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NOTRE DAME, Ind. - Maybe Notre Dame's karma is starting to change. After a stretch earlier this month that saw them drop three of four games, including an uncharacteristic pair of home losses, the Irish fought their way to a 65-60 win over what had been a hot Villanova team Wednesday night at Purcell Pavilion at the Joyce Center.

"They are really physical and I'm thrilled we met and maybe exceeded the physicality that was gonna be needed," Irish head coach Mike Brey said after the win. "We did a really good job of defending the three-point line, which is where they had so much success in their two great wins last week."

Those two Villanova (13-8, 4-4 Big East) wins last week came over Syracuse and former No. 1 Louisville. The Wildcats combined for 16 three-pointers in the pair of upset wins, but they were just 3-of-11 from long range in their loss to Notre Dame (17-4, 5-3).

Brey did everything he could to change his team's "karma". He got his iced tea before the game at a new location and wore an open collar shirt for the second straight game - a departure from his traditional mock turtle neck look. The Irish also sported gold uniforms at home for the second time this season after going to black uniforms on the road against South Florida.

The Irish led by six points three different times in the first six minutes of the contest, but couldn't shake the Wildcats. Notre Dame shot at a blistering 58% (7-for-12) early on, but Villanova was even better - going 6-for-10 rom the field and 4-for-4 at the free throw line - and took its first lead of the game at 16-15 on Daniel Ochefu's layup at the 10:56 mark of the first half.

Notre Dame got the lead right back when Tom Knight followed Pat Connaughton's missed three-pointer with a layup of his own. Villanova tied the game at 19 moments later on a three by James Bell. The Irish were just 1-for-7 on its own threes - with six straight misses - at that point. Jerian Grant, who hit ND's first three just a little more than a minute into the game, ended the three-point drought when he nailed his second from long range with 5:20 left in the first half to put the Irish back up 24-21.

"I was getting good looks and I know I'm a good shooter," Grant, who matched his career-high with four treys, said of he and his teammates bouncing-back from a rough start to the game. "I just keep shooting them and know that they're gonna go in."

Grant also led the Fighting Irish with 10 assists - a career-best mark that he hit for the third time this season.

The lead did not last long. Villanova used an 8-0 run, with six of the points coming at the free throw line, to go up 29-24. Jack Cooley ended the run with a pair of free throws of his own. Cameron Biedscheid's three with 43 seconds left in the half ended a drought of nearly 4:40 on the clock to make it 31-29 Villanova at halftime. After hitting six of their first 10 shots to start the half the Irish connected on a mere 6-for-18 the rest of the half.

The Wildcats made their first 10 free throws before their first miss at the stripe when Ochefu missed the first of two, but he still gave his team a 34-29 lead. Biedscheid then went on a personal 6-0 run, with three straight free throws and a trey, to put the Irish up 35-34 three minutes into the second half. Biedscheid nailed another trey from the left corner to put the Irish up 41-39 with 12:54 remaining, while giving himself 12 points at the time. It marked the first time since a 15-point effort against Niagara on Dec. 21 that the freshman had scored in double figures. He had averaged just 3.5 points over the last seven games since then.

Biedscheid finished with a game and career-high 18 points. He was 5-for-8 from the field, with all the shots coming on three pointers after going 1-for-14 from the floor and averaging just 3.5 points over the previous seven games.

"Just keep shooting them," Biedscheid echoed Grant's sentiment of how to put a slump behind

him.. "You've gotta keep shooting them. That's the only way to get through it. Just put the work in off the court so you can put the work in on the court and just keep shooting when you get the shot."

"He is such a gamer," Brey said of Biedscheid. "He loves to play ball. He loves to compete. It was almost like 'I'm not gonna let you down, I'll be back'. He didn't get a whole lot of minutes in Tampa (in Saturday's win over USF), but he hit a big three and he had a dunk on the baseline. This was coming."

A barrage of threes, three by Biedscheid and another by Grant, helped push the Irish to a 52-46 lead. The Fighting Irish finished 9-for-21 from behind the arc. The four straight threes in a five minute second-half stretch surpassed the team's first half output from long range. Grant's three with 3:57 to play gave the Irish a 59-51 lead - their biggest advantage of the game.

Eric Atkins, who finished with just four points on 2-for-7 shooting, and Grant both missed the front end of 1-and-1 chances with under 40 seconds to play. Cooley nailed a pair from the free through line though with 13.3 seconds left to make it a five-point game. A layup by Mouphtaou Yarou cut the lead to three, but a long inbound pass and a layup by Atkins just before the buzzer sealed the Irish victory.

Cooley battled inside all night to wind up with a 17-point and season-best 16-rebound performance - his 13th double-double of the season.

"What more can you say about Cooley," Brey asked rhetorically after the win. "I have never seen a guy so relentless. He is going after balls…I don't know how he has the energy to do it, but he continually does it. How he set the tone for us in the middle was just fabulous."

Tom Knight left the game for a few minutes midway through the second half to have a skinned right knee attended to. He pulled a knee pad over it to control bleeding. He picked-up his fourth foul with 3:40 to play, but had his second straight double-digit scoring night with 10 points in his second consecutive start.

Knight hit four of his five field goals from at least 15 feet from the basket, but he and Cooley give the Irish the more physical presence inside that Brey referred to. Zach Auguste played just six minutes, but gave the Irish energy and played with fire as well.

The "karma" has changed at least for now and the Irish will see if they can carry it with them to Chicago this weekend when they play at DePaul on Saturday.

"We're gonna see if we can ride this a while," Brey concluded.