

# Hawkeyes secure first road win of season over Boilermakers

By Brendan Stiles

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WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. – What looked like a comedy of errors during the second quarter of Saturday's contest between Iowa and Purdue ended up being one of the biggest victories of the season for the Hawkeyes, who left Ross-Ade Stadium with a 31-21 victory over the Boilermakers.

The win was Iowa's first away from Kinnick Stadium this season, and the Hawkeyes now sit at 7-4 overall and 4-3 in the Big Ten, putting themselves in better bowl positioning despite being mathematically eliminated from the race for the Legends Division title clinched by No. 12 Michigan State on Saturday.

Going against the wind in the first quarter, the Iowa offense got things going with a pair of touchdown drives where the passing game was heavily involved. Junior quarterback James Vandenberg completed 4-of-5 passes on both drives and tossed a pair of touchdowns, one to senior wide receiver Marvin McNutt of 26 yards and another to sophomore tight end C.J. Fiedorowicz on a 3rd-and-Goal play in the closing seconds following a Purdue timeout. Fiedorowicz finished with three receptions for 31 yards, all of which came on third-down plays.

"It was tight," Fiedorowicz said about his touchdown, his second of the season. "The 'backer was sitting over the top. I tried to give him a little hint in my route and I ended up winning. James threw a great ball, fitting it right in there."

Following Fiedorowicz's touchdown, Iowa had a chance to put Purdue in a gigantic hole following a fumble on the ensuing kickoff. However, McNutt dropped a sure touchdown in the end zone, then chaos ensued. Sophomore kicker Mike Meyer's 34-yard field goal attempt hit the right upright. After a Purdue three-and-out, punter/kicker Carson Wiggs tried a rugby style punt that was blocked by senior Kyle Steinbrecher and gave the Hawkeyes the ball on the Boilermaker 9-yard line.

Freshman running back Mika'il McCall then entered the game in place of sophomore running back Marcus Coker, and after two carries, McCall, who played in his first game since injuring his ankle against Tennessee Tech in the season-opener, coughed the ball up and gave it right back to Purdue.

Later in the second quarter, sophomore free safety Tanner Miller made the first of two interceptions on the day off a tipped ball and went out of bounds at the 1-yard line. The following play, Iowa attempted a play-action pass, only to see Vandenberg get sacked, lose the ball, and have the Boilermakers recover the fumble in the end zone for the game-tying score. Just before halftime however, Coker would give Iowa the lead right back with a 2-yard touchdown run that made it 21-14 as the teams went to the locker rooms. Coker finished with 139 yards rushing on 30 carries.

"He's not a slasher or a speed guy, that's for sure," Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz said. "But he's working hard and it complements what we're trying to do. I'm really proud of him."

While the offense piled up the yards, the defense got stellar performances from senior defensive linemen Mike Daniels and Broderick Binns. Daniels led the defense with eight tackles and two sacks, while Binns finished with seven tackles and a sack himself.

"We knew we had a choice to make – either keep pushing, or fold," Miller said. "Obviously it showed today what we decided

to do. I can't say enough about those guys. They were constantly on everybody's butt this week, making sure we were running to the ball and everything.

"Just throughout the whole course of the week and even on the field today, we saw what kind of players they are and what kind of people they are."

On the very first play of the fourth quarter, McNutt struck again with his second touchdown of the game, one that went for 51 yards. The score put Iowa ahead 31-14 and the St. Louis native broke yet another record with the play. It was his 12th touchdown reception of the year, surpassing the previous mark of 11 touchdown catches in a single season held by former wideout Maurice Brown.

Following a Purdue touchdown on the ensuing series, the Boilermakers threatened in the final minutes to trim the Hawkeye lead to a single possession. The officials originally called a run by quarterback Robert Marve a touchdown that would've made it 31-28, but replay showed Marve losing the ball and hitting the pylon, resulting in a touchback that gave Iowa the ball on its own 20.

The Hawkeyes now have a short week to prepare for their regular season finale on Nov. 25 against No. 17 Nebraska, who will enter off a demoralizing 45-17 thrashing at the hands of No. 20 Michigan on Saturday in Ann Arbor. The Cornhuskers fell to 8-3 overall and 4-3 in the Big Ten. Kickoff is set for 11 a.m. Central and the game will air nationally on ABC.

"We'll adjust the schedule – Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday," Ferentz said. "There won't be a lot of contact, and that was a decision we made pretty much back in the out of season."

"This time of year, the game's really more mental than anything, so we'll try to keep the guys fresh."