

10/13/2010: Rich Rodriguez teleconference transcript (premium)

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Michigan head coach Rich Rodriguez held a teleconference with Iowa and Michigan reporters on Wednesday to discuss the Oct. 16 showdown in Ann Arbor, Mich., between the 15th-ranked Hawkeyes and Wolverines. The teleconference was set up by the sports information department at Michigan.

Below is a complete transcript of the Wednesday teleconference:

On whether he has noticed a change in the acoustics at "The Big House" as a result of the stadium's recent renovations:

"A little bit. I think the way the new suites have been built, and the way it is structured to be – it was tilted in a little bit – I think has kept some of the crowd noise in. I do believe we have new speakers as well, so it has appeared to be louder than it has in the past, which is to be expected. I think that has been a very positive thing."

On whether wide receiver Martavious Odoms' foot injury has been ruled as season-ending:

"Well, we're not sure. There's a possibility he could get back a little later during the year. A slim possibility, maybe in the last couple of ballgames. But at this point, I think it's hard to tell. His surgery is either today or tomorrow."

On what he has seen from wide receiver Junior Hemingway this year and what this opportunity does for him:

"Yeah, he has actually been a fixture since the first week. He has stayed healthy, he's in good shape. He has got great ball skills, and he really understands our offense. He has played the last several weeks and has been a big, big part of our offense."

On whether the future has been determined for safety Mike Williams:

"The doctors have talked with Mike and the trainers several times. Obviously with his multiple concussions, there has been quite a bit of time that has gone by since he has been allowed to practice. Right now, I don't know if Mike is going to continue to play or not. I think the doctors may leave the decision up to him. I think it's not at the point where they say he can't play anymore, but I'm not sure exactly. As a coach, we stay out of those decisions. But I think Mike and the doctors will have further discussions to see if he can keep playing or not."

On if Williams would be invited to still play at Michigan should he choose to continue his football career:

"Oh sure. Yeah. We'd love having Mike play. He gave us a spark. He was on special teams. He's a good guy and he's a good football player, but his health comes first and foremost. We'll see what the doctors and Mike come to with that."

On how much of an emphasis there will be on the run game this week with the bye approaching:

"I don't know if it would be more or less of an emphasis in particular with our offense, or our defense. I think the biggest emphasis for us next week is probably getting a lot of fundamental work done with the younger guys we've got playing and the execution of our schemes on both sides of the ball. We got a couple of days next week to really concentrate on that."

On how many carries ideally he'd like to give Michael Shaw,

Vincent Smith, and Stephen Hopkins this week vs. Iowa:

"Yeah, I never go into a game caring about giving this guy so many carries or that guy so many carries when we have the tailback situation that we have right now. We have a couple of veteran guys, and we're trying to get the younger guys like Stephen Hopkins a few more reps. He had some in the last game. But as far as an X number of carries, it really depends on how they're playing us and how the guys do when they get in there."

On updates regarding both defensive tackle Mike Martin and linebacker J.B. Fitzgerald:

"Fitz is still out. Hopefully he'll be back after the bye week. Mike practiced yesterday and moved around pretty good, so he should be fine."

On what will go into his decision-making process with the linebackers for this week:

"Yeah, we're actually talking about playing more guys defensively all year. In the last ballgame, we played quite a few in the secondary and a few guys up front, but we didn't rotate a lot of guys at linebacker. That's something we'll probably have to look at more often this week, to get more guys in there. Kenny Demens, J.B. Fitzgerald, and Mark Moundros are all guys that have played and have some experience. I would expect them to get in the rotation a bit more, especially if they have a good week of practice."

On what he has seen from those guys and if having to go to any of them at linebacker is more out of necessity:

"No, I think it's the fact that they've kept pretty consistent. Kenny Demens, in particular, has had some real good practices and has shown some pretty good things when he has had the opportunity out there. So it's almost like they've warranted the opportunity to come out there and see what they

can do in a game."

On the frustration he has had as a coach dealing with some of Michigan's season-ending injuries this season:

"Well, it's one of those things there's not much you can do about it as a coach, and I think that's probably with all coaches. Maybe it's just unfortunate luck. Some years, you don't have any. Some years, you have several. But it's hard to prepare what you want to do for your football team. Obviously, it's building up depth, that if one guy unfortunately does go down, there's another guy that can go in and play close to the same level. In college, sometimes you can do that. But sometimes, you have young guys that have to go in and they have to mature quickly and maybe play before they're truly ready. But it is what it is, and you got to deal with it.

"I think the frustrating part, more than anything else, I think is for the young men that work so hard, and train to get ready for the season, whether it's early in the season or mid-season or what have you, and in the tough game of football, they have an injury that kind of takes them out for the season or for several weeks. It's really frustrating for those young men because of all the hard work they put in. That's what you feel for the most."

On the status of defensive tackle Will Campbell and if he has emerged as anticipated:

"He's still coming. He's behind a couple of pretty good guys, and he's still got some work to do. I think he's a better player now than he was a year ago, and he'll continue to get better because I think the game is important to him. But he still has to work on some things in order to be able to be an every-down player for us and be able to help us in our base situations. And he knows that and knows what things he has got to work to. He's still a young player. He has not been in the program a whole lot, just a couple of years. But he has got a

good attitude and he is working to get better. I know Coach [Bruce] Tall has been pleased with his progress to some level. But there's another level he can get to, and we're hoping he'll get there quickly."