

10/5/2010: 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, like everybody, I'm just glad to hear Mark [Dantonio]'s voice. Hopefully he's doing well and can rejoin [Michigan State] here shortly. I also want to congratulate Adrian [Clayborn] on his performance the other night and his award. Very fitting. He's a tremendous football player and we're thrilled he's on our team. It was great to get the win. It was a tough, hard-fought game. Penn State has outstanding players. They're very well-coached. It was just a typical, very competitive Big Ten game on both sides, so we were thrilled to get the win. The atmosphere in Kinnick was great, and the bye week really comes at a good time right now. We're a little thin in some spots, and probably most noticeably, we were down to our fourth middle linebacker the other night, so that was not a comforting thought. But I thought James [Morris] stepped up and did a very nice job and all the other guys that have been thrown in for injured players did a good job. Hopefully, we'll be smart with the bye week, and be a little healthier the next time we're on the field."

On what he has seen of Michigan QB Denard Robinson and the difficulty of preparing for him:

"You know, I saw him briefly last year. He was not at an

advantageous position at that point. He came in and pretty much had to run a two-minute drill. Also, I think it's a little bit of a different circumstance right now, certainly. The only thing I might have seen in, you know, 5-8 snaps of him on ESPN highlights so far. I've been watching our other opponents and haven't begun that process yet. But he has been racking up some statistics that are unbelievable. The one clip I saw, I don't know who it was against, but I don't know if I have seen a faster player in the conference."

On whether there's merit to return to the old bowl alliances where Big Ten champion plays in Rose Bowl no matter what:

"I don't know about that stuff. Personally, I just like it the way it is. If we ever wanted to go to a plus-1 game, I would have no opposition to that. I'm not rallying for it, but I have no opposition to that thought. Outside of that, it's a good topic to talk about. It seems like everybody talks about it every week."

On how he plans to handle practices with the bye this week:

"We'll try to be smart. We've gone at it, I think it was eight weeks exactly on Saturday, maybe eight weeks and a day, and Saturday looking forward to our last game, it's another eight weeks. I think it's just important that we give everybody a chance to get their legs back underneath them a little bit. Every year is different. This year, we've probably got more injuries than we have had some other times, so I think we have to be intelligent that way. At the same time, we've got some younger guys that really need to be moved along here because, Saturday was a great example. If you had told any of us in August that James Morris was going to be playing 2.5-3 quarters against Penn State on national TV, I think all of us would have been a little bit nervous about that. And we're going to have that again at other positions here down the road. We're not that deep of a team. I think we have to try and move our younger guys along and be smart with what we do

with the older guys."

On who some of those other younger guys will be:

"If you follow our team a little bit, you might guess that our running back position is a little bit of a concern right now. You know, we're not real deep there since two of the three guys that everybody thought was going to be playing this year, two of those three guys aren't with us. We have more areas like that than I'd care to have. I won't respond too deeply on that, but we need to get some guys moving forward here."

On the gratification that came from seeing Clayborn stuff the stat sheet against Penn State:

"It's going to come. He's a good player. He has been playing well. Those things will come, but it's like anything. If you press too hard or change what you're doing because they're doing some other things, he's getting attention. Good players get attention. Good receivers get rolled up on. Good running backs or running quarterbacks I think attract attention, and that's just football. With what Adrian needs to be careful is he doesn't worry about that, just worry about playing our defense, and I think good things will come. That's what he did last week, and I think he was feeling pretty good about things afterwards. It was a good team win for us, and he's a big part of it because he is a great leader on our team."

On Clayborn facing double and perhaps triple teams:

"Yeah. If you're a good pass rusher – although the game I watched Sunday night, they could have used some adjustments there – when you have a guy that can be disruptive, yeah, you try to limit his access to the quarterback, and there's two ways to do it. You have to first of all, line the tight end up to him. That's usually Rule No. 1. Secondly, it's possibly push a guard out or use a back. Those are things that happen to everybody, not just Adrian. But he's got a résumé right now, so people, they're going to be aware of him when they

game plan. Again, all he has to do is just don't let that get to his head and play football."

On if he's looking to find someone to simulate him in practice:

"If there was, we'd probably be playing him. Based on the statistics I've heard, oh my gosh! I doubt there's a lot in the Midwest, maybe the country. At least I haven't heard about it. I haven't seen him on tape yet. I saw him last year from the sideline. The thought I had when I've heard all this talk about him, the first thing I thought about was [Antwaan] Randle El, who we had a hard time defending for three years. It brought back some good scar tissue. We'll just do what we can."

On whether there's anything new regarding Brandon Wegher:

"If he comes back, we'll let you know. But we're coaching the guys we have, and our focus is on our roster. As far as I know, he's gone for at least this season, and for all I know, maybe forever. That's something he'll decide and work through, and we'll discuss it if it's ever appropriate. But right now, we're coaching the guys that are here."