

2013 NFL Draft: One-on-One with Keenan Davis

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

As he waits to hear whether his name will be called at the 2013 NFL Draft later this week, former Iowa wide receiver Keenan Davis recently took time to talk with *HawkeyeDrive.com* about what he's doing to prepare himself for the next level, as well as reflect back on his time playing for the Hawkeyes.

If the Cedar Rapids native does get that call from an NFL team this weekend, it would be the second straight year an Iowa wideout gets picked following a 9-year span where no Hawkeye receivers went drafted by any NFL teams.

Below is a complete transcript of *HawkeyeDrive.com's* interview with Davis:

HawkeyeDrive.com (HD): How have these last few months been for you here since the last time we talked after the Nebraska game last November up until now?

Keenan Davis: You know, it has been good. I've just been working out. Definitely staying with the Iowa program and then I went to Arizona for like a week and worked out there, just to stay in shape. I worked on my routes a lot and just did everything I could to get ready for the all-star game and then the Pro Day.

HD: You mention working out in Arizona. How was that experience for you?

Davis: It was good. I actually got to run routes with [former NFL quarterback] Donovan McNabb and that was definitely a

great experience. You know, I just did some different things. Some position work, things that I hadn't done before and then when I got back, I went straight to the all-star game from there and that really helped me.

HD: You mentioned the East-West Shrine Game and I know you got a chance to go to that with Micah Hyde and James Ferentz. What was that experience like?

Davis: Oh, it was great. It was good to actually be able to sit down and talk with a lot of scouts. I did a lot of that. There were a lot of hours spent just getting questioned. You know, it's like a job interview. And then to play against other great athletes, it was pretty good just to compete and be able to have fun, especially being with Micah and James the whole time. It was a good time.

HD: When you talk about the different things you're doing with your route-running and what not, what are those areas that you've worked on and maybe feel you've improved on here over these last few months?

Davis: Coming off the ball fast and definitely come out of my routes, get out of that quicker. You know, try to get to my coming out speed faster, catch the ball with my outside shoulder, stuff like that. Just doing regular receiver things that I need to work on for the NFL.

HD: How has it been for you to juggle school along with everything else? I ask because a lot of your former teammates that have gone through this process usually take the 5-year route and have already graduated beforehand.

Davis: I mean, it's difficult. But we've done four years of it. Nothing different. You just got to manage your time, I guess. But, it's still all right. It's keeping me busy, so I'm not just sitting here eating all day or anything. I'm definitely going to class, going to school, so it's kind of keeping me focused.

HD: How many semester hours are you taking right now and are you graduating after this semester, correct?

Davis: Fifteen, and yeah, in May.

HD: I would imagine then you've done a lot of working out here in Iowa as well. How has that gone for you, knowing that you're still able to be around the football complex to get in what you need to do?

Davis: Oh, that's the good part. I mean, you're still at home and you're still around familiar faces, so that makes it more comfortable doing my workouts. Being with [Chris] Doyle and being with the other guys trying to make it to the next level, too. It's definitely comfortable being with the people you've been with the past four years and yeah, basically, that's it. Just being around the complex and stuff, having the same things right there for you that I could use to help me.

HD: Now I know you didn't get invited to the NFL Combine, so how anxious were you for your Pro Day and having that first real moment besides the Shrine Game to work out for NFL teams?

Davis: Yeah. Micah and James [Vandenberg] got to go to the Combine and they got to show what they can do pretty early and you know, you're just like, "Wow," after that. I was really kind of getting antsy for it. When it happened, I just let loose and I felt really comfortable. Not as nervous as I thought I was going to be, so I mean, that was good.

HD: What have the interactions been like for you with the teams you have gotten to speak with?

Davis: A lot of them talked about last season and then just regular basic stuff like background information. Then we talked about learning offenses and what I can do to help that team, how I feel about myself as a player. Basic questions like that.

HD: You brought up last year and you went through having to learn a completely new offense. How much did that come up in terms of teams trying to compare what you did earlier in your career playing in Ken O'Keefe's offense to what you did last year in Greg Davis' offense?

Davis: They just asked what happened, basically, and why was there such a drop. You know, I just replied by saying there were a lot of details that we didn't execute and just learning a new offense is tough. But we're just taking it as a learning experience and all the guys that are still there, they know that was unacceptable and they're going to get better. I'm going to take that learning experience harder and go out and learn offenses a little better, stuff like that.

HD: How do you view yourself as a receiver entering this next phase?

Davis: Well, I'm a bigger receiver. I feel like I'm quicker than most people think. You know, I feel like I catch the ball well. I'm a competitor, I'm tough. All those attributes I think will help me at the next level.

HD: How many teams have talked to you to this point?

Davis: I've talked to quite a bit. I talked to a lot of teams at the all-star game. Since then, it has been the Patriots, the Vikings. I talked to Miami. I think there's probably a good 3-4 more teams that I've talked to. Jacksonville. They just asked for some basic background information.

HD: Have you gotten a chance to visit any of these teams at their headquarters?

Davis: No. But the Patriots came to our place and they worked me out.

HD: As far as draft weekend goes, how are you going to spend it? Do you watch it with your family or is the draft coverage

something you try to avoid completely unless you get a call from someone?

Davis: I'll be with my family at home. I'm probably not going to try to watch it too much. I'll just wait for a call and hang out with my family. When I get the call, I'll be pretty excited about it.

HD: I read that Blake Baratz is your agent. Is that still the case?

Davis: Yep.

HD: Let's say you don't end up getting picked and end up signing somewhere as an undrafted free agent. Is that a possibility you've prepared yourself for?

Davis: You know, the way I handle it is I just really want to compete. I don't care if I get drafted. If I'm a free agent, I just want to go somewhere and compete and be able to have that chance for a spot in camp.

HD: As you've gone through this process, I'm sure you've talked to a lot of former teammates who have done a similar thing. What sort of advice have they given you as you've gone through the last few months?

Davis: Basically, I talked to Marvin [McNutt] and Bernie [Jordan Bernstine] and they told me to just keep my head down and keep moving forward. Don't listen to outside noise. Do everything that can help you. That's about it. Stuff like that, along those lines.

HD: Has it been easier for you to go through this process with someone like Micah, for example, who you're close friends?

Davis: Yeah, definitely, and he's my roommate, too. I mean, having someone that close to me go through it, it helps a lot. Hearing advice from him, someone that close, it kind of kicks in more than from somebody from the outside. So I think it's

definitely a plus.

HD: When you look back on your last four years playing at Iowa, what will you remember most about your time as a Hawkeye?

Davis: Probably coming out of the tunnel every time. That's probably the most excited I'll ever see the fans and then the whole swarm, that's probably the best feeling for anybody, any Hawkeye, that has ever experienced that. Then besides that, probably the Orange Bowl.

HD: Last question – When the dust settles and you at least know where you're going to be, drafted or not, what makes you believe you'll be successful at the next level, playing in the NFL?

Davis: Just my competitiveness. I hate losing. I love going and doing my best, so I think me just going out there and working hard, showing that I can play, that I can compete, that's going to be a plus for me.