

# Iowa vs. Oklahoma (What to expect)



By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

To get you all ready for Friday's Insight Bowl between Iowa and No. 19 Oklahoma, I put together a list of things you ought to know before these two face off at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Ariz.

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

*2011 Insight Bowl: Iowa Hawkeyes (7-5) vs. No. 19 Oklahoma Sooners (9-3)*

*Sun Devil Stadium; Tempe, Ariz.*

*Dec. 30, 2011*

*9 p.m. Central*

*TV: ESPN (Sean McDonough, Matt Millen, Heather Cox)*

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

*Weather: [61 degrees](#)*

## ***Brendan's Three Keys to the Game:***

### **1. Set the tone early**

Iowa's best chance of winning this game Friday night is by catching Oklahoma off guard early and getting the first punches in. The big question with the Sooners going into this game will be where their psyche is, given that they were the preseason No. 1 team in the country and ended up in this game after losing three games in Big 12 play. Both teams looked bad the last time they stepped on a football field. If Iowa can set an early tone and force Oklahoma to play from behind, it has a good chance of prevailing. If the Sooners strike early and often, it will be a long night for the Hawkeyes.

### **2. Younger players stepping up**

Obviously a lot of pressure will be placed on the running backs with Marcus Coker being suspended. But most of Iowa's success in bowl games has been a result of underclassmen having huge games. In last year's Insight Bowl, it was Coker and Micah Hyde that made the big plays. If the Hawkeyes are going to win this time around, guys like Kevonte Martin-Manley and C.J. Fiedorowicz on offense and Christian Kirksey and Tanner Miller on defense might need to be the difference makers.

### **3. Red zone execution from both sides**

This one should go without saying, but red zone play will be critical, especially if and when the Sooners have the ball inside Iowa's 20. Oklahoma won't shy away from using back-up quarterback Blake Bell down near the goal-line, so the Hawkeyes will have to account for the 6-6, 245-pound redshirt freshman. Conversely, when Iowa gets chances in the red zone, the Hawkeyes have to come away with touchdowns, especially if they are able to set an early tone. Allowing a team like Oklahoma to hang around for four quarters isn't going to help matters in crunch time.