

Hawkeyes hammer Hoosiers in style

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – The Iowa Hawkeyes knew what they were facing and didn't waste any time in putting away Indiana early.

Thanks in large part to scoring touchdowns on each of its first five drives, Iowa was able to dispose of Indiana, defeating the Hoosiers, 45-24. The victory puts the Hawkeyes at 2-1 in the Big Ten and 5-2 overall, while Indiana now sits at 1-7 and is no longer eligible for a bowl game.

It began with Iowa starting a little unconventional from its last three games, but having a distinct purpose of establishing the run. There was no no-huddle offense until it was needed for two plays following a sack and a false start penalty. It ended with sophomore running back Marcus Coker scoring from one yard out to put the Hawkeyes ahead 7-0.

"We wanted to get Marcus going, get the line going," Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz said. "They really did some good things a week ago. We tried to keep feeding that a little bit."

Indiana would respond with a touchdown on its opening drive, however, one that featured some poor tackling and a lot of open field.

History was then made near the end of the first quarter, when junior quarterback James Vandenberg hit senior wide receiver Marvin McNutt for an 80-yard touchdown pass, the first of three caught by McNutt on the afternoon. This one in particular though made McNutt Iowa's all-time leader in touchdown catches, surpassing the previous mark shared by both

Danan Hughes and Tim Dwight.

"It's an honor to be a part of what Tim and Danan had and for what they stand for in Iowa history," McNutt said. "I hope I can leave a little bit of legacy like they did."

Following another Indiana touchdown to tie the game at 14-14, Iowa then scored its third touchdown in an interesting fashion. Following an incomplete pass by Vandenberg on a fade to McNutt, Vandenberg called an audible to the same play and same McNutt fade route the ensuing play and was able to connect with McNutt the second time around.

"The first time, we checked to it and the guy made a great play. I thought it was a touchdown, and then all of a sudden the ball popped out," Vandenberg said. "We did the exact same thing the second time and were able to execute."

After Iowa finally got its first 3-and-out of the afternoon, the offense scored again with Coker's second touchdown on the ground to make it 28-14. The Hawkeyes would get the ball back again with exactly one minute left and 53 yards to work with, and Vandenberg found McNutt for his third score of the game, giving Iowa a 35-14 halftime lead.

The second half featured more defense, as well as a surprise on special teams. Redshirt freshman A.J. Derby was converted earlier in the week by Ferentz from a quarterback to a linebacker. He came on the field with the kickoff team during the third quarter following a 47-yard field goal by sophomore Mike Meyer and recorded his first career tackle.

"It just kind of came down to what me and Coach talked about and what was best for the team," Derby said. "I'm just trying to be a team player."

The final bit of scoring by Iowa came late in the fourth quarter when Vandenberg tossed his fourth touchdown pass of the day to senior tight end Brad Herman. This was also the

fourth time this season the Hawkeyes have amassed a minimum of 40 points in a game this season after only reaching the plateau twice over both the 2009 and 2010 seasons.

Iowa can secure bowl eligibility with a win Oct. 29 at Minnesota (1-6, 0-3) in a game scheduled to start at 2:30 p.m. Central on the Big Ten Network. The Hawkeyes will also be looking to reclaim Floyd of Rosedale after losing 27-24 to the Golden Gophers last season at TCF Bank Stadium in Minneapolis.