

Iowa vs. Northwestern (What to expect)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

To get you all ready for Saturday's game between Iowa and Northwestern, I put together a list of things you ought to know before heading to Kinnick Stadium.

At the end, I'll provide what I think are three keys to an Iowa victory.

Iowa Hawkeyes (3-2, 0-1) vs. Northwestern Wildcats (2-3, 0-2)

Kinnick Stadium; Iowa City, Iowa

Oct. 15, 2011

6 p.m. Central

TV: BTN (Eric Collins, Chris Martin, Dionne Miller)

Radio: Hawkeye Radio Network (Gary Dolphin, Ed Podolak, Rob Brooks)

Weather: [61 degrees](#)

Brendan's Three Keys to the Game:

1. Force Northwestern into 3rd-and-longs

One thing Northwestern has done well offensively against Iowa during its current three-game winning streak over the Hawkeyes is move the football effectively on 1st and 2nd down plays, setting up 2nd-and-short, 3rd-and-short opportunities where the play-calling can totally vary. The best way to stop the Wildcat offense will be to force Northwestern into 3rd-and-

long. By doing this, Iowa will have better opportunities defensively to get off the field by forcing fourth down or create turnovers.

2. Ball security

The last three seasons, Northwestern has forced 10 Iowa turnovers, five of which the Wildcats were able to turn into points. Iowa is coming off an abysmal three-point showing last week at Penn State and continuously shot itself in the foot during the fourth quarter with turnovers. Northwestern has an offense that's more capable of scoring touchdowns than Penn State's proved to be, so the Hawkeyes cannot be making mistakes turning the ball back over to the Wildcat offense.

3. Keep emotions in check

From the moment this was announced as a prime time game back in May to now, the build-up for Saturday's showdown at Kinnick Stadium has been enormous. Much like Penn State last week, Iowa is looking to finally lay a knockout punch to a team that has had its number. The fan support will be there, but there's only so much a high-frenzied crowd can do. The key for these Hawkeye players is to not let this reach a point where suddenly emotions can't be kept in check. This is where turnovers can happen and where Northwestern can capitalize on Hawkeye errors. It's a big game, but the Hawkeyes still have to go out and execute if they want the talk of Northwestern owning them to stop.