

Iowa at Minnesota: Grades

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HawkeyeDrive.com

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. – The No. 24 Iowa Hawkeyes fell to the Minnesota Golden Gophers on Saturday at TCF Bank Stadium, 27-24. Iowa finished 7-5 overall and 4-4 in the Big Ten with the loss, while Minnesota moved to 3-9 overall and 2-6 in conference play.

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

Quarterbacks – C

Ricky Stanzi had a couple of touchdown passes on the day to both Derrell Johnson-Koulianos and Marvin McNutt. That said, he was 10-of-22 passing. Forget the cold weather. I, along with everyone else who has followed this team closely the past three years, have seen much better out of Stanzi. Fumbling a snap that led to a Minnesota touchdown caught me a bit by surprise.

The good news here is he does have one more game as a Hawkeye, and therefore, a chance to end his remarkable career on a high note.

Running Backs – C+

Marcus Coker didn't play that poorly, but let's face it. His fumble late in the fourth quarter was the last thing Iowa needed after finding itself down 27-24 in the final minutes.

Wide Receivers – B-

I'll start by saying that if I was grading players individually, Derrell Johnson-Koulianos might have been the

only Hawkeye to get an “A” from me. As a group, I got to give him and McNutt their dues for the touchdown catches they had. McNutt’s score actually gave Iowa a fourth-quarter lead, as hard as that might seem to believe. Colin Sandeman played fine.

Tight Ends – B+

Allen Reisner had a good game, and has been a bright spot on this team all season. Him, Brad Herman, and C.J. Fiedorowicz had good moments in this game.

Offensive Line – B-

The O-Line was fine. It wasn’t spectacular, and there were times I felt the blocking just wasn’t there. But with that said, I didn’t think this group collectively looked that bad.

Defensive Line – C+

The Minnesota guys – Broderick Binns and Karl Klug – both played well. I’m going to leave it at that.

Linebackers – C

Jeremiha Hunter had a solid game. It just seemed like Minnesota was able to exploit mismatches it was able to create with the Hawkeye linebackers.

Secondary – C+

I can’t get on this group that hard because both corners – Shaun Prater and Micah Hyde – suffered injuries in this game. That said, the secondary has had better days.

Special Teams – B-

The touchdown from Johnson-Koulianos and the effort Michael Meyer gave on field goals cancels out the inexplicable illegal substitution and the horrendous effort on the Golden Gophers’ onside kick attempt.

Overall – F

With all due respect to Minnesota, the Golden Gophers were 2-9 entering this game. There is no excuse for this performance, and it was hands down the worst effort I saw this team collectively give all season. Forget the Floyd of Rosedale and the cold weather. There is no reason for looking inferior against one of the conference's worst teams with a coaching staff that is probably being shown the door as you read this. Again, when you lose the same way not once, not twice, not thrice, not four times, but FIVE TIMES, something is not there mentally. The only silver lining from this is that at 7-5, the Hawkeyes do have a bowl game ahead and can rectify all the blunders of 2010 in one final act. But right now, the fans have every right to be frustrated by the product that was out there at TCF Bank Stadium 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. 24 Iowa's 27-24 loss to Minnesota, I decided to give this week's “Big Ups” to senior wide receiver Derrell Johnson-Koulianos.

Honestly, this was a fairly easy decision. For someone that didn't even start because Colin Sandeman “had a better week of practice,” Johnson-Koulianos looked like one of the few guys on the team that played with any sort of emotion in this game. He scored two touchdowns for the Hawkeyes, including one on a kickoff return when Minnesota was trying to kick away from him and Keenan Davis. He single-handedly may have been the reason Iowa wasn't completely blown out of the Twin Cities on Saturday. “Big Ups” to Derrell Johnson-Koulianos. He clearly earned them.

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

11/20/2010: Ohio State 20, Iowa 17 – Marcus Coker

11/27/2010: Minnesota 27, Iowa 24 – Derrell Johnson-Koulianos