

# 9/7/2010: Kirk Ferentz teleconference transcript (premium)

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Below is a written transcript of Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz's teleconference on Tuesday with the Big Ten media:

## **Ferentz's opening statement:**

*"I thought it was a good start for our team. The guys came ready to go and played hard, I thought, as did Eastern Illinois. They played extremely hard and competed well. We made some plays, and certainly one of the highlights from the game was the play with Paki O'Meara. He got a punt block, and then scooped it up and scored. I thought it was a really nice tribute to him because he's a guy who is kind of a behind-the-scenes guy, if you will. He has been a very good special teams player for us, and just a very respected guy on our team. So that was certainly a highlight. And then I think we came away pretty healthy. We turn back to work this week and have a great challenge with Iowa State coming in to our place this weekend."*

## **On what he remembers about last year's game against ISU, and specifically, the D-Line struggles:**

*"The first thing that jumps out at you is they ran the ball for 190 yards on us, and we really just couldn't do much about it. That's not good in any game. It's hard to win football games consistently if you're giving up a lot of rushing yardage, and we didn't do very well last year. They've got a lot of those guys back, so they've really got a big offensive*

line and a good offensive back. We're going to have to play at a much higher level defensively if we expect to win this football game."

**On whether he needs to remind his D-Line of ISU's success running the ball or not:**

"Yeah, I'm not so sure I have to say a heck of a lot. They probably focused on that during our out-of-season. When they look at the tapes, part of our film study is looking at last year's game like everybody else. Yeah, they'll get some reminders during the week just from watching the tape, I think."

**On the impact Norm Parker has had on Iowa and his importance to the program:**

"First of all, his contributions have been invaluable. It's interesting because just a couple of years ago, a lot of people were thinking that maybe the game had past Norm by, and he was too old to be coaching, which is the nature of sports, I guess. But he has just done a tremendous job, not only as a defensive coordinator, which has been very, very important, but also just what he brings to our staff in terms of his experience, his stability, his life experiences. He's just so respected by everybody on our staff, everybody in the program, and certainly our players. They really respond to him as well."

"He has been tremendous, and you know, I've been very fortunate. I'm in my 21st year here now, and during my time at Iowa, we've had two coordinators – one being Bill Brashier back in the '80s, who is one of the best coaches and people I've ever been around in my life, and now Norm Parker, and I'd say the same thing. Both two guys are just tremendous defensive football coaches, but also great people. I've been really lucky. It's good luck to be around good D-coordinators. I know that."

**On the concern and frustration as a coach with competing**

**against programs who have problems such as USC with Reggie Bush:**

*"Well, you know, the world has changed. There's probably more out there now for young people to be distracted by than any time. But I'd also tell you, I don't remember a lot of things, but one thing I remember from reading the Vince Lombardi book, When Pride Still Mattered, he played on a Fordham team that had a chance to go undefeated, and they lost a game at the end of the year. They found out later on that players on his team were playing Saturdays for Fordham, and then going into New Jersey and making like \$50 a game to play sandlot ball on Sunday, and that caught up to them.*

*"I remember reading that and just thinking that, the same challenges are still around. You know, people do dumb things all the time. That happened back when Vince Lombardi was playing at Fordham, and you know, things happen in today's world. So maybe it's just trying to be proactive and hoping that people are making good decisions."*

**On what makes the Iowa-Iowa State rivalry unique:**

*"Yeah, outside of about three million people, nobody knows. There are a lot of people that don't. But it's unique on a lot of fronts I think. First of all, it happens early in the season. The other thing is we're both in BCS conferences, yet separate conferences, so that makes it a little bit unique that way, too.*

*"For us, it's like a conference game. It has all the importance of a Big Ten game right off the bat here early in the season. Historically, it was brought back to life in the late '70s. As you might imagine, that garnered a lot of attention when that took place. And then for whatever reason, that series got a little one-sided there from the mid-80s on. And then they came back with a vengeance in '98, and they upset Iowa in Kinnick Stadium. I think Iowa was 20-plus point*

*favorites and got beat by about that much, I believe. Ever since that time, it has kind of been just a tooth-and-nail series.*

*"It's really a great series, I think, for creating interest in football just in our state everywhere, no matter what side of the fence you're on. People are paying attention to it and talking about it, so I think it's just good for the entire state."*

**On Adam Robinson's performance against Eastern Illinois:**

*"That was a real highlight for us. Adam really stepped in and did a nice job last year. He was not a highly-recruited guy and really just kind of emerged last year during camp, and went on and did a very nice job as a redshirt freshman player for us. One thing we were really hopeful is that, hopeful of all of our players is that, they get experience and they improve, and Adam certainly has done that. He ran well last week, but ran very tough and very determined. I think that probably just sparked our entire football team."*

**On what happens now with Jewel Hampton returning and his excitement for having him back:**

*"It just changes in that we have two guys that we feel very confident in. Not that we don't feel confident in Paki, but I think Adam and Jewel have kind of pushed themselves above Paki. We're excited to have him back. He practiced very well last spring. We didn't let him get the ball in contact. He could have, but we didn't. And he's having a really nice camp, so I think he's anxious to get back and get on the field. I think any coach would feel better when they have at least two backs that they have a lot of confidence in, and that's how we feel about both Adam and Jewel."*