

Iowa vs. Ball State: Grades

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IOWA CITY, Iowa – The No. 18 Iowa Hawkeyes defeated the Ball State Cardinals on Saturday, 45-0. The win puts Iowa at 3-1 overall as it enters Big Ten play next week.

Below are the grades I would give each group of players after Saturday's game:

Quarterbacks – A-

Ricky Stanzi looked good in this game. He completed 19-of-25 passes for 288 yards through the air and three touchdown passes – two to Derrell Johnson-Koulianos and one to Keenan Davis. James Vandenberg also came in late and threw a touchdown pass on his first series of the game to Colin Sandeman. Both guys played well.

Running Backs – A-

Adam Robinson came back in a big way, rushing for two touchdowns and finishing with 115 yards on 22 carries. This game also marked the debuts of Brad Rogers and Marcus Coker.

Wide Receivers – A

Simply put, this group really stood out. Yes, Marvin McNutt did leave the game with a leg injury. However, Johnson-Koulianos caught two touchdowns, Davis caught one, and Colin Sandeman caught one. Also throw in the rainy weather conditions, and these guys excelled on Saturday.

Tight Ends – A-

Allen Reisner led the Hawkeyes in receptions with five, and really helped set the tone for the Iowa offense early in this

contest.

Offensive Line – A-

Considering the balance Iowa showed on offense Saturday, this group deserves a solid grade. As a unit, it bought Stanzi time to throw, and opened holes for the backs such as Robinson, Rogers, and Coker.

Defensive Line – A

These guys came to play. The one defensive lineman who really stood out against Ball State was junior Mike Daniels. All four of his tackles were unassisted and for a loss of yards. Daniels also recorded a sack in this game.

Linebackers – B+

Jeff Tarpinian led the team in tackles again, Jeremiha Hunter recovered a fumble, Tyler Nielsen played well with three solo tackles, and Troy Johnson laid a bone-crushing hit in the second half. Overall, these guys looked solid.

Secondary – B+

Not too many big plays from the secondary aside from two in the second quarter courtesy of Micah Hyde. The cornerback first recorded an interception shortly after Iowa missed a field goal, then just before halftime, he forced the fumble recovered by Hunter.

Special Teams – B

Kickoff coverage was better this week. Michael Meyer replaced Trent Mossbrucker on PAT attempts, and was 6-for-6. He also was 1-of-2 on field goals, missing from 37 yards out, then connecting from 25 yards away in the fourth quarter for the Hawkeyes' final points of the afternoon.

Overall – A-

The shutout after surrendering 34 points last week is why this final grade reaches the “A” plateau. There were definitely a few areas that could use cleaning up, but for the most part, there was a nice blend of key players and up-and-coming players contributing in big ways. This was a nice bounce-back victory for the Hawkeyes, who now enter Big Ten play hosting Penn State next week.

“BIG UPS”

My player of the game will get “Big Ups” from me (For those new to *HawkeyeDrive.com*, I’ll give these out on Twitter every now and then). After No. 18 Iowa’s 45-0 victory over Ball State, I decided to give these to junior defensive tackle Mike Daniels.

This was sort of difficult considering the performances both receivers Derrell Johnson-Koulianos and Keenan Davis had, but consider the following: Daniels had six tackles and one sack. Four of his tackles were for a loss of yards, and four of the six were also solo. Not only that, but Daniels didn’t even start this game. That type of performance from any defensive lineman is worthy of “Big Ups.”

2010 BIG UPS TALLY:

9/4/2010: Iowa 37, Eastern Illinois 7 – Adam Robinson

9/11/2010: Iowa 35, Iowa State 7 – Ricky Stanzi

9/18/2010: Arizona 34, Iowa 27 – Jeff Tarpinian

9/25/2010: Iowa 45, Ball State 0 – Mike Daniels