

# 2012 Spring Football position breakdowns: Wide Receivers (premium)

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One of the few stable areas from the coaching changes made this offseason came with the receiving corps, as Erik Campbell will remain in charge of coaching that group.

A change in identity at wide receiver is imminent, however, especially with Marvin McNutt no longer in the picture. The question facing Iowa's receivers this spring isn't so much who replaces McNutt, but who can emerge to give the Hawkeyes depth that will desperately be needed.

With Keenan Davis returning after finishing second to McNutt in just about every receiving category, the onus will be on the senior wideout to lead this group in 2012. Davis finished with 50 catches and 713 yards receiving as a junior, catching four touchdown passes last season.

The other receiver Iowa will be counting on to make strides is sophomore Kevonte Martin-Manley. Primarily used as a slot receiver in 2011, Martin-Manley had 30 catches for 323 yards receiving and three touchdowns, two of which came in the fourth quarter of the Hawkeyes' 31-27 win over Pittsburgh on Sept. 17.

Outside of Davis and Martin-Manley however, there isn't much experience to work with this spring for Iowa. One player who will get the opportunity to impress this spring is senior Steven Staggs, who made five catches while playing 10 games in 2011. Another name to watch this spring and moving forward is

junior Don Shumpert, who has primarily been used as a special teams guy for each of the past two seasons.

Redshirt freshman wide receiver Jacob Hillyer also saw his name listed on the initial 2-deep released at the start of spring practice. Hillyer came into the spring listed at 6-4, 205 pounds. Should he continue to develop as he has, Hillyer and Martin-Manley will become two of the more reliable receivers Iowa has in the near future.

Nothing will be or should be flat-out determined with the Hawkeye receiving corps by the end of the spring outside of knowing Davis has to be the No. 1 guy being the the most experienced wideout Iowa has. Beyond that, this is really an opportunity for Campbell to coach up the others more than anything.

With Greg Davis at the helm as offensive coordinator, how Iowa uses its receivers in 2012 is going to be worth watching. The Hawkeyes weren't shy about using the spread when they deemed it necessary last season, and players such as Davis and Martin-Manley found themselves capitalizing during those times it was used. If Iowa opts for more of a spread attack this fall, there's no reason to think both players can't improve their numbers from a year ago. There would also be optimism for No. 3 and No. 4 receivers emerging.

Will Davis or Martin-Manley post numbers even remotely close to what McNutt compiled last year? Most likely not. But if Davis catches anywhere between 70-75 passes and Martin-Manley somewhere between 40-45 passes in 2012, that would be significant.

The best thing that Iowa can have happen is for any questions surrounding the receiving corps right now to be answered by spring's end. For one, it will give quarterback James Vandenberg a little more comfortability running the offense by the time fall camp starts. It also helps in terms of how Iowa

uses other guys at the running back and tight end positions in the passing game.