

# 4/19/2011: I-Club Spring Banquet notebook (Polk County)



Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz addresses Polk County I-Club members Tuesday evening during its annual spring banquet held at the 7 Flags Events Center in Clive, Iowa.

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

CLIVE, Iowa – It was a night of past, present and future for Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz, who was among many on hand at the 7 Flags Events Center Tuesday evening for the 2011 Polk County I-Club Spring Banquet.

Before taking the stage, Ferentz met with reporters to discuss what's currently going on with his program and what would be happening moving forward. While the story revolving 13 players suffering from Rhabdomyolysis last January is one Ferentz wants to put behind him, he did give an update on the one affected player that came out publicly about it – defensive back Willie Lowe.

According to Ferentz, no decision has been made yet by Lowe about whether to transfer or return to the program altogether, but that one could come in the next few weeks.

"I spoke to him on the phone Sunday, and I think he's coming closer to deciding what he wants to do," Ferentz said. "Hopefully, I'll have an announcement on that in the next couple of weeks.

"I think he needs to figure out what he wants to do, what his next move is, and we're going to support him. I've told him from Day One we want him to stay here and graduate from Iowa. But it's entirely up to him."

Ferentz also addressed a situation regarding former running back Adam Robinson, who was dismissed from the Hawkeye football team in January following an arrest the night before Iowa played in the 2010 Insight Bowl against Missouri. He reiterated his stance on Robinson getting through the remainder of the UI's spring semester in good standing academically.

"We'll just see where he's at at the end of the semester and then we'll go from there," Ferentz said regarding Robinson. "Clearly, he's going to have to have some idea what he wants to do, I would think in the next couple of weeks."

After speaking with reporters, Kirk Ferentz and his wife Mary were among the guest speakers during the banquet's program portion. Mary Ferentz was on hand to promote the inaugural Ladies' Football Academy taking place at Kinnick Stadium in June. When Kirk Ferentz took to the mic, he presented three former players with end-of-season awards.

The recipients for the awards given out Tuesday were linebacker Jeff Tarpinian, defensive tackle Karl Klug and safety Brett Greenwood. Quarterback Ricky Stanzi and defensive end Adrian Clayborn also garnered accolades, but were taking visits with NFL teams on Tuesday and thus were unable to

attend.

There was also a first Assistant Coach of the Year Award given out Tuesday, which went to strength and conditioning coach Chris Doyle, who spoke publicly for the first time since the Rhabdomyolysis news first leaked last winter.

After receiving a standing ovation from the I-Club members on hand, Doyle talked about how he felt humbled by the honor, and then proceeded to discuss overcoming adversity as a result of the fallout from what occurred earlier in the year.

“Sometimes when you face adversity, you find out what you’re really made out of. Certainly, that was true in this case,” Doyle said while speaking to the crowd. “We understand that as the Iowa football program, we’re very visible across the state, we’re very visible throughout the country, and we have an obligation to you people in the state of Iowa to go to work every day and to build a program that represents this state and the people the way they want it run. We’re going to continue to do that.”

### **Renovations about to begin**

While the renovations with Carver-Hawkeye Arena are about to be completed later this year, the first step towards renovating the football complex is scheduled to take place in the fall, according to Iowa athletics director Gary Barta.

According to Barta, the first phase of these football renovations is solely focused on building a new indoor practice facility. He said while parking might become an issue early on, there would eventually be more parking spaces created once the old Grant Field (which was used for field hockey until the new Grant Field was put to use in 2005) was turned into a new parking lot.

“We’re still trying to figure out the exact number of spaces and how we’re going to move people around,” Barta said

regarding temporary parking. "After one year of trying to get through it, it will be a net gain of a several hundred spaces."

Assuming everything goes according to plan, Barta anticipates the fall of 2012 being when the rest of the renovations with things such as offices, meeting rooms, and what not can begin to take place.

### **Barta, Ferentz react to news of Melrose vendors**

Both Barta and Ferentz were asked about the recent situation that occurred in Iowa City, where the city's City Council looked into possibly banning street vendors such as Chuck Ford, who sells the Big Ass Turkey Legs, from doing business on football gamedays along Melrose Ave., only to decide against eliminating them from existing around the stadium entirely.

Barta called the move "common sense."

"I've never had the pleasure of enjoying a Big Ass Turkey Leg, but I'm thrilled that they'll still be up for sale, it appears they will be, on Melrose," Barta said. "I don't have all the information that the City has to deal with. What I know is that we have a great game day environment, and the vendors on Melrose have been a part of it for a long time."

As for Ferentz, he recalled an instance where the team had to arrive at Kinnick Stadium for a game by taking Melrose Ave., and liked Barta, expressed a desire for the atmosphere surrounding the stadium to stand pat.

"That's what's unique to college football, and that's really what's unique to our situation," Ferentz said. "I know we're not the only one like that, but selfishly I just hope they can come to an accord and make everything work out because I know we have a great fan experience."

“As a coach, I definitely want that to continue. I’ve told people this jokingly, but I mean this – I can’t wait to retire. I don’t know if I’ll go to the games, but I know I’ll tailgate a little bit.”

***\*Sign up to become a 3-day free trial member, or to become a monthly or yearly paid subscriber at [HawkeyeDrive.com](http://HawkeyeDrive.com), and check out the audio of both the [Barta](#) and [Ferentz](#) interviews from Tuesday evening in their entirety.***