

# 6/27/2010: One-on-One with LeVar Woods (Part One)

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*HawkeyeDrive.com*

LeVar Woods is all about giving back.

On June 29, the former Hawkeye linebacker will conduct the [LeVar Woods Football Academy](#), a two-day football camp for kids up in Spirit Lake, Iowa, in the Northwest portion of the state.

This is the first year of Woods' camp, and his list of volunteers features many familiar names associated with Iowa football, such as Dallas Clark, Nate Kaeding, and Brad Banks.

Among the highlights for those attending is a Coaches Clinic, as well as a keynote address from Clark, who is entering his eighth season in the NFL as a tight end for the Indianapolis Colts. The money from ticket sales for Clark's address will be donated to both the Dallas Clark Foundation, and the SAMI Center in Spirit Lake, Iowa, where both events will be held. Also benefiting from the LeVar Woods Football Academy is the Bedell Family YMCA of the Okobojis, where the camp for kids between 5th-12th grades will take place.

After playing for the Hawkeyes, Woods spent seven seasons in the NFL playing for four different teams – the Arizona Cardinals, Chicago Bears, Detroit Lions, and Tennessee Titans. He now serves a role on the Iowa coaching staff as an administrative assistant.

This is Part One from my phone interview with Woods on June 25.

***HawkeyeDrive.com (HD):*** Tell us a little about your camp and

some of the things you're hoping to accomplish with it.

**LeVar Woods:** This year, it's a two-day, non-padded, skill and instructional camp. My goal is to give kids the opportunity that I never had and a lot of other people never had growing up. It's an opportunity for kids to learn the game of football, which everyone involved with this academy has played, give them the opportunity to learn the game, and to learn from some of the best players to have ever played the game at their position, and also some of the best coaches available. The goal is just they have the opportunity. It's right there in front of them, and they could seize the opportunity and make something of their football career, for they otherwise, would never get the opportunity to ever do.

**HD:** You talked about having a lot of players helping out. I saw the list of volunteers, and it's basically a 'Who's who' of Iowa football from the last 10 years. How did you go about getting some of these guys to help out with your camp?

**Woods:** It's funny. Everyone asks me that, and to be honest, it wasn't really difficult at all. These guys are all eager to help, all eager to pass on the knowledge they have. That first call, I called them and they said, "Yeah. What time? Where? When? What day? What position do you want me to work with?" They were all eager to do it. It wasn't a matter of trying to sell them into doing it. They were all ready, willing, and eager to do it. I was very happy about that.

The good thing about this staff is not only were the majority of them outstanding players, some of the best players to play their positions in college and in the NFL, but they are also great coaches, great teachers. They all have a passion for passing on the knowledge they have of the game of football and helping prepare the next generation of football players. I guess that was the criteria I had for coaching.

**HD:** Your camp features a Coaches Clinic, and you have Dallas

Clark as a keynote speaker. What was the thought-process for going and putting that together as a part of your football academy?

**Woods:** The thought-process was that I wanted to be able to give some of the area coaches some of the techniques that we not only use at the University of Iowa, but college and professional football. The speakers there are going to be tremendous, tremendous speakers. Not only are they very well-versed in football, but they also work at the University of Iowa. It's one of those kinds of things that you don't really realize until you leave and come back and see these guys in action behind the scenes, with the coaching side of things, just how good these coaches really are and how good this football program really is. Not only the program itself, and the players, but the coaches are outstanding.

The two guys are David Raih and Charlie Bullen, who are two very up-and-coming coaches, have a very bright future in the game of football and coaching football, and they also have the great message that they want to share. That part, I think, speaks for itself, giving coaches the opportunity to learn these things. Defensively, learning how to stop these spread and option offenses.

High school coaches, college coaches, professional coaches, have called in, all wanting to know how did we beat Georgia Tech, how did we stop Georgia Tech defensively? All these 20-25 different Division-I programs spend thousands of dollars and send their staffs to the University of Iowa to learn the defense, learn the philosophy behind what we did against Georgia Tech, and the truth of the matter is Charlie Bullen gave most of the clinics to these coaches. Charlie has done this tons of times, has done it over and over and over. He understands defense, he understands what Norm's philosophy is, so he's there to pass that on to any coaches who want to hear.

David Raih has a wealth of knowledge, playing the position of

quarterback in Iowa, then coming to Iowa as an undergraduate assistant to Coach [Kirk] Ferentz and Coach [Ken] O'Keefe, then going to UCLA, living and learning the passing game under Rick Neuheisel and Norm Chow. Anyone who knows anything about coaching knows that Norm Chow knows his offense. He coached three Heisman Trophy winning quarterbacks. David was tutored directly underneath those guys, learning this tremendous amount of knowledge. Fortunately for us at the University of Iowa, he's back on staff as an undergraduate assistant, and he's going to be talking about the passing game and how to have an efficient passing game in your offense.

Then with Dallas Clark, the reason for that is because Dallas is from Northwest Iowa. He's from Livermore, which is not far from the Okoboji area. Dallas is what the state of Iowa is. Dallas is hard-working, he's very modest. He has come through a lot of adversity to get to the place where he is. All of Dallas' accomplishments started as a kid from "Podunk, Iowa," if you will, with a dream, and Dallas has done everything and anything he possibly could to better himself and to achieve that dream.

That is the story I think not only kids need to hear, but adults need to hear as well – the things that Dallas did to separate himself from other players. Truth be told, Dallas came as a walk-on. He came as a walk-on linebacker. The things that he did every single day that other people weren't willing to do separated Dallas from being a good player to being a great player to being an outstanding, all-Pro, world-class athlete. It all started for Dallas in Livermore, Iowa, a town of 300 people. To me, that's a story that needs to be told.

Kids need to hear that, and kids need to understand because if you know anything about Northwest Iowa, once you get away from the bigger 10-20,000-person town, it gets pretty desolate, where you get into 200-300 person towns. I want kids to be able to see, "Look, if you start with a dream, and bust your tail, and have done everything that you're supposed to do, and

then more, this is the result. You get Dallas Clark." I have been a fan of Dallas Clark since the day he stepped on campus at Iowa, and still, every time I see him, I tell him how he never ceases to amaze me.