

4/11/2012: Iowa spring football notebook

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IOWA CITY, Iowa – As the Iowa Hawkeyes entered their ninth of 15 spring practices on Wednesday, one player has become the name of heavy discussion around the Hayden Fry Football Complex – junior tight end C.J. Fiedorowicz.

The reasoning is valid. Entering this spring listed at 6-7, 265 pounds, Fiedorowicz is someone who will have an ability to create matchup problems for opposing defenses.

Junior defensive end Dominic Alvis likened Fiedorowicz's physique to that of New England Patriots tight end Rob Gronkowski.

"They've got similar builds and both are very powerful dudes," Alvis said. "He's going to have an impact for us this fall, no doubt."

First-year offensive coordinator Greg Davis made a strong comment himself Wednesday, saying he had never coached a tight end like Fiedorowicz in 39 years of coaching.

Davis went on to say there would be instances where a tight end like Fiedorowicz could be lined up on the outside instead of a wide receiver and that he has been used in situations where Iowa has worked on its empty package during practice.

"He knows how to get big in the paint," Davis said. "He knows how to get there and box out backwards and that kind of stuff."



Iowa offensive coordinator Greg Davis discusses how the offense has looked in spring practices during his press conference with the local media on Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at the Hayden Fry Football Complex in Iowa City.

Expect use of more no-huddle

As far as Davis is concerned, the more no-huddle Iowa uses in 2012, the better.

The former Texas offensive coordinator made mention of how the previous six practices Iowa conducted prior to Wednesday were spent installing bits of no-huddle.

"We're still not greased up and totally comfortable with it, but we're heading in the right direction," Davis said.

But while the no-huddle looks to be a big part of the Hawkeye offense this upcoming season, Davis also made clear he can't have the offense be exclusively no-huddle. He said how much it's used will vary game-by-game based on the opponent and how it schemes defensively.

"There are some things you can do in no-huddle that forces the action, forces the tempo, changes the complexion of a game, changes momentum sometimes," Davis said. "So we just want to be able to jump in it whenever we choose to."



Iowa defensive coordinator Phil Parker discusses how the defense has looked in spring practices during his press conference with the local media on Wednesday, April 11, 2012 at the Hayden Fry Football Complex in Iowa City.

Working with the front four

After coaching defensive backs for the past 13 seasons, first-year defensive coordinator Phil Parker has found himself working less with the secondary and more with the defensive line as he goes through the first spring in his new coaching role.

Unlike the secondary, which has a pair of returning starters in senior cornerback Micah Hyde and junior free safety Tanner Miller, the defensive line remains a work in progress. Parker said anywhere up to 7-8 players could be used up front at given points during the season, much like the rotating being done during the early part of 2011.

“A lot of them are young and trying to understand the footwork and their assignments right now,” Parker said. “A lot of them are showing everybody that they’re willing to learn and giving great effort, so we’re happy with that.”

One player expecting to get back in the mix this summer is the aforementioned Alvis, who had secured a starting spot at

defensive end last season before suffering a season-ending knee injury against Michigan last November. Alvis continues to rehab from that knee injury and in the process, finds himself taking what Parker called “mental reps” with defensive line coach Reese Morgan.

“We’ve been able to pick apart together what the offense does and the tendencies,” Alvis said. “You really learn, more conceptually, the game of football. It’s a game of chess, and it’s great to have Coach Morgan as a resource to be able to do that.”

Injury update

Senior wide receiver Keenan Davis and junior linebacker Shane DiBona are both dealing with unspecified injuries that will sideline them the remainder of the spring. Neither player was listed on the updated 2-deep released Wednesday by the school. Davis had been the No. 1 receiver throughout the spring, while DiBona had been listed second-string behind junior Christian Kirksey at the LEO position.

Both Parker and Greg Davis declined to comment during their press conferences Wednesday on those two injuries. Head coach Kirk Ferentz was also unavailable for comment.

Tidbits surrounding open practice

While it won’t be the final practice Iowa conducts this spring, the Hawkeyes will hold their annual spring practice open to the public on April 14 at Kinnick Stadium. Gates are scheduled to open at 11 a.m. Central, with the two-hour practice set to start at 12 p.m. Central. The final portion will include a full 11-on-11 scrimmage.

Those unable to make it to Kinnick Stadium for the open practice can watch it live via stream on BTN.com. The Big Ten Network is scheduled to show the practice on a tape delay basis at a time to be determined. Brent Balbinot will handle

the play-by-play, while former Hawkeye and current Philadelphia Eagle offensive lineman Julian Vandervelde will provide color commentary.

[4/11/2012: Phil Parker transcript](#)

[4/11/2012: Greg Davis transcript](#)