

# Iowa at Northwestern: Grades

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

EVANSTON, Ill. – The No. 13 Iowa Hawkeyes fell to the Northwestern Wildcats at Ryan Field on Saturday, 21-17. Iowa dropped to 7-3 overall and 4-2 in the Big Ten, while Northwestern moved to 7-3 overall and 3-3 in conference play.

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

## **Quarterbacks – B**

I won't say it was the worst I've seen Ricky Stanzi play, but it certainly wasn't the best. Yes, he had 270 yards passing and threw two touchdowns. His one interception, however, changed the complexion of this game completely. Not to mention after the game, he took complete accountability for his performance and the team's.

## **Running Backs – B+**

Getting Adam Robinson proved to pay big dividends for the Hawkeyes. The only reason I can't give the backs a group in the A-range though is because there weren't any touchdowns on the ground, and even just one would've been the difference in Iowa winning and losing this game.

## **Wide Receivers – B+**

In fairness to the wide receivers, Colin Sandeman wasn't able to play Saturday, and I feel his role on this team is bigger than maybe some do. Marvin McNutt and Derrell Johnson-Koulianos both scored for the Hawkeyes in this game and put up solid numbers. However, there were drops, miscommunications, etc., and those arose at bad times.

## **Tight Ends – A-**

Allen Reisner and Brad Herman both played solid games. Reisner made one incredible catch when momentum was still with the Hawkeyes, and he also caught a big pass on fourth-down late in the first half to set up the Hawkeyes' first points of the day. No complaints with what I saw from these guys. They played well.

## **Offensive Line – B**

Penalties hurt these guys. As did some missed assignments in the fourth quarter. Iowa did have 371 yards of total offense, so it wasn't a complete disaster. But given how these guys were playing coming into this game, it wasn't the best they played by any stretch.

## **Defensive Line – B+**

Karl Klug played great. He had seven tackles (six solo) and two sacks. I also felt Northwestern got away with a couple of blatant holds, so I can't say this was a subpar performance from the D-Line, especially when guys liked Adrian Clayborn just looked gassed during those Northwestern scoring drives late.

## **Linebackers – A-**

James Morris was all over the field in this game and led the Hawkeyes with 13 tackles. Jeremiha Hunter had an interception that went off the hands of a Northwestern wideout. Jeff Tarpinian made his first start in weeks and had eight tackles. These guys were not the reason this defense struggled late in the game.

## **Secondary – B**

This is a tough grade to give out, especially when Micah Hyde has 12 tackles, 10 of which were solo. But at the same time, Northwestern made big plays on offense late in this game, and

Persa ended up winning this game with his arm as opposed to his legs.

### **Special Teams – B+**

Michael Meyer played well again. He made his only field goal and had touchbacks on the majority of his kickoffs. Ryan Donahue had one horrible punt, but he made up for it the next time he went out there and boomed one 73 yards to the Northwestern 4-yard line. There weren't any kickoff returns. Punt returns, there were times when Paul Chaney, Jr., could've called fair catch, but didn't and got hit almost immediately.

### **Overall – B-**

This was a game I truly believe Iowa wins about 7-8 times out of 10. Unfortunately for the Hawkeyes, this was one of those 2-3 times they didn't. This loss certainly stings. Any chance of winning at least a share of the Big Ten died at Ryan Field on Saturday. It's now the fifth time in six years Iowa has lost to Northwestern, and this was a game the Hawkeyes just let get away from them completely. Right now, the best case scenario for Iowa looks to be the Capital One Bowl, but winning both of the final two games would need to happen. Next week against Ohio State will not be easy, so the Hawkeyes aren't going to have any time to hang their heads from this defeat on Saturday.

### **"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 21-17 loss to Northwestern, I decided to give this week's "Big Ups" to freshman linebacker James Morris.

Real simple here. Morris was everywhere. He finished with 13 tackles, seven of which were solo. He recorded his first career sack in the fourth quarter before the game slipped away

from Iowa. And this was his third career start. Right now, the sky's the limit for this kid. If Saturday's game, even in defeat, was any indicator, Morris is going to be something special for the Hawkeyes. So "Big Ups" to James Morris.

**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

10/30/2010: Iowa 37, Michigan State 6 – Micah Hyde

11/6/2010: Iowa 18, Indiana 13 – Marvin McNutt

**11/13/2010: Northwestern 21, Iowa 17 – James Morris**