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Every Monday, we will be running a weekly series titled "State of the Big Ten," which will be made available to all members of HawkeyeDrive.com. This series of columns will focus on one major headline regarding the conference and go in-depth on the subject at hand.

By Brendan Stiles

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Iowa and Nebraska have both made their intentions known to the Big Ten about keeping their annual football game played on the Friday after Thanksgiving as it has been for the past two seasons since Nebraska became a conference member. While this is something that would still need to be finalized by the conference later this month, the big development from this past week is both schools wanting it to remain as is.

There was never a doubt on Nebraska's end about wanting this game to remain as is. The Cornhuskers have been a prominent part of college football played on "Black Friday" since its Big Eight days when it annually played Oklahoma on that date and then Colorado later on as the conference expanded into what is now known today as the Big 12. Simply put, this has been a Nebraska tradition that was welcomed into the Big Ten and one the school doesn't want to see going away anytime soon.

That wasn't always the case with Iowa, however, and the debate about what day of the week this game would be played on came based off concerns coming from Iowa City shortly after Kinnick Stadium played host to last season's Black Friday game.

Right now, the only guarantee would be this year's game in

Lincoln being played on Nov. 29 instead of Nov. 30 should the Big Ten approve of the joint proposal being put together by both schools' athletics directors. That's because the recent additions of Maryland and Rutgers – which will be effective in 2014 – will cause the conference to re-configure its schedules for next year and beyond.

In other words, until a new 2014 schedule is finalized and divisions are reshuffled, there's no guarantee that Kinnick Stadium hosts another Black Friday showdown unless the Big Ten keeps Iowa and Nebraska together in one division and continues to schedule them for games against each other at season's end.

If Iowa's willing to be on board for the 2013 game being played on a Friday, then it ought to be doing everything possible to ensure it keeps Nebraska as its final regular season opponent every season going forward so all parties can be satisfied. This is an opportunity for the Hawkeyes to market themselves to a national audience on a holiday where their game is the only Big Ten game happening that day.

The fans have made clear they want this and the football program should be advocating for as much exposure as possible. Even right now, when things around Iowa City look bleak after the Hawkeyes finished 2012 with a 4-8 record that included six straight losses to end the season, any exposure Iowa can get is going to be of benefit.

This is something that also helps in recruiting as well for both programs, especially if they're able to keep the game on ABC every season like it has been each of the past two years. If Iowa wants to become more relevant again and stay that way in the near future, this is one step that ought to be taken and kudos to those involved in making sure this game continues as it has.

Iowa's rivalry with Nebraska will never reach the same proportions nationally as the Big Ten's most storied rivalry,

Michigan/Ohio State. But keeping their game on Black Friday allows those on the outside to associate both the Hawkeyes and Cornhuskers with something on a national scale.