

Iowa vs. Wisconsin: Grades

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IOWA CITY, Iowa – The No. 13 Iowa Hawkeyes lost to the No. 10 Wisconsin Badgers on Saturday inside Kinnick Stadium, 31-30. Iowa falls to 5-2 overall and 2-1 in the Big Ten, while Wisconsin moves to 7-1 overall and 3-1 in conference play.

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

Quarterbacks – A-

Aside from the poor clock management shown by the Hawkeye offense at the end of the game, Ricky Stanzi deserves a good grade for his performance on Saturday. He completed 25-of-37 passes for 258 yards passing. Stanzi threw three touchdown passes to three different players, and didn't turn the football over once. Simply put, Stanzi played a heck of a game here.

Running Backs – A-

The same things said about Stanzi can be said about Adam Robinson after this game. He had 23 carries for 114 yards on the ground. Iowa also got some real nice contributions throughout the game from fullback Brett Morse, who had a couple of third-down conversions for the Hawkeyes during the afternoon.

Wide Receivers – A-

I thought Marvin McNutt played a great game. He led the Hawkeyes with seven receptions for XX yards and caught a go-ahead touchdown in the fourth quarter, and Derrell Johnson-Koulianos caught a 45-yard touchdown pass from Stanzi in the

third quarter, and finished with five catches, tying him with Kevin Kasper for the career mark at Iowa. There was a critical drop early on by Paul Chaney, Jr., which is part of the reason why I can't give this group a solid A, but nevertheless, these guys performed well.

Tight Ends – A-

Allen Reisner had a solid game for the Hawkeyes, and one thing that stood out on the afternoon was his ability to get yards after the catch when the football did come his way. He also had a 3-yard touchdown reception that gave Iowa a 13-10 lead at halftime.

Offensive Line – B+

This is where there are some concerns. Riley Reiff had a costly false start penalty in the red zone on a 3rd-and-1, and as it turned out, Iowa was unable to come away with points during that second quarter series. To be fair, Stanzi was only sacked once, and Iowa did have more yards offensively than Wisconsin did.

Defensive Line – B

Maybe this grade is too low for the defensive line, but I just felt like these guys got moved around more than they probably should have. This grade is merely a combination of Wisconsin being able to run the ball as effectively as it did, and the fact that there were some missed plays here from this group.

Linebackers – B

Considering how the Hawkeyes were already without Jeff Tarpinian and saw Jeremiha Hunter leave this game with an injury, these guys were in a bind throughout most of the game. I can't fault these guys for doing what they could with what they have, but with that being said, Wisconsin was able to move the ball effectively on this defense throughout the game.

Secondary – B+

If Iowa doesn't give up 31 points, this grade would be in the A range. Tyler Sash had an outstanding game leading the Hawkeyes with 13 tackles. Iowa also got a big interception (at the time at least) from Brett Greenwood in the fourth quarter, but the Hawkeyes were only able to turn that Badger turnover into three points. There was also a costly personal foul penalty on Shaun Prater.

Special Teams – D+

A blocked PAT. A mishandled field goal attempt. Giving up a fake punt to the punter in the fourth quarter when it was a one-possession game. An offsides penalty on a kickoff. Simply put, the special teams killed Iowa. However, I can't give these guys a failing grade for two reasons: 1. Michael Meyer did make a 40-yard field goal in the fourth quarter to extend Iowa's lead at the time to 30-24. 2. Ryan Donahue had a punt that went 71 yards.

Overall – C

There was plenty of both good and bad in this game. Most of the bad that came from the Hawkeyes on Saturday, quite frankly, is inexcusable. That being said, there should not be any shame at all in losing by one point to a team that came in off a victory over the then-No. 1 team in the country, no matter how heartbreaking this game was. Iowa has a chance to rectify for its mistakes next week when an undefeated Michigan State comes into town.

“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. 13 Iowa's 31-30 loss to No. 10 Wisconsin, I originally considered giving “Big Ups” to Marvin McNutt, but at the last moment, decided to give them to Adam

Robinson.

Playing in front of former Hawkeye running back Shonn Greene (who was the Hawkeyes' honorary captain), Robinson posted 114 yards on the ground on 23 carries. But here is what stands out in the stat sheet – Robinson didn't have a single carry that resulted in a loss of yardage. He also proved to be a big contributor in the passing game as well, and he has undoubtedly become the second-most important player to the Hawkeyes after Stanzi. So with all due respect to McNutt, who again, had a solid game, "Big Ups" to Adam Robinson, even in defeat.

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

10/2/2010: Iowa 24, Penn State 3 – Christian Ballard

10/16/2010: Iowa 38, Michigan 28 – Derrell Johnson-Koulianos

10/23/2010: Wisconsin 31, Iowa 30 – Adam Robinson