

Iowa, Nebraska to meet Friday after Thanksgiving in 2011, 2012

By Brendan Stiles

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In a release sent out Monday afternoon, both Iowa and Nebraska have announced that the schools' 2011 and 2012 football games against each other will both be played on the Friday after Thanksgiving. The inaugural game as Big Ten rivals will now take place on Friday, Nov. 25, at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Neb., while the following meeting at Kinnick Stadium is now slated for Nov. 23, 2012.

According to the release, no kickoff times or television information have been determined for either game. As a member of the Big 12, Nebraska had annually played its game against Colorado on the Friday after Thanksgiving.

The following are statements in the release from Iowa athletics director Gary Barta and head coach Kirk Ferentz, and Nebraska athletics director Tom Osborne and head coach Bo Pelini:

Gary Barta, Iowa athletics director:

"Iowa playing Nebraska on any given weekend is a great match-up between two historic programs. Having the game on Thanksgiving Friday will add to the excitement and the potential for a strong national television audience."

Kirk Ferentz, Iowa head coach:

"Our staff and players are excited to begin competing with Nebraska the day after Thanksgiving this season and in 2012."

College football played on this day has a well-established rivalry history, and we feel it will be a great opportunity for our program to join in a new chapter of Big Ten history. These Friday games should help create great atmosphere, both in Lincoln this fall and in Kinnick Stadium in 2012."

Tom Osborne, Nebraska athletics director:

"I think our fans have enjoyed the tradition of playing on the day after Thanksgiving, and we are pleased the Big Ten Conference has allowed us to continue to do so. The University of Iowa is a natural opponent to play on that day, and we look forward to great match-ups between the two schools for years to come."

Bo Pelini, Nebraska head coach:

"Obviously, I have the philosophy that you show up and play when and where the schedule dictates. That being said, playing the day after Thanksgiving has been good for our program in terms of national exposure, and we look forward to that continuing as we move into the Big Ten Conference. We have a lot of respect for Iowa's football program, and these games should be a good showcase for the league."