensively. Great shots, some run out basket opportunities. Even when they scored, scored on top of them, those types of things. So you kind of felt like -- and you were there, you kind of felt like yeah, this is kind of what we have to do.

But when they're scoring and we're not, we're turning the ball over and they're not, and we're not getting second shots and they are, pretty hard to bite into a lead.

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