

**February 3, 2012**



An interview with:

## **COACH FRAN McCAFFERY**

**Q. Tim Frazier has had a pretty nice year. What does he do well?**

COACH McCAFFERY: He does everything well. He's leading in scoring, he's leading in rebounding. He gets to the free-throw line. He finds his teammates. He plays defense. He's got an amazing ability to sustain it for a lot of minutes with everybody going after him.

He's having as good a year as anybody in our league.

**Q. What kind of problems does he present the guards?**

COACH McCAFFERY: He's phenomenally talented at getting in the lane, whether it is with ball screens or without. He can seemingly get in there anytime he wants.

He's shooting the ball much better than he did last year. His pull-up jumper, his floater is really good. His three is solid, good enough to set up everything else.

But a lot of times he'll go away from shooting the ball and just load his teammates up. I think he's the kind of guy that really wants to win. He's scoring the ball because he has to at times, but he's trying to take care of his teammates, too.

**Q. This kind of feels like the circumstances going into Nebraska. Does that concern you at all?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Every game concerns me. Every team in this league is really good. Some are a little bit better than others, and that will be determined over time.

This team has good players. They've got a good coach. They know what they're doing.

They compete. They play hard. They're athletic. It would be tough for any team in our league to beat them.

**Q. Do you know if Eric May will be able to go?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I do not.

**Q. You've beaten four teams now with RPI's of 55 or better. As you look at that, does that kind of show you the upside of your team?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think it shows you exactly what we're capable of. I think in some ways it defines the frustration that we have at times, because there's times when we haven't played up to our capabilities.

I think, as I said towards the end of our press conference the other night, the challenge for us is becoming more consistent with what we're doing. We've proven we can play with anybody. We've proven that we can play well for long periods of time.

But we talked more about defense recently, being able to do that consistently. It's pretty much everything. You want to understand, play defense, run your break, execute your offense. Once you're doing all of those things consistently, what are you going to do, you're going to win consistently.

**Q. Are you going to have any of the '86/'87 team talk to some of your players, mingle with them?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I hope they mingle with them. Some of them are going to be at practice today. I think some of the guys are going to go with Brad Lohaus and Michael Morgan to the West High game because both their sons are playing. I think they're going to come, be at practice, we'll have a get-together, then some of them are going to stay, some are going to head over there with those guys.

**Q. Did you know much about that team?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I knew about that team. I coached against that team the year before. So I knew those players. I was obviously very familiar with Dr. Tom. I watched him when he was at Lafayette. I watched him when he was at BC. I was always very impressed with him and his coaching style and always liked kind of how he coached.

So I remember those players very well. And, of course, I had the opportunity to watch them for a long time. A lot of them played in the pros. Eight guys were drafted from that team. Pretty incredible when you think about it.

**Q. Have you gotten to develop a bond with Coach Davis since you arrived last year?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Yes. And it's easy to do because of the kind of person he is. Press conference couldn't have been over five minutes and I had a message and we talked for a long time. We got together for lunch. We have subsequently gotten together a couple times. I'm glad he's going to be here tomorrow.

**Q. When you look back to Wednesday's game, there's a timeout after Devyn hit the three. After that the only stop in play was when Bryce shot the free throws. How pleasing was it for you to see the way the team reacted with the game on the line?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think any coach in that situation would feel great because at that point it almost had to be that way for us to win. Marble shooting an open three, Cartwright found him in transition, he's wide open. We were able to overcome some mistakes. We don't get the rebound off the missed free throw. They hit a three. I think everybody thought it was over. I think everybody assumed that was it.

After that, you know, we didn't panic. We hit the three. Bryce's decision making was excellent. Marble's decision making was excellent. Our execution was very good. We didn't give them two, three, four shots. We played the zone and rebounded out of the zone. Even the last eight seconds we did a good job defensively. Very impressed with our mentality at that point in time.

**Q. What can Matt Gatens do defensively to affect Tim Frazier on Saturday?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, when he's on him, he'll be on him some, I don't know if he's going to be on him all the time, he's got to take advantage of his length. As I said, Tim has a unique ability to stop and start with explosion. You don't see that a lot. You see that at the pro level. So he stops and he goes and he's by you. He's always down. His burst is incredible. He can go either way. Probably better going right. Most right-handed players are. But he goes either way.

He's not a selfish guy, so he's not always going to score. He's going to score or draw the defense. So anybody that's guarding him, whether it's Matt or anybody else, has to get help. You have to sort of corral him as a group and be locked into that mentally.

It's not a one-person operation to stop Tim Frazier.

**Q. With the '86/'87 team under the spotlight this weekend, there's always comparisons drawn between Roy and Devyn. What have you noticed about their relationship?**

COACH McCAFFERY: It's excellent. Roy, he comes around. He sort of knows when to come around and how to be. I think what he tells Dev, he understands the difference between being a coach and a father, what you need to do to be successful at this level. I mean, he's got credibility. He was phenomenally successful at this level.

He gives him good advice. He pushes him to work hard. I know that they have a very, very special bond. You can see it. He's at every game. I know they talk after every game.

But I think by the same token Devyn is really a unique person, he's his own man. He thinks for himself, he takes advice, he takes coaching. He really works hard to be the best player he can be. But he's got a really unique ability to play the game in a relaxed way and make mistakes and come back and make great plays.

I mean, he essentially won the game for us. When he drove the ball and shot it over his ear, that wasn't a good play. But it's forgotten. He doesn't harp on it. He just comes back and makes three plays and we win. He never gets too up or too down.

I think Roy was that way. He was a real competitor. Having coached against him, he'd just keep coming after you. That's the one thing that clearly exists between the two of them, they're both

phenomenal competitors.

**Q. You joked earlier Devyn might have inherited his dad's defensive genes as well.**

COACH McCAFFERY: He should be good. He's just okay. I think the reason for that is we're asking him to do a lot. That's the fine line. We talk about, Okay, Dev, I need you to go get us 15 points, you need to run the offense, and now you need to go guard somebody on the wing who is really talented, and you have to play 36 minutes while you're doing it. That's hard to do.

He'll tend to rest a little bit on defense. Not that he can't do it. He tends to rest. He just doesn't sustain it from a concentration standpoint like he needs to. I've tried to explain to him. I say, If you want to play at the next level, you've got to do it at both ends of the floor.

For him, if he does that for us, we're a better team. If he does that for himself, they're going to pay him to play. That, I think, would be enough incentive because he's a good kid. He knows how to defend. If you watch him get his feet apart, he's almost 6'7" as a guard, he gets his shot off easy. He can finish with either hand. He's dunking the ball going down the lane now. He's becoming more and more explosive as he gets stronger, as he matures. He's got the total package.

When he's not playing good defense it's because he's just not playing defense, not because he can't.

**Q. The '86/'87 team, isn't that the same year that the three-point shot came into college basketball?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I think so, yeah.

**Q. How did that affect the game? Did people embrace that right away?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Some coaches embraced it more than others. I just remember Jim Boyle from Saint Joe's, I think they shot like 35 in the first game. Pitino was one of the first guys that really worked on that shot. He would get on you if you shot one with your toe on the line, make sure you put your toe behind the line. They took a lot of shots. Where you put your toe as you were coming into your shot, things of that nature.

We didn't make a big deal about it either way. We kind of kept doing what we were doing and shot some. There's a lot less zone being played now than there was then. I think that's part of the reason. You're giving up jumpers, and three

is greater than two. I think it varied by coach I would say.

**Q. Over the course of the year, has the man or zone defense been more consistent for your guys?**

COACH McCAFFERY: Well, the zone has been really good for us in a couple situations. It was good for us in both Minnesota games. We've kind of mixed it in. But we're primarily a man-to-man team. We play so much more man. I think some teams are really hard to zone.

So, I think all in all we'll still be a man-to-man team, a little more consistent man-to-man team. We work it more, we play it more. But we mix the zone in when we're struggling with our man or against a team that we think is maybe not quite as good against the zone as it would be against man.

**Q. Your full court, especially the first half, was very effective getting turnovers, easy baskets. As this evolves, do you see your teams playing more and more of that?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I do. I do. I've said this before. I'm a little reluctant to go to it exclusively. Kind of like how we started the season. We were going to it on every made basket. As you start to play really good teams, that's difficult to do. You can do it, but you're going to be susceptible to runs and you're going to open up the floor to really talented players and give them more space to go dunk the ball and drive the ball.

So at some level you got to get your defense back and underneath the ball and be in a position to help, be in a position to handle ball screens and so forth.

But I favor that style in terms of more possessions, quicker shots. I think we'll have an offensive team capable of excelling in that type of situation. So you'll see us do it more and more. But I don't know if we'll ever go to where it's every possession possible.

**Q. Have you gotten any sort of feedback or explanation as to why, particularly during the games, there seems to be an inadvertent clock issue that seems to take place?**

COACH McCAFFERY: See, that stuff, it's different now. It's not all on the clock operator. It's

the precision timing that's right on the official's hip. It's based on when you blow the whistle. So the clock stops automatically when you blow the whistle.

So, for example, if an official takes a deep breath, it might stop the clock. So I think the last two times it happened in our game was kind of a fluke situation. So, we just have to deal with it.

**Q. Players get throw-back uniforms tomorrow. You going to do anything throw-back?**

COACH McCAFFERY: No.

**Q. No plaid suit?**

COACH McCAFFERY: I didn't own one then (laughter). I think I'll go with what I have in my closet. Of course, I could probably find something. I know when I was playing, we had the short shorts. Even though we have throw-backs, we have the long shorts. I don't think they're as long as they want them. They want them longer. So we'll see.

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