

Kaeding retires from NFL after nine seasons

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

Former Iowa kicker Nate Kaeding announced his retirement from the NFL on Thursday after playing nine seasons in the league. The news of Kaeding's retirement [was first reported by Pat Harty of the Iowa City Press-Citizen](#) and comes one month after signing as a free agent with the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

During his four-year Hawkeye career, Kaeding played in three bowl games and was part of the 2002 squad that won a share of the Big Ten title with eventual national champion Ohio State. As a sophomore, the Coralville native made the game-winning field goal in Iowa's 19-16 victory over Texas Tech in the 2001 Alamo Bowl. In 2002, Kaeding won the Lou Groza Award, which is given annually to college football's top kicker and he was first-team all-Big Ten during both his junior and senior seasons with the Hawkeyes.

Kaeding was a third-round selection of the San Diego Chargers in the 2004 NFL Draft. The pick San Diego used on the Iowa City West High product was acquired as part of a trade with the New York Giants that involved quarterbacks Eli Manning and Philip Rivers.

During his eight-plus years in San Diego, Kaeding was named to two Pro Bowls and was named first-team All-Pro in 2009. He reached the postseason five times in his first six seasons and was part of three playoff wins over that stretch. During the 2007 season, the Chargers reached the AFC Championship Game where they lost 21-12 to New England. All 12 of their points in that game came courtesy of Kaeding's leg.

Injuries over the past two NFL seasons to his knee and groin led to the end of Kaeding's tenure with San Diego last fall. He was picked up by the Miami Dolphins late last season and appeared in their final two games.

As of Thursday, Kaeding retires as [the NFL's fourth-most accurate kicker all-time](#), converting on over 86 percent of his field goal attempts.