

# Iowa vs. Missouri: Grades

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TEMPE, Ariz. – The Iowa Hawkeyes defeated the No. 14 Missouri Tigers on Tuesday in the 2010 Insight Bowl at Sun Devil Stadium, 27-24. Iowa finished its 2010 campaign with an 8-5 mark, while Missouri fell to 10-3 with the loss.

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

## **Quarterbacks – B+**

I'm going to give Ricky Stanzi the benefit of the doubt here for one reason – the Hawkeyes won. Completing 11-of-21 for 200 yards and a couple of interceptions might not have been how he envisioned his final game as an Iowa player unfolding, but he definitely looked solid early on in leading the offense, and made a key completion to tight end Allen Reisner on play-action to seal the victory. Also, being the first Iowa quarterback to win three consecutive bowl games isn't too shabby, either.

## **Running Backs – A**

Marcus Coker's final stat line: 33 carries, 219 yards rushing, two touchdowns. One of those touchdown runs went for 62 yards. He was a beast, and has secured the running back job entering 2011.

## **Wide Receivers – B**

Not the most impressive stats in terms of receptions, but Marvin McNutt had a key 49-yard reception on Iowa's opening drive, Colin Sandeman made some critical catches throughout the game, Don Nordmann even had a big 38-yard catch to set up

a score. Even more impressive was the blocking down field. These guys were, for the most part, productive.

### **Tight Ends – B+**

Allen Reisner may have only hauled in three catches, but he delivered the dagger in the game's final minutes.

### **Offensive Line – A-**

What shouldn't get lost in this performance was how these guys played. The offensive line absolutely manhandled Missouri's front four for the majority of the game, and it showed on some of the grind-it-out runs Coker had. This is a group that will be a major strength for this team entering 2011.

### **Defensive Line – B**

The player who stood out to me from this group was Karl Klug. He finished with five tackles, two of which were for a loss of yards. He and Christian Ballard had the two lone sacks of the evening for the Hawkeyes.

### **Linebackers – B**

Jeremiha Hunter didn't play the first half. However, James Morris recorded seven tackles, and while Jeff Tarpinian only had three tackles, his presence in this linebacking corps made a huge difference. Having Tarpinian be able to start and be productive was critical to the success Iowa had as a defense.

### **Secondary – A-**

Brett Greenwood led the team with 11 tackles and had an interception right before halftime that killed any momentum Missouri may have had going into the locker room. Also, Shaun Prater recorded nine tackles (all of which were solo) and made the deflection on Greenwood's pick, and Tyler Sash finished with six tackles.

Oh, and Micah Hyde returned an interception in the fourth quarter 72 yards for what ended up being the game-winning touchdown for the Hawkeyes. That was pretty significant as well.

### **Special Teams – B**

I wouldn't say Ryan Donahue had a really impressive performance, but the return game allowed the Hawkeyes to start with decent field position more often than not, and Michael Meyer was perfect on both field goals and PATs.

### **Overall – B+**

I give Iowa credit for finding a way to win a game that quite honestly, I didn't think the Hawkeyes could win. This wasn't the season I think anyone expected this team to have, which is why I can't quite put this performance in the "A" range. But key players did step up when called upon, and to the Hawkeyes' credit, they won a bowl game over a very solid Missouri team that barring early departures to the NFL will be a fierce Big 12 contender in 2011.

### **"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 Iowa's 27-24 Insight Bowl victory over No. 14 Missouri, I decided to give "Big Ups" to the man who was named the game's Offensive Most Valuable Player, freshman running back Marcus Coker.

For Iowa to have had any chance of winning this game, the Hawkeyes needed Coker to have a superstar-like performance, and he delivered. The Beltsville, Md., native finished with 219 yards rushing on 33 carries, way above the numbers in both categories I felt he would need to have. Throw in the circumstances the Hawkeyes have been faced with at running back the entire season, and Coker's performance may have been

proven to be enough for him to remain Iowa's feature back for the foreseeable future. Marcus Coker, "Big Ups."

**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

**12/28/2010: Iowa 27, Missouri 24 – Marcus Coker**