

Iowa receives Delany visit, reveals new video board



Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany speaks with the local media following his visit with the Iowa football team on Thursday, Aug. 22, 2013, at the Kenyon Practice Facility in Iowa City. Delany's stop was one of three he conducted Thursday as part of his tour across all 12 Big Ten campuses this month.

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – On what was the final day of his campus tour, Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany made his first of three scheduled stops Thursday at the Kenyon Practice Facility prior to the Hawkeyes' morning practice.

Shortly after the team conducted its walkthrough, all the players were called over by head coach Kirk Ferentz and from there, Delany briefly addressed the entire team about their opportunities as Big Ten student-athletes. As soon as Delany

finished speaking, he was presented with a chair that had the Big Ten logo and an inscription on the back of it by Iowa athletics director Gary Barta.

"I don't talk to these players any differently than I talk to my own sons," Delany said about being able to speak to the Hawkeye players Thursday. "I don't think young kids have changed. I think the scrutiny has changed.

"I try not to judge kids. You try to teach them, you try to lead them, you try to encourage them to make good decisions and that's part of growing up. That's part of playing Big Ten football."

Once the Hawkeyes' practice got officially underway, Delany then spent 10-15 minutes addressing conference matters. When the topic of conference expansion came up, Delany described it as "calm." There aren't plans for the Big Ten (right now at least) to expand beyond Maryland and Rutgers joining the conference next year and Delany said he has enjoyed being able to establish connections for the Big Ten along the country's Eastern seaboard as a result of those two schools joining.

The topic of Black Friday was discussed, as Delany was asked about the future of Iowa's annual game against Nebraska remaining on that date in the future. The Hawkeyes and Cornhuskers have met on the last two Black Fridays since Nebraska first joined the Big Ten in 2011 and are currently scheduled to meet on that date up through the 2017 season. Delany didn't give any clue no way or the other on that game, but made clear the two weekends he's most willing to showcase the league on dates other than Saturday are Labor Day weekend and Thanksgiving weekend.

"We like to use that Friday if we can find a good game to put in it and both Iowa and Nebraska have been willing to play it," Delany said. "I hope they continue to stay flexible and open on it, but I don't really know exactly where it goes in

the future.”

Delany also talked about being able to incorporate Big Ten football games during prime time. He mentioned that the league is willing to experiment over the next three years with prime time games during the month of November if interest from schools is piqued, including perhaps this season.

“It’s a possibility,” Delany said about possible prime time games this coming November. “If TV requests it and the schools were willing, we would look at it,” Delany said. “I don’t think there’s anything scheduled this year, but the weather turns a little bit and the crowds are very large. Those kinds of things are not easy to do, but I think we’re more open to it than we’ve been.

“I don’t think we’ll do one in the next three years, but we’ll look at it.”

Following Delany’s departure, the UI displayed its new video board at Kinnick Stadium for the first time to local media, showcasing some of the different nuances pursued in order to what those inside the athletics department will enhance the game day experience for fans attending games this fall.

Every video screen at Kinnick Stadium is now in high definition. Along the new wall behind the North end zone, there are two screens (one in each corner) that have expanded by a total of 369 square feet (dimensions are now 21.5 x 38). The scoreboard behind the South end zone will now three different types of video screens – in-game, split-screen and full screen, all three of which are also bigger.

The in-game screen that will be most commonly seen throughout a game is now 1,296 square feet. The split-screen and full screen will appear periodically (including when replays are being reviewed). The split-screen is now 1,984 square feet and the full screen is 3,968 square feet, both of which are significantly bigger than the 814 square feet used before.

Iowa associate athletics director Rick Klatt said a survey was provided to season-ticket holders during the offseason about how the school could enhance fan experience for those seeing a game in person versus watching from home. He mentioned the four most common responses he received from fans were more replays (including instant replays that are being reviewed), bigger video screens (which Iowa has now addressed), more stats being made available on the scoreboard to fans during games and being able to see scores from other college football games regularly as opposed to only during TV timeouts.

Klatt acknowledged that part of the reason for Iowa not showing more instant replays before had to do with tightly following guidelines by the Big Ten. But given the conference becoming more open to showing more replays, the school is now looking to provide fans more of what they're looking for with that.

"I think what our fans are going to see in 2013 is they're going to continue to see just about every play have a replay to it, but unlike a year ago when we were a little bit more close to the policy in terms of those controversial plays, we're going to open it up," Klatt said.

Klatt and Barta both mentioned some demands with the video screens not being able to be met since Ferentz and his staff need to remain privy to certain information displayed on the scoreboard while the game's in progress, such as timeouts, time on the clock, etc. But the split and full screens will be used more often during play stoppages.

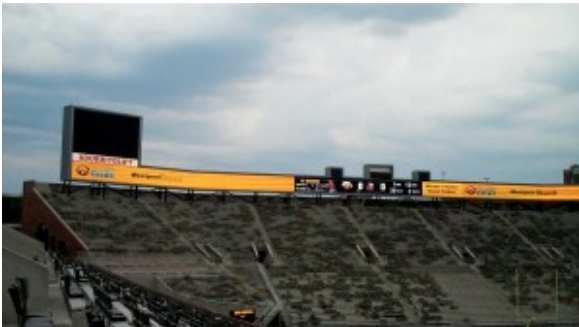
They also mentioned improving the audio that comes from Kinnick Stadium's sound system. Barta said small improvements have already been made and that their is for it to become clearer over the course of a two-stage process that should be completed by the start of next season. The UI Board of Regents gave approval of up to \$9 million on all the audio and video upgrades being done to Kinnick Stadium and according to both

Barta and Klatt, the school is looking at spending a total somewhere between \$8-9 million once everything is completed.

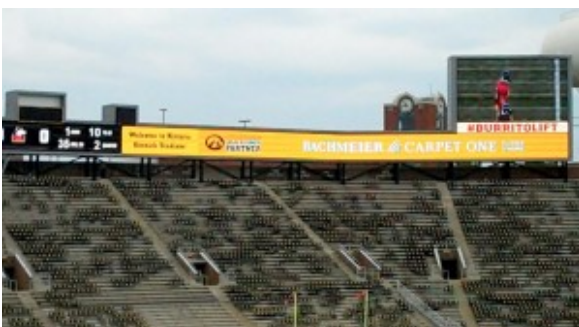
"We're going to put some enhancement in this year, so you're going to hear a difference," Barta said. "The consultants want to be here for every game, hear it when the stadium's full, hear it from all angles. Then you'll see an even more dramatic upgrade next year.

"We're going to do less really well, and then we're going to ramp up."

PHOTO GALLERY: New Kinnick Stadium Video Board/Screens



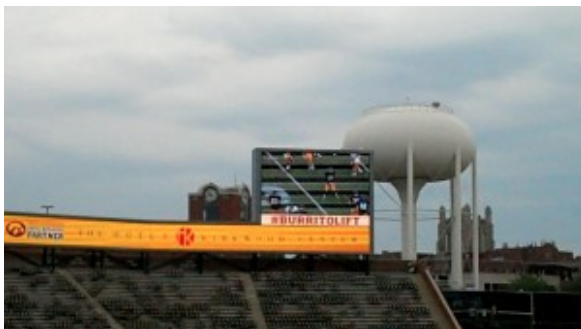
The Northwest corner portion of the new video board behind the North end zone at Kinnick Stadium.



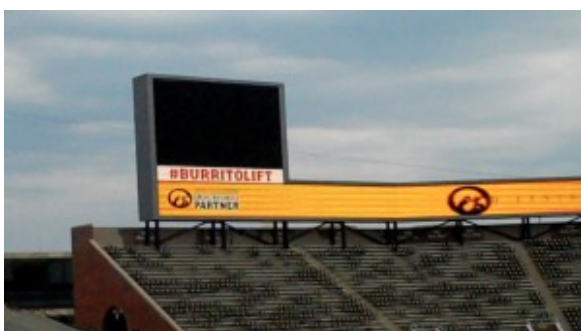
The Northeast corner portion of the new video board behind the North end zone at Kinnick Stadium.



This is what the scoreboard behind the South end zone at Kinnick Stadium will look throughout the majority of games this fall. The new dimensions for the video screen are 48 x 27 square feet.



The new video board showing footage from the open practice during Iowa Kids Day back on Aug. 17, 2013, at Kinnick Stadium.



Panchero's showcasing some well-done marketing with the

#BurritoLift hashtag on both ends of the new video board behind the North end zone at Kinnick Stadium.



Among the new features on the South end zone scoreboard is the ability to go split-screen with new dimensions of 62 x 32 square feet.



The South end zone scoreboard is also now capable of going full screen with video at dimensions of 124 x 32 square feet.



The video frame on the South end zone scoreboard at Kinnick Stadium will go full screen with this graphic following Iowa touchdowns during home games this fall.



Iowa legend Calvin Jones with the distinction of being the first former Hawkeye football player to have his name and number etched on the new "Wall of Honor" that will be on display at Kinnick Stadium. Jones is one of nine former players who will have their names and numbers appear there in 2013.