

Iowa position breakdowns: Wide Receivers/Tight Ends (premium)

*Every day this week, *HawkeyeDrive.com* will be previewing the 2010 version of the Iowa Hawkeyes position-by-position. After focusing on [quarterbacks and running backs](#), we now turn our attention in the second of our seven-part series towards Iowa wide receivers and tight ends.*

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

The Iowa Hawkeyes' receiving corps is aged like a fine wine. It consists of playmakers groomed properly into upperclassmen with the experience needed to make Iowa's offense go in 2010.

Whether it's like a sparkling wine, a red wine, or a white wine doesn't matter. It's the ingredients coming together to give it the quality many Hawkeye fans believe it has this fall.

The bulk of Iowa's receivers and tight ends consist of juniors and seniors. It starts with three wideouts, two seniors and a junior, who are all capable of big plays at any moment.

Right now, there's a battle at one of the receiver spots between seniors Derrell Johnson-Koulianos and Colin Sandeman. Johnson-Koulianos has led the Hawkeyes in receiving every season since he first stepped on the field in 2007, and the numbers have gotten better with each year. Last season, the Campbell, Ohio native had 45 receptions for 750 yards in 12 games (he missed the Arizona game last season due to injury).

Johnson-Koulianos needs 31 receptions and 401 receiving yards to become Iowa's all-time leader in both categories.

Currently, Kevin Kasper has the record for career catches with 157 of them, while Tim Dwight has 2,271 career receiving yards.

Barring injury, both are marks Johnson-Koulianos should be able to break this season.

"If I can obtain the starting position, and maintain it, I think those will take care of themselves," he said when asked about wanting to set these new school records. "The focus right now is to be the best receiver on the team, have my teammates count on me, have Ricky [Stanzi] count on me, and continue to make plays. All those fine achievements will take care of themselves."

Meanwhile, Sandeman began to play more of a role for the Hawkeyes in 2009, with the highlight of his season being a 21-yard touchdown reception in Iowa's 24-14 win over Georgia Tech in 2010 FedEx Orange Bowl.

There are a couple of other senior wideouts the Hawkeyes could break out at any time this season as well in Don Nordmann and Paul Chaney, Jr., who is recovering from a torn ACL suffered while returning a punt last season in Iowa's 30-28 victory against Michigan. Also at the receiver slots are seniors Ben Evans and Nick Kuchel.

"We've been together forever," Sandeman said. "We've definitely built a lot of great chemistry, especially with Rick, throughout the season. It's great to count on those guys. I think we can rotate anyone out of the mix, and there's really no slack."

Then the other receiving slot is held down by junior Marvin McNutt, who burst onto the scene in 2009 after completing the conversion from quarterback to wide receiver. The St. Louis native had 34 catches and 674 receiving yards for the Hawkeyes in 2009. He also led Iowa with eight touchdown receptions last season, including one on the final play of the game to beat

Michigan State, 15-13.

Behind McNutt on the two-deep is sophomore Keenan Davis, who had a touchdown reception last season during Iowa's 35-3 victory over Iowa State.

"We would love to start something here where we create an atmosphere where people would want to come here and play wide receiver," McNutt said.

The experience at both receiver positions is something that has been taken advantage of throughout the summer, as receivers would meet up with quarterback Ricky Stanzi to throw the pigskin around, making certain that they're all on the same page.

"I think we've developed some timing with that, but there's still a far way to go with that," Stanzi said. "It's hard to be perfect at it. You can rep it so many times, but until you get out there in a game and try to do it, and do it in practice with a rush on, that's a whole new thing.

"We've done some good things, but right now, we still got a lot of things that need to be done. I think we got the guys who are willing to put in that work, and are willing to have a good attitude about it, and know that the kind of work that needs to be done isn't going to be easy."

As for the tight ends, there are three players looking to provide the most contributions at this position. It starts with senior Allen Reisner, who has gotten playing time from the get-go filling in for an injured Tony Moeaki during his freshman and sophomore campaigns. As a junior, Reisner came in and got 14 receptions, including a touchdown catch against Iowa State.

This year, he will be the focal point among the tight ends. Behind him is junior Brad Herman, who appeared in eight games last season for the Hawkeyes.

If there's one true freshman who could see some playing time this year, it's freshman tight end C.J. Fiedorowicz, who was pegged the top recruit in Iowa's 2010 class, as well as one of the top tight end prospects in the country.

"Physically, [Fiedorowicz] is ready to go. We just got to see if he's ready to pick up the mental aspect of it," Iowa tight ends coach Eric Johnson said. "That's a huge part in our offense, the things we do with our tight ends. That will be interesting to see how he progresses in camp."

While there are playmakers at both receiver and tight end still waiting in the wings, for now, it's the experience of older players that will be relied upon heavily in 2010.