

More Nebraska/Expansion stuff

These are direct statements from UI officials in response to Nebraska becoming a member of the Big Ten on Friday, as given in a release sent out by the Iowa sports information department:

UI President Sally Mason: *"The University of Iowa is delighted to welcome the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to the Big Ten Conference. We believe that Nebraska shares many strong values and attributes with Iowa – including a longstanding commitment to academic excellence and tradition-rich athletic programs with national appeal. They are a perfect fit, and I'm certain that our fans will quickly embrace having a new rival in all sports."*

"Nebraska will dramatically strengthen the Big Ten in a variety of ways. The university is an outstanding public research institution with academic values that mirror current Big Ten member schools. It also has a phenomenal athletic tradition that brings another storied program with a national following into our ranks. I expect the overall benefits of Nebraska's addition to the Big Ten will be mutually shared and will bring considerable added value and prestige to our conference academically, athletically, and culturally – all of which are essential outcomes when considering adding any university to the conference."

Iowa Athletics Director Gary Barta: *"The addition of Nebraska is an extremely exciting development for the Big Ten, and especially for Hawkeye student-athletes, coaches, and supporters. I expect Iowa and Nebraska to quickly develop a healthy athletic rivalry that will stir the passions of our respective fans and captivate the region and the nation. Much of what makes college athletics great involves the rivalries that develop over the years, and the Hawkeyes and Cornhuskers*

are a natural to grow into one of the nation's next marquee rivalries."

Kirk Ferentz (Football): *"The addition of the University of Nebraska to the Big Ten appears to be a very positive and an exciting development – much like when Penn State joined the conference years ago. I would anticipate the reaction to this development by players and fans to be extremely enthusiastic. From my vantage point, Nebraska is a natural and positive fit in all regards and this announcement is a real credit to all of those involved in providing leadership in the Big Ten."*

Fran McCaffery (Men's Basketball): *"I'm the new kid on the block, so all I would add to this discussion would be an appreciation for all that the University of Nebraska brings to our conference athletically and academically. I wholeheartedly agree that Nebraska appears to be a perfect fit."*

Lisa Bluder (Women's Basketball): *"The Big Ten is one of the nation's toughest conferences in women's basketball. The addition of Nebraska makes our conference stronger, tougher and deeper. That's a great thing for our fans, student-athletes and alumni. It's an exciting change and we are up to the challenge."*