

9/21/2010: 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:

"First of all, most importantly, we talked a lot about Mark [Dantonio]'s condition, but I'm very encouraged. It sounds like everything's going to be fine and I want to wish him the best, certainly, on a full, fast recovery. As far as our football team, it was a tough loss we endured on the road. The bottom line is we just did too many things early in the game, put ourselves at a real disadvantage point, and made a very difficult comeback. To our players' credit, they did a great job of battling back, and gave them position to be back in the game in the fourth quarter, and we just couldn't close it out. Moving forward, we have two things on our agenda certainly. First of all, it's getting ready for Ball State. And then secondly, both for this week and the rest of the season, we've got to clean up some things that we're not doing a really good job in. If we don't do that, it's going to be bad for us this weekend, certainly, and the weeks to follow."

On whether he has noticed Big Ten teams running more of a 3-4 defensive look like some SEC teams are:

"You know, I think nationally, and this is just one person's opinion, but it's been pretty rare to see people playing a 3-4. I think if you look nationally, there aren't a lot of

people doing it. It's really, I think, a challenge to get the personnel to match it. Now I'm not saying that's impossible, but it's a lot more common in the NFL, certainly. Maybe the trend will go that direction. I know Georgia, I believe, is committed to, and I believe Alabama is playing some. But I think, overall, there just aren't a lot of teams that are not committed to playing the 3-4 in college, at least."

On the type of personnel needed to run a 3-4 look:

"Well, you have to have pretty good linebackers, and guys on the outside that can both rush and drop, and play good coverage. The good 3-4 teams I've seen typically have a good nose tackle, and those guys don't grow on trees. They're really tough to find. It's a real, I think, a very challenging position in that defense. If you look at the Steelers historically, they've had somebody in that middle that could really play the position well and afford them to do some good things. If you recruit towards that end and you're able to recruit the kind of players you want, I think you can pretty much do anything offensively or defensively if you're sitting in a depth system."

On Jewel Hampton's status:

"That's one of the tough parts about the game. We actually lost a couple of players. Jewel, and Bruce Davis both encountered knee injuries that are going to require surgery, so it looks like they're both going to be out to the season."

On who he'll look for at running back now:

"Well, Paki [O'Meara] got dinged on a kickoff, so we lost him for the game, too. I think we'll probably lose him for this week. Right now, we got Adam [Robinson], and anybody else that wants to volunteer. Jason White suffered an MCL injury two weeks ago, so as you might imagine, with three tailbacks out of there, it puts us in a bind back there."

On how he minimizes the amount of stress he deals with as a coach:

"I think stress can be part of any profession, not just coaching. You know, one thing I learned here in the 80s, you can't control what the weather does, and if you're a farmer, that's got to cause some stress. I'd think it would. I think it's something that goes with a lot of professions and certainly ones that are demanding and high visibility. My guess is Mark, like most of us, you try to watch what you eat, you try to be careful about your living habits and those types of things, and get as much rest as you possibly can, and just kind of go from there. But there are certain things that can't be avoided, and it's just part of the deal."

On whether there's any solace in the comeback made, or just a downer as a result of how the Arizona game turned out:

"Well, any time you lose, it's disappointing and it doesn't feel good. But if there was a positive down there, it was the fact that we were down whatever it was, 20 points I guess, at halftime, and we didn't dwell on that. We just went out and went back to work and tried to play the best we possibly could. We put ourselves in a position where it was a winnable game, and we couldn't get it done at that point, which is disappointing. But the team never quit. They never gave up hope that they could win the football game really up until our last offensive possession. Everything with the mind starts with attitude, so the attitude of the team took after hitting a tough spot there, I thought was good. As long as the attitude stays strong, we'll work on the other areas and get those things cleaned up hopefully."

On if this experience will help the Hawkeyes come Big Ten season:

"If we make it, yeah. That's our job to make sure that it does. Again, I think a starting point for anything you do to

have a good football team is the kind of attitude the team has, and how does that attitude build and develop. That's something we're hopefully working on right now."