

2013 NFL Draft: One-on-One with Micah Hyde

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As Micah Hyde waits to find out when he'll be selected in this week's 2013 NFL Draft, the former Iowa defensive back recently took time to talk with *HawkeyeDrive.com* about both his future as a pro and his past as a Hawkeye.

Should Hyde get drafted, it would mark the sixth consecutive year at least one Iowa defensive back gets taken in the NFL Draft.

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

HawkeyeDrive.com (HD): Since we last spoke after the Nebraska game last November, what have these last few months been like for you as far as just going through the drafting process and everything you've had to deal with?

Micah Hyde: It has been really exciting. You know, it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to prepare yourself for the NFL Draft. I mean, we're at the end here and right now, it's just a waiting game and it's just kind of a real long process of waiting. There's nothing you can really do right now but work out, so it's just kind of not as fun a time right now.

HD: What have some of those workouts been like? I know you're still a student at the University of Iowa, but have you been going around and doing workouts at various places or have you mostly been in Iowa with your training regimen?

Hyde: Yeah, I've been mostly in Iowa. Teams will either send you to their facilities or you know, guys will come into Iowa

City. I've been having school, so the best thing for me has been for teams to come to Iowa City. I've worked out for a couple of teams here. After the Pro Day, the workouts are kind of just to better stay in shape for after I hopefully get picked up and hopefully I can be in my best shape by the time I go to the first minicamp or whatever. But right now, like I said, it's just a waiting time. I'm just waiting to get picked up.

HD: How difficult has it been for you to just kind of juggle the time between still dealing with school with this being your last semester and also just everything you've had to do with football? I ask because I know a lot of your former teammates I've talked to in the past have gone the 5-year route and have already graduated before they go through this process.

Hyde: Yeah. I mean, there have been a couple of instances where I've been kind of having something that went together. It has kind of been tough a couple of times. But other than that, it's something I've been able to work through. Coach [Chris] Doyle has done a good job. I let him know exactly what my classes are and from that, he'll know when to get me in and when to get me out. You know, I've only got nine hours this semester, which has really helped me out. Other than that, that's stressful and it has kind of swung together with the Combine and stuff like that. I missed a couple of days of class, so I had to let instructors know and stuff like that.

HD: Now I know back in January, you had the opportunity to play in the East-West Shrine Game with teammates Keenan Davis and James Ferentz. What was that whole experience like, just being in St. Petersburg, Fla., that week and getting the opportunity to play in an all-star game like that?

Hyde: Yeah, it was a fun experience. You know, I got to be down in Florida and it was an opportunity to meet a lot of guys that are in the same situation that you are, you know,

trying to make the best of it. Practices were intense. You know, that's when all the scouts were there and that's when you got to show your stuff and it was kind of weird because you're going through a game and not as many scouts are there and it kind of wasn't as serious as the practices were. But like I said, it was a great opportunity for all of us going down competing against some of the best that will be at the end of the draft. You know, it's just kind of how you rank with other guys and I think we all did pretty good and we all showed our skill.

HD: You mentioned the Combine. What was the experience like for you being in Indianapolis and not just working out for all those teams, but also knowing that with the coverage it gets, you're under even more of a microscope?

Hyde: Yeah. You see it on TV and in past years, I watched it on TV. I didn't understand how serious of an event this was. Going into it with an open mind, the only thing I didn't want to do was let it be stressful. I wanted to be loose and knock out the drills and see how I did with my 40, my shuttle, all that stuff. Yeah, I went in with an open mind. I wasn't nervous, but it was kind of weird. There are a ton of coaches, a ton of GMs, everybody there.

The interviews were tough. You know, they could ask you any question they wanted to. You know that everybody's going to watch it on TV, but you kind of got to put that past and just go out and do your thing, have fun with it. There are guys, just like the all-star game, that are in the same boat as you are. They're trying to get drafted and trying to showcase their best abilities. You're working out with them and that's kind of what made it easier because you all kind of help each other out and remain loose. It actually made it pretty fun.

HD: This is the only question I'm going to ask in regard to your arrest last October: Were you prepared for teams asking you about that while you were at the Combine and how often did

it come up?

Hyde: Every meeting I had with a team, they obviously had brought it up to see what happened, what went on. I think a lot of guys ... there were guys that had way bigger issues than what that was. I mean, I'm not trying to blow it off like it was nothing, but it was in Iowa City. It happens a lot in Iowa City. The scouts, the coaches, they all understood that and I let them know that was the case, too, that it happens all the time in Iowa City and I didn't get charged with anything. I'm still fighting it. Every team that asked me about it, I told them the straight up story of what honestly happened. You know, I made a mistake and moved on from there and they didn't ask again throughout the interviews.

HD: Now as far as the football side of things, when you've talked with teams – whether it was during the Combine or after your Pro Day or just when you're doing workouts – what are they talking to you about as far as where you'd fit in with their plans if they were to have interest in you?

Hyde: Well, there were a couple of teams that told me straight up, "We don't see you as a corner. We need a safety and if we think you're the best player to play safety, that's where we see you at." A couple of teams have said that and I told them straight up, "I'm fine with that." You know, I'm not going to be mad about that. I think I'm a versatile player, so I can play a couple of positions. I think a lot of these teams know me well through special teams, too. I'll go out there and I'll go play on special teams. So I've just been trying to let these guys know that I'm out there doing whatever I can and if it's corner, safety or whatever, I'm definitely going to play my best.

HD: In hindsight, how much do you feel the experience you got your junior season working as a free safety is benefiting you now as far as showing off your versatility to different NFL teams?

Hyde: Well, I mean, those were a couple of games that I really didn't play that well in. I think they know our coaches, our DB coach, all the trainers and I can say I didn't play that well. But it does show teams that I'm open to anything and that was a first-hand experience where I was a corner that moved to safety and really picked up the whole defense, which helped me out. It made me a better player overall, but I think teams see that and yeah, I watched it with a couple of guys that asked, "How did that go?" I said I didn't play that well in those first two games and they understood that. They were like, "It was tough on you having to play a new position," and I'm not trying to make excuses, but it was new and I wish I could've played better. But I think teams know that and they know that I'm open to doing whatever.

HD: So if a team takes you and says they want you as a free safety, you feel you'd do a better job now just based on that experience.

Hyde: Exactly. And the thing that helped me the most was knowing the whole defense and stuff like that.

HD: Now if the team that drafts you comes up to you and says, "Corner, safety, do you have a preference?," they give you a choice, would you want to be a corner since that's what you mostly played at Iowa or would you want to experiment with playing safety?

Hyde: Like I said, I really don't care. But if they were to ask me straight up, "What do you want to play?," I'd probably say corner because that's where most of my experience comes from in college and that's probably what I feel more comfortable playing. I'd obviously be open to playing at free safety though.

HD: Have any teams talked to you at all about being a return man on special teams since you did handle punt return duties for two seasons at Iowa, or are you mainly be asked to play as

a gunner on special teams?

Hyde: Well, I know a couple of teams asked me about it being something that I did. They were like, "Did you return punts?" I told them, "Yeah, I did." I actually should've had a couple [touchdown returns] that I ended up getting tackled, I think 1-2 times. But it's a position on the team that comes with my game. It means I'm a versatile player and actually, whenever our team was on the field – all day, every day – I let them know I was [a returner] and if I could've played some slot receiver or some quarterback, I would've done that, too. It's just another part that comes with my game and yeah, they've asked me about it.

HD: What are your plans going to be while the draft is going on? Are you going to be in Iowa City still or will you be back in Ohio with your family?

Hyde: I'll be in Ohio with my family.

HD: What are you anticipating when that day finally comes?

Hyde: It's actually really exciting because it's actually here. All these workouts and everything, watching film, it has actually paid off. It's right around the corner. But you know, I'm just going to stay focused. I'm going into it with an open mind. I'm not going to say I'm going in the third round and then be mad when my name's not called in the third round. I'm just keeping an open mind and if I'm the last pick in the draft, I'll be happy. I'll be a happy camper because at the end of the day, everybody has to work to make it on the team and I just want to get that shot.

HD: I read that Jack Bechta is your agent. Is that still the case?

Hyde: Yes.

HD: As far as you getting the chance to talk with former

teammates of yours who have already gone through this and are in the NFL, what type of advice have they given you?

Hyde: Just exactly what I said – go in with an open mind. All it took, this whole process, was to impress one team and you got to hope that on draft day, that one team takes a shot on you. You go in there, don't be too stressed. They've pretty much said, "You're going to get a shot." Whether you get drafted or not, you're going to get a shot. Just go in there with an open mind and once you get that opportunity, just go out and make the best of it.

HD: When you do get a chance to look back on your time playing at Iowa, what are you going to remember the most?

Hyde: You know, just the memories that I have playing for Coach Ferentz. I'll probably forget all the practices and stuff like that, but just the games and the memories, the huge wins that we got under Coach Ferentz and just to see Coach Ferentz in the locker room after the game and see the look on his face. You know, he's an emotional guy. Just the big wins and I think the best one will be my freshman year when we won the Orange Bowl. Just to see Coach Ferentz in the locker room and how happy he was, how big of a win it was for our program and our staff and our players.

We all went out there and played our hardest the whole season and just seeing his face, that's why you play. And to see all the coaches' faces after the game, you develop such a bond with everyone every day in practice. It kind of seems like torture, but in the end, when you get a good win at the end of the week, it all pays off and everybody's happy.

HD: Last question for you – When the dust settles and you know where you're going to be starting this next chapter in your life, why do you believe you'll be successful in the NFL?

Hyde: You know, I think it just goes with playing for Coach Ferentz. He has a real professional way of running his program

and I know that a lot of scouts and a lot of coaches come in to talk to him. They all say the same thing. Coach Ferentz knows what he's doing. He gets you ready for the NFL and that's why a lot of Hawkeyes stick in the NFL. Because when it gets tough, they know what they got to do. They handle their business and don't worry about anything else. I think that's what Coach Ferentz has given us the opportunity to do. I'm thankful for playing for him and I'm just going to take this opportunity and run with it.