

# 4/10/2013: Iowa spring football notebook

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – One coach has experienced a season in the Iowa football program, while the other is completely new to Kirk Ferentz's system. One played at Iowa and coaches the position he played, while the other left a job coaching the Minnesota Vikings' special teams unit when a vacancy opened in Iowa City.

But there's one area of expertise that linebackers coach LeVar Woods and newly-named running backs coach Chris White share in common – special teams. While White is assuming the primary duty of handling Iowa's special teams in 2013, Woods will continue to play a role.

White said he looks to bring a lot of the nuances that made the Vikings' special teams area successful in the NFL last season over to Iowa, but that he finds himself leaning on Woods right now in terms of adjusting to the college game. One specific example he referenced was with the shield punting formation used by many college football teams (none of which are Iowa) that aren't allowed in the NFL.

"We're going to stick with what I know and what the kids have known," White said. "We're going to change up some fundamentals a little bit here, tweak a little here."

Woods said nothing has really been divided up yet in terms of special teams duties between him and White and that the two have been working together to create competition, specifically in space. In other words, evaluating is being done as to who can block and/or tackle in the open field on plays where a

return is involved.

He also doesn't foresee any issues working with White given how both have NFL backgrounds.

"If you don't have a familiarity with it, you don't quite understand how difficult it is to do," Woods said. "I think having that experience as a player can help.

"But also, the thing I was particularly excited about with Coach White is that he brings some of those elements to our team, some of the same schemes that I'm familiar with, having played in."

As far as White's concerned, it isn't so much statistics that matter to him, but field position and where an offense or defense is starting a possession because of what might have occurred on special teams the play before.

"I'm not a stat guy at all," White said. "I can care less where we rank in terms of in the Big Ten. I want to know where the defense gets the ball, where's their starting position. I want to know where our offense starts the drive.

"It's all what we call complementary football and that's all the job is with special teams, is to complement your offense and defense."



Iowa running backs/special teams coach Chris White discussed spring practices during his press conference

held Wednesday, April 10, 2013, at the Hayden Fry Football Complex in Iowa City. White joined the Hawkeyes in February after serving four years as an assistant with the Minnesota Vikings.

### **RBs knowing the 4 Bs**

White said his biggest emphasis this spring with the running backs group is getting everyone to understand what he called the 4 Bs – “Base, Bend, Balance, Burst.”

It’s the “Bend,” White said, that he has spent the spring with junior running back Mark Weisman on more than anything else. Weisman, who got placed on scholarship last January after walking on as a transfer from Air Force in 2011, led the Hawkeyes in rushing last season. White noticed Weisman not having much of the “bend” to his game as he watched 2012 film and said he has already noticed a major improvement through six spring practices.

“He made a couple of jump cuts the other day in practice and I was like, ‘Wow,’” White said. “It’s step one here just to see the guys improving.”

Meanwhile, the one “B” probably being emphasized most with fellow junior running back Damon Bullock right now is “balance.” Not so much in terms of run versus pass since Bullock has experience playing receiver, but in terms of pass protection when the ball isn’t coming his way.

White said he looks for Bullock to become a more physical and more complete player as he shows improvement with little things such as blocking.

“He made a block on a blitzing linebacker the other day and

earned the respect of the whole team, including the head coach and the assistants.”



Iowa linebackers/special teams coach LeVar Woods discussed spring practices during his press conference held Wednesday, April 10, 2013, at the Hayden Fry Football Complex in Iowa City. Woods will enter his second season as a full-time assistant.

### **Woods reflects on what he learned**

Woods had the background playing linebacker both at Iowa and in the NFL and even returning to Iowa to work in an administrative assistant role. Last season presented him with his first full-time coaching opportunity and as he reflected back on that Wednesday, he said he learned a lot.

He described learning from in-game coaching errors, as well as learning how to better work with the linebackers he coaches and how to handle recruiting, as Woods' main recruiting area is around Dallas and other parts of Texas. As far as the football side of things is concerned, Woods is looking to make more of an effort to not be “too perfect” with coaching.

“Sometimes, I think you can kind of paralyze a young man when you tell him do this, do this, do this, if he does that, do

this,” Woods said. “So I’m working hard to just let guys go, let them play.”

Woods described the first time he traveled to Dallas to recruit and how he felt like a door-to-door salesman that just carried around a notebook, learning about all the different high schools. He said going back there in the winter was much easier as he had more of an understanding for how to handle recruiting.

“It’s fun because it’s very welcoming, very inviting,” Woods said. “I love recruiting Texas. It is competitive because every school is down there.”

### **Trinca-Pasat rehabbing shoulder**

Among the handful of players made available to the media Wednesday afternoon was junior defensive tackle Louis Trinca-Pasat, who is sitting out this spring due to offseason surgery performed on his left rotator cuff.

The operation itself wasn’t a surprise, as Ferentz had even said prior to the start of spring practices that Trinca-Pasat wouldn’t be available again until fall camp. What Trinca-Pasat revealed Wednesday, however, was a bit of a surprise.

As he discussed his shoulder injury, Trinca-Pasat said it occurred back in 2011 and confirmed he played the entire 2012 season with a torn rotator cuff. Last season, he recorded 40 tackles while appearing in all 12 of Iowa’s games.

Trinca-Pasat called it “a minor repair” and expects to be back for fall camp. While disappointed he can’t be on the field practicing this spring, he’s doing what he can to stay involved.

“I’m just taking a lot of mental reps, learning and just getting a better feel for the game,” Trinca-Pasat said.

[4/10/2013: LeVar Woods/Chris White press conference](#)

transcripts