

Iowa vs. Northwestern (What to expect)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

To get you all ready for Saturday's game between Iowa and Northwestern, 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 (4-3, 1-2) vs. Northwestern Wildcats (4-3, 0-3)

Kinnick Stadium; Iowa City, Iowa

Oct. 26, 2013

11 a.m. Central

TV: BTN (Matt Devlin, Glen Mason, Jon Jansen)

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

Weather: [47 degrees; clear skies; winds from W/NW around 15-16 MPH with gusts between 21-23 MPH](#)

Brendan's Three Keys to the Game:

1. Make Northwestern adjust to offensive strengths

Looking back at what worked for Iowa against Ohio State last weekend, there's no reason to think the Hawkeyes can't have similar success against Northwestern on Saturday with two things specifically – establishing a ground game and utilizing the tight ends. This is a good week for Iowa to include its 13

personnel grouping because for one, it can double-team Wildcat DE Tyler Scott with two tight ends whenever it attempts to run to his side of the field, and two, it would force Northwestern to do more than simply jam Iowa receivers off their routes whenever the Hawkeyes do look to throw the ball. The main thing here is going to be not abandoning this completely should Northwestern's defense has success in the early going of getting off the field.

2. Force 3rd-and-long situations defensively

Regardless of whether it's Kain Colter or Trevor Siemian taking snaps at quarterback for Northwestern, this is huge. In recent match-ups against Iowa, the Wildcats have had success moving the chains because they pick up positive yardage on first and second downs and find themselves in 3rd-and-short opportunities. Whenever the Hawkeye defense managed any sort of success stopping Northwestern, it would be when the Wildcats faced 3rd-and-long (let's say at least 6 yards or more to go). Along these same lines, if Iowa does use any nickel on 3rd-and-long (don't expect this with Nate Meier already playing more in the DE rotation with Dominic Alvis out), it'll more likely occur when Siemian's taking snaps. As long as Colter's out there, expect more of the base 4-3 look since Colter is capable of making plays with his feet as well as his arm.

3. Solid second half

Iowa has led at halftime in every game this season, yet enters this contest with a 4-3 record. With this game looking much more winnable for the Hawkeyes than it was just 2-3 weeks ago, this is the week Iowa needs to play a strong second half, especially if Saturday marks the eighth straight game with a halftime lead. In the second halves of the Hawkeyes' three losses, Iowa has a combined 10 points and a time of possession average of under 10 minutes. Not only that, but six of Jake Rudock's seven interceptions this season have come in the

second half and four of those six second-half turnovers have come in those three defeats. Maybe this is where sticking to your strengths comes into play, but regardless, the Hawkeye offense needs to be clicking throughout the second half if they're going to beat Northwestern on Saturday and move one step closer to becoming bowl-eligible.