

# 11/5/2013: Kirk Ferentz teleconference transcript (premium)

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Below is a written transcript of Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz's teleconference on Tuesday with the Big Ten media:

## **Ferentz's opening statement:**

*"It was a tough loss Saturday to a very good Wisconsin team. Both teams really competed hard. It was an excellent football game and we give them a lot of credit. They're an excellent football team. So we go back to work today and get ready for a trip to Purdue. It's conference play, on the road, so it'll be a tough contest."*

## **On how much of a toll the losses during his first season as Iowa's head coach took on him and being able to stick to his plan long-term:**

*"Well you know, I think any time you make a transition to a new program, chances are there are going to be challenges. Not always, but chances are. It depends on the circumstance, certainly. But you take it a week at a time and from what I can see, from the outside looking in, they're doing a great job of that. You take it one week at a time, just worry about moving forward and give yourself the best chance possible each and every week."*

## **On if there was moment where a belief system was created, such as beating Michigan State in 2000:**

*"Uh, you know, you always encourage your guys to work hard and*

*at some point, it sure helps to get some feedback – some positive feedback – and that usually comes in the way of a win. So you know, the first victory was big and that was our first Big Ten victory and it wasn't pretty. I think they about doubled us statistically, but we found a way to win the game and that was ... it's huge. Any time you can win and then experience success, that's a good thing, so that's what you're working for."*

**On if anything jumps out at him when he studies the ineffectiveness Iowa has recently had in the red zone offensively:**

*"I'm more focused on what happened last week and you know, we had a couple of trips down there and came away with three points each and every time. The first half in particular, we had a drop, so there's no guarantee we would've made the first, but we would've given ourselves a chance to and we didn't. The second time down, we had a couple penalties, which made it tougher. We overcame one, which was a major penalty then. It went from a 3rd-and-3/3rd-and-4 situation to a 3rd-and-8/3rd-and-9 situation, which is not good."*

*"So I think when you're playing a good football team like Wisconsin and a lot has been talked about their offense and rightfully so, but they're playing excellent defense and they have the majority of the season. So when you get down in that area and you can't come away with a touchdown, that just ... you're not going to beat them just kicking field goals."*

**On if he challenges his offensive line about getting in the end zone being something they need to improve on:**

*"Well, we challenge our whole team and we do it every week. I mean, that's the objective. You get down there and I don't think anybody wants to settle for field goals. If it's the best you can do, then you do that. But you know, everybody wants touchdowns. That's pretty elementary there."*

**On if he has to bring up the topic of bowl eligibility with his players so they avoid pressing too much during a week like this:**

*"Uh, you know, I don't know. I mean, we don't talk a lot about that in general. You know, I think most of these guys are smart enough. They're in college. I think most of them know if you win six, you're eligible for a bowl. So you know, we're all trying to do that and we're all trying to do better, obviously."*

*"I think we really just try to get our guys to focus on the week at hand. I think most coaches do that. So that's what it's all about. If you want to do better with each season, you better handle each step along the way. The more you put into it, the better the place you'll be in the end."*

**On the challenges of preparing for a 3-4 defense in a short amount of time:**

*"You know, we played one early in the season, which probably helped us a little bit. At least we felt that, but you might not have known it on Saturday. It's just a little bit unique. There are some things, you know, that's probably more protection-ally, a little more mental there. You want to avoid match-ups that aren't good, mainly getting backs matched up on linebackers that might overpower them and over-handle them physically."*

*"But you know, it's a little bit different, it's a little bit unique and it affects the run game as well. When we looked at the film, we didn't do as well as we would've liked to have and that's probably one of the advantages of playing that scheme. But again, there's a reason why I think a lot of people don't do it, because it's easier said than done."*

*"I'm awfully impressed watching Wisconsin first-hand and I was awfully impressed watching Utah State tape, just how well they played it with their scheme. So they're well-coached in all"*

*areas and the defense is no exception there."*

**On if he sees it coming in cycles and whether the 3-4 becomes a more prominent look in college football:**

*"Um, I'm not sure about that. You know, it just doesn't seem like there are a lot of people nationally that are doing it. That doesn't mean it won't come back. But it just doesn't seem that way. But that's just one person's opinion. It has in pro football, for sure."*

**On the impact James Morris has had playing linebacker this season:**

*"You know, he's playing really well. We've got a great group of senior linebackers. All three guys are playing at a really high level and James and Anthony Hitchens have more notable stats only because of the positions they play. We're really proud of all three of those guys. I'm thrilled there. They're doing such a good job."*

*"And then James, on top of it, last week I think he's one of four Big Ten players who were recognized by the National Football Foundation with the post-graduate scholarship. That's such a nice award and that really, to me, epitomizes what this is all about and James certainly embodies all the characteristics you're looking for. He's a tremendous football player, does an unbelievable job in the classroom and is also just a really strong team leader, a really respected team leader."*

*"If I had known the other three recipients personally, I think you'd probably say the same about all four of these guys. But it's just a really nice honor and that was great news last week for him and I'm sure all the other three recipients feel the same way."*

**On comparing the three best teams in the Big Ten – Ohio State, Michigan State and Wisconsin – after playing all three of**

**them:**

*"You know, every game's different and you know, to that point, I guess what I'm trying to make reference to is sometimes you go into a game thinking it's going to be a defensive game and the score ends up being 28-27, so you just never know when teams mesh. I'm going back to Ohio State/Michigan in '06 or '07, it doesn't really matter. You know the game I'm talking about. Those were two outstanding defensive teams and it was 30-something to 40-something, if I remember correctly.*

*"The bottom line is all three of those teams you just mentioned are excellent football teams and they're just really well-coached, they have really good players and they're playing at a high level right now. At least they were against us."*

**On how compelling a match-up Ohio State vs. Michigan State would be for this year's Big Ten Championship:**

*"I think my prediction would be with whoever ends up in the game, it's going to be a really good game. Those are two really good football teams and there's still a lot of football to be played. A lot of things can happen here in the next month. But my prediction would be whoever ends up in that game, it should be a really good contest."*