

# Reiff selected by Lions in first round

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

Former Iowa offensive tackle Riley Reiff was selected 23rd overall in the first round of the 2012 NFL Draft by the Detroit Lions on Thursday. Reiff became the 19th first-round pick in school history and is the third first-round pick from Iowa in as many years.

The Parkston, S.D., native is also the third offensive lineman to be picked in the first round under head coach Kirk Ferentz, joining Robert Gallery (2004) and Bryan Bulaga (2010). Coincidentally, Bulaga was also the 23rd overall pick when the Green Bay Packers selected him two years ago.

Lions general manager Martin Mayhew said he was surprised to see Reiff still available when Detroit went on the clock.

"Big, strong, tough guy. Versatile," Mayhew said to reporters during a press conference Thursday evening in Detroit. "We came into this draft thinking that we needed to add some young players to that group, and Riley certainly fits that mold."

Reiff started 11 games as a redshirt freshman in 2009, including three games at left tackle in place of an injured Bulaga. He then proceeded to start seven games at left guard and at right tackle in the Hawkeyes' 24-14 win over Georgia Tech in the 2010 Orange Bowl. Reiff started every game at left tackle during each of the past two seasons for Iowa.

While Mayhew mentioned Reiff's capabilities of playing four different positions on the offensive line, Lions head coach Jim Schwartz envisions Reiff as the team's future left tackle.

Currently, the Lions' left tackle is Jeff Backus.

"It's not very often that the second offensive lineman off the board goes off at No. 23 overall," Schwartz said. "There usually off the board by then, so we were fortunate to be sit at 23 and still end up with a player that we liked.

"We're not drafting a guy that's a developmental player. He's a very experienced player. He has played at a high level in the Big Ten and we were very fortunate to be able to get him where we were."

**\*Be sure to visit *HawkeyeDrive.com* throughout the weekend as more Hawkeye players continue to get picked in the 2012 NFL Draft.**