

# Iowa vs. Michigan State (What to expect)

By Brendan Stiles

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To get you all ready for Saturday's game between Iowa and Michigan State, I put together a list of things you ought to know before these two face off at Kinnick Stadium.

At the end, I'll provide what I think are three keys to an Iowa victory.

*Iowa Hawkeyes (4-1, 1-0) vs. Michigan State Spartans (3-1, 0-0)*

*Kinnick Stadium; Iowa City, Iowa*

*Oct. 5, 2013*

*11 a.m. Central*

*TV: ESPN2 (Beth Mowins, Joey Galloway, Paul Carcaterra)*

*Radio: Hawkeye Radio Network (Gary Dolphin, Ed Podolak, Rob Brooks)*

*Weather: [65 degrees; chance of rain; winds from SW around 15-20 MPH with gusts between 21-28 MPH](#)*

## **Brendan's Three Keys to the Game:**

### **1. Turnover battle**

Given how stout both Iowa's and Michigan State's defenses are entering Saturday's contest, this is a game where winning the turnover battle could play critical. The Hawkeye defense (more specifically perhaps, the front seven) has found a way to

create turnovers at key points this season and will need to do so again here against a porous Spartan offense. Conversely, Iowa has to avoid turning the ball over whenever it has possession. 3-and-outs (especially early on) aren't necessarily the end of the world for the Hawkeyes, but a turnover here or there could prove far more costly.

## **2. Take advantage in the red zone**

At some point in this game, Iowa is going to get at least 1-2 trips into the red zone and the Hawkeyes have to make the most of those opportunities here against what will likely be the best defense they face all season. Iowa currently has seven empty red zone trips through five games, which might be O.K. now because the Hawkeyes are currently 4-1, but won't cut it now as the competition continues to heat up more and more.

## **3. Third phase**

Iowa is going to need a heavy contribution from its special teams unit Saturday afternoon. Kickoff coverage has to improve from what it was against Minnesota last week. Then there are guys like Connor Kornbrath and Mike Meyer who will be counted on to do their jobs and help dictate field position through most of the game. But the name to keep an eye on here just might be Jordan Cotton. Think back to last season when these teams met in East Lansing and Cotton had a kickoff return for a touchdown get called back because of an Iowa penalty. Just a hunch here, but a similar opportunity to house a kickoff return for a score might present itself for Cotton this weekend.