

Iowa to face Mizzou in Insight Bowl



The Iowa Hawkeyes will play No. 14 Missouri in the 2010 Insight Bowl on Dec. 28 at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Ariz.

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – If the start of the 2010 Iowa football season was a peak, then the end ought to be considered a valley. So naturally, it seems appropriate that the Hawkeyes will end the year in what is called “The Valley of the Sun.”

On Sunday, Iowa (7-5, 4-4) was extended an invitation to the 2010 Insight Bowl, which will be played at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Ariz., on the evening of Dec. 28. The Hawkeyes’ opponent will be a Missouri Tiger squad from the Big 12 that finished 10-2 overall and comes into this match-up ranked 14th nationally by the AP.

Iowa found itself in this game after both the Outback and Gator Bowls opted to select teams in 7-5 Penn State and 7-5 Michigan that were both defeated by the Hawkeyes in October.

Nevertheless, this game against Missouri is one both head coach Kirk Ferentz and athletics director Gary Barta find intriguing, as well as exciting.

"I think this will be exciting for our teams and our fans to have a new venue," Ferentz said. "I don't know how you can have anything but a great experience there."

Barta said he received the official news of Iowa's invitation to Tempe, Ariz., Sunday afternoon shortly after the Iowa women's basketball game at Carver-Hawkeye Arena. He added that the Insight Bowl was the first committee to call and that he never received any calls from either the Outback or Gator Bowls saying they weren't selecting the Hawkeyes.

"At the end of the day, we didn't have a great November, so my guess is that factored into it," Barta said, describing how losses in November to Northwestern, Ohio State, and Minnesota may have played a role. "But that's my speculation, not them directly giving me that feedback."

For the Hawkeyes, this marks their second trip to the desert this season. Back on Sept. 18, Iowa traveled to Tucson, Ariz., where it suffered its first loss to the Arizona Wildcats, 34-27. The Insight Bowl will be the second trip to Tempe for the Hawkeyes under Ferentz, with the first coming in the form of a 44-7 loss to Arizona State back in 2004.

As of Sunday evening, both Barta and Pam Finke, the UI's ticket office manager, said there was an allotment of 11,000 tickets given to the school from the Insight Bowl and that as many as 2,000 tickets were already ordered prior to the announcement on Sunday. All of the tickets sent to the UI are placed behind the Iowa sidelines.

"We know we're going to have a great showing by our fans," Barta said. "Now that we've announced it, I'm sure that people will start trying to make their way to Phoenix."

While the Hawkeyes look to snap a three-game losing streak, the Tigers come into the contest on a three-game winning streak, having beaten Kansas State, Iowa State, and Kansas. The Cyclones are the only common opponent between the two teams. Missouri defeated Iowa State at Jack Trice Stadium in Ames on Nov. 20, 14-0, while Iowa defeated Iowa State at Kinnick Stadium on Sept. 11, 35-7.

Missouri is led by quarterback Blaine Gabbert, someone that Ferentz attempted to recruit to Iowa before the signal-caller decided to join Gary Pinkel and the Tigers.

"Gary Pinkel has done a great job ever since he got to Missouri," Ferentz said. "They've had a lot of good football teams in recent history. This looks like another good version."

Iowa will be the designated home team for the Insight Bowl, and will wear its black jerseys, while Missouri will wear its road white.

Kickoff is scheduled on Dec. 28 for 9 p.m. Central Standard Time, and the game will be televised nationally by ESPN.

[Ferentz and Barta – 12 05 10](#)

2010-11 BIG TEN BOWL SCHEDULE:

Insight Bowl; Tempe, Ariz.

Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2010; Iowa (7-5) vs. Missouri (10-2); 9 p.m. CST; ESPN

Texas Bowl; Houston, Texas

Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2010; Illinois (6-6) vs. Baylor (7-5); 5

p.m. CST; ESPN

TicketCity Bowl; Dallas, Texas

Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011; Northwestern (7-5) vs. Texas Tech (7-5); 11 a.m. CST; ESPNU

Outback Bowl; Tampa, Fla.

Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011; Penn State (7-5) vs. Florida (7-5); 12 p.m. CST; ABC

Capital One Bowl; Orlando, Fla.

Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011; Michigan State (11-1) vs. Alabama (9-3); 12 p.m. CST; ESPN

Gator Bowl; Jacksonville, Fla.

Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011; Michigan (7-5) vs. Mississippi State (8-4); 12:30 p.m. CST; ESPN2

Rose Bowl; Pasadena, Calif.

Saturday, Jan. 1, 2011; Wisconsin (11-1) vs. TCU (12-0); 4 p.m. CST; ESPN

Sugar Bowl; New Orleans, La.

Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2011; Ohio State (11-1) vs. Arkansas (10-2); 7:30 p.m. CST; ESPN