

Iowa comes alive in 2nd half, sneaks past Green Bay

By Adam Hensley

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Iowa's offense struggled with turnovers early on, but thanks to its determination to feed the post, the Hawkeyes dominated down low in a 93-82 win over Green Bay on Sunday.

Luka Garza and Tyler Cook muscled Phoenix defenders in the paint all game long, as each scored 17 points.

"Early on we were getting (the ball) to me inside, then we started getting it to Cook, because we knew we had the advantage there," Garza said. "They couldn't stop us."

Forwards Garza, Cook, Nicholas Baer, and Ryan Kriener combined to score 54 points, but it was also Jordan Bohannon's play on the outside that sparked Iowa's second-half breakaway.

Connor McCaffery's presence at point guard allowed Bohannon to slide over from point to shooting guard, freeing him from primary ball-handling duties and giving him more looks from long-range.

Bohannon scored all 13 of his points in the second half, hitting three of his six 3-point attempts.

"I think it helped me get some shots off, especially with them pressing the entire game," he said. "I wasn't really too aggressive - I don't think it was needed for me to be aggressive in the first half. I just let the game come to me."

Thanks to early foul trouble on Cook's end and Bohannon's 0-for-2 performance in the first half, the Phoenix held both players to just 3 points combined in the opening half. They scored 27 in the second half.

Meanwhile, Green Bay hung around thanks to the hot hands of Sandy Cohen III and Manny Patterson.

Both scored 17 points, with Cohen added eight assists and six rebounds in his 37 minutes on the court. The Phoenix forced 17 turnovers, sparking an early first-half lead. Green Bay fell into foul trouble as the game went on, however, as Iowa shot 45 free throws.

BIG PICTURE

Green Bay: The Phoenix defense made the Hawkeyes uncomfortable for most of the game, forcing 17 turnovers. That's one turnover better than their last game, and also something head coach Linc Darner should be pleased with.

Iowa: Defense was Iowa's Achilles' heel last season and it showed again. It's early, but giving up 82 points isn't ideal for a team that made defense an offseason priority.

TURNING POINT

With less than six minutes remaining in the game, Bohannon stole a Green Bay pass, and the Phoenix failed to stop the ball. The Hawkeye point guard drove to the bucket and made a layup through a foul. He made his free throw, and Iowa's lead grew to nine - its largest of the day to that point.

ROLE PLAYER

Baer's contributions off the bench kept things from getting out of hand in the first half. He had eight points in the first, and then he added four in the second half.

"He was phenomenal in the first half," coach Fran McCaffery said. "He was probably the reason we were up in the first half."

STAT OF THE NIGHT

Iowa's bench scored 33 points. McCaffery's squad prides itself on a deep rotation, and on Sunday, that was the case.

Baer led the way, scoring 12 points, grabbing six rebounds, and tallying a steal and a block. McCaffery scored 11 points and dished three assists and Kriener added eight points.

HE SAID IT

McCaffery on playing alongside Bohannon: "He makes shots. I can take my guy off the dribble. It's good to have two guards on the floor that really handle the ball, know what we're doing at all times. I think it's a good lineup. I love playing with him."

UP NEXT

Green Bay returns home after losing its second game in a row, hosting Eastern Washington on Friday.

Iowa travels to New York City for a showdown against Oregon on Thursday as the 2K Classic for the Wounded Warrior Project moves from campus sites to Madison Square Garden.