

Iowa-Nebraska video: Marvin McNutt

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

LINCOLN, Neb. – Iowa senior wide receiver Marvin McNutt had four catches for 29 yards receiving on Friday in the Hawkeyes' 20-7 loss to No. 22 Nebraska at Memorial Stadium.

Iowa at Nebraska (What to expect)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

To get you all ready for Friday's game between Iowa and No. 22 Nebraska, I put together a list of things you ought to know before these two face off at Memorial Stadium.

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

Iowa Hawkeyes (7-4, 4-3) at No. 22 Nebraska Cornhuskers (8-3, 4-3)

Memorial Stadium; Lincoln, Neb.

Nov. 25, 2011

11 a.m. Central

TV: ABC (Bob Wischusen, Bob Davie, Jeannine Edwards)

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

Weather: [53 degrees](#)

Brendan's Three Keys to the Game:

1. Stop the run

Nebraska's duo of Rex Burkhead and Taylor Martinez enters as the fourth and eighth-leading rushers in the Big Ten this season, averaging a combined 175 yards per game on offense. If they get it going on the ground, it could be a long day for the defense.

2. Capitalize in the red zone

The team that does better in the red zone will win this game, period.

3. Remember what's at stake

There might not be a division title to play for any longer, but that doesn't mean this isn't a big game. Iowa has to lay it out on the line in order to win.

11/23/2011: Talkin' Hawks podcast (Iowa at Nebraska)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

Every Thursday during the 2011 football season, *HawkeyeDrive.com* will feature "Talkin' Hawks," a podcast to get you ready for the Hawkeyes' upcoming game and other college football action. ***(With this Thursday being Thanksgiving, the decision was made to post this week's edition on Wednesday).***

This week, we preview Iowa's showdown against No. 22 Nebraska on Nov. 25 at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Neb. Once again, former Iowa defensive back [Chris Rowell](#) (2005-09) joins us during the final segment to provide insight on the Hawkeyes and give his thoughts on all the games featured in this week's [HawkeyeDrive.com Pick 'Em](#). Also joining as a guest this week is Randy Peterson from the *Des Moines Register*.

I'd also like to take this opportunity and thank all of you who have either signed up to become a *HawkeyeDrive.com* member or visit *HawkeyeDrive.com* on a regular basis. Your support is greatly appreciated and I wish you all a happy Thanksgiving. We will have two more editions of "Talkin' Hawks" this season – one next week (Dec. 1), and the other at a time still to be determined.

This week's podcast is approximately 70-75 minutes long. Enjoy.

[Talkin' Hawks podcast \(Iowa at Nebraska\)](#)

***Intro sound byte credit to my former Daily Iowan colleague Ryan Young for putting that together.**

11/22/2011: Iowa football notebook



Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz discusses the Hawkeyes' upcoming game at No. 22 Nebraska during his weekly press conference on Tuesday, Nov. 22, 2011 at the Hayden Fry Football Complex in Iowa City.

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – After 17-and-a-half months of build-up, the week many in both the states of Iowa and Nebraska have long been anticipating has arrived.

On Nov. 25, the Iowa Hawkeyes (7-4, 4-3) and No. 22 Nebraska Cornhuskers (8-3, 4-3) will square off at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln, Neb., for what's being dubbed by the schools as the inaugural "Heroes Game." Neither team remains in contention for the Legends Division crown, which was won by Michigan State last weekend, but that isn't diminishing the significance of this being the first meeting between these two schools since Nebraska first accepted an invitation to join the Big Ten in June 2010.

This game was originally set to take place Nov. 26, but the announcement to move the game up to the Friday after Thanksgiving came last March and was a decision that Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz was supportive of.

“After our experience last year, I was kind of at the conclusion of, why not?” Ferentz said. “It’s a good thing for us. We’re excited to get invited to the party.”

With this game being on a Friday however comes a short week of preparation, something Iowa hasn’t had as a program since the end of the 1966 season. In fact, the last time the Hawkeyes played a regular season game on a day of the week that wasn’t Saturday was the 1987 Kickoff Classic against Tennessee, which was played on a Sunday.

“We won’t have any excuses on Friday,” Ferentz said. “If we don’t play well, it won’t be because of this week. I think we’re in good shape there, and I think our players are in good mental spirit.”

But while the extra day of preparation isn’t there, one of the things to counter that is this being Thanksgiving break at the UI, meaning players don’t have classes and school work to deal with in addition to preparing for a game.

“It’s a big opportunity,” senior linebacker Tyler Nielsen said. “We don’t care if we cut a day off. It’s going to be fun to be able to play and then sit back the next day and watch some of the other games.”

Growing up Husker fans

Two starters on the defensive side of the ball have roots to Nebraska and grew up fans of the Cornhuskers.

Sophomore free safety Tanner Miller has two relatives – his father Brian and his uncle Kevin – who played for Tom Osborne at Nebraska. His father was a linebacker for the Cornhuskers,

while his uncle played along the defensive line. Miller spent part of his childhood living in the state, and said he went to about 3-4 games a season on average as a kid.

Miller said it was a childhood dream of his to play for Nebraska prior to moving to Iowa in eighth grade, which is when he said his affection for the Iowa program first began.

“I never thought growing up that I would ever be coming out of the visitors’ locker room if I was ever going to get a chance to play there,” Miller said. “At first, it will be a little different, but I’ll have time to take it in. After that, it’s all business.”

Meanwhile, senior cornerback Shaun Prater will be heading home, sort of. Prater hails from Omaha, and had the luxury of his final high school game being played inside Nebraska’s Memorial Stadium.

“I just want to make sure we get this win,” Prater said. “I have 30-something family members that’s going be there, so I want to make sure we have a chance to win.

“I have all these memories of growing up watching these guys play, going to the stadium. Hopefully I can definitely get this win.”

Two that could’ve been Huskers

It’s not only players with roots to Nebraska who have stories this week, but those who were also being recruited by Nebraska. Two such players were senior defensive end Broderick Binns and junior quarterback James Vandenberg.

Binns said Nebraska pursued him after he had already committed to Iowa, and it was basically a “Thanks, but no thanks” situation.

“They were going to offer me my junior year and they asked me to come out on a visit,” Binns said. “I was already committed

here, so I was like, 'No, guys. I don't want to waste your time and my time.'"

The odds of Binns playing for the Cornhuskers may have been slim, but the same can't be said about Vandenberg. Nebraska was the first major school to offer Vandenberg a scholarship and while he didn't commit to then-head coach Bill Callahan, he did have serious interest in playing there up until Callahan was fired and replaced by current head coach Bo Pelini.

This was also around the same time, Vandenberg said, that Iowa came in and finally gave him the offer he was waiting for.

"Coach Osborne contacted me and just made sure that I knew my scholarship still stood, but Coach Pelini never contacted me," Vandenberg said. "I was really fortunate to have a chance to pick between the two of them, and I'm glad I chose here."

Reflecting back

While this week's game against Nebraska marks the first time the Hawkeyes and Cornhuskers will meet as Big Ten rivals, this won't be the first time these teams have met in the Kirk Ferentz era.

In fact, Ferentz's first game as head coach at Iowa came in 1999, when Nebraska left Kinnick Stadium with a 42-7 win over the Hawkeyes.

"Nebraska took it to us pretty good," said junior center James Ferentz, who was 10 years old when his father made his Iowa head coaching debut. "We hung in there for about a quarter. I might have to look at the tape. They had a good squad, and obviously we were on the rebound there."

The two teams met at Memorial Stadium the following season, with the Cornhuskers, who were ranked No. 1 in the country that afternoon, prevailing 42-13.

“We weren’t very good then, either, and they were pretty good,” Kirk said. “That wasn’t much fun. Hopefully we’ve closed the gap a little bit. We’ll see. Time will tell.”

Depth depleted at RB

Iowa will be without the services of two freshman running backs when it travels to Nebraska on Friday. Jordan Canzeri will miss his second straight game due to a hamstring injury that prevented him from traveling to West Lafayette, Ind., last weekend for the Hawkeyes’ game against Purdue.

Meanwhile, Mika’il McCall, who returned from his ankle injury and had two carries against the Boilermakers, has been suspended by Ferentz for violating a team policy. Ferentz said McCall was instructed to go home this week and wouldn’t be practicing with the team. No timetable has been set for when McCall will return, but Ferentz said what McCall did to get suspended took place after the team returned from Purdue.

For now, senior running back Jason White is the No. 2 behind sophomore Marcus Coker, while redshirt freshman De’Andre Johnson would be third in the order.

Daniels receives additional sack

Senior defensive tackle Mike Daniels had perhaps his best game of the 2011 season last weekend against Purdue. It turned out to be even better than originally documented.

Daniels was credited Tuesday with a sack in the game that originally belonged to sophomore cornerback B.J. Lowery, so Daniels’ final numbers were nine tackles, five of which were for a loss of yards, and three sacks.

“Something I’ve been focusing on is just increasing my energy level and performance week-by-week,” Daniels said. “It’s nice to see that it’s actually starting to show.”

11/22/2011: Iowa player audio with photos (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – On Tuesday, nine members of the Iowa football team spoke with the media to discuss the Hawkeyes' upcoming game on Nov. 25 at No. 22 Nebraska.

Below is audio from each of the following players – senior linebacker Tyler Nielsen, sophomore free safety Tanner Miller, junior cornerback Micah Hyde, junior center James Ferentz, senior strong safety Jordan Bernstine, senior cornerback Shaun Prater, junior quarterback James Vandenberg, senior defensive tackle Mike Daniels and senior defensive end Broderick Binns:



Tyler Nielsen, Nov. 22, 2011

[Tyler Nielsen, senior linebacker](#)



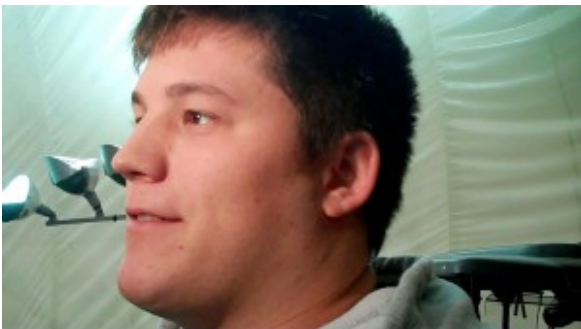
Tanner Miller, Nov. 22, 2011

[Tanner Miller, sophomore free safety](#)



Micah Hyde, Nov. 22, 2011

[Micah Hyde, junior cornerback](#)



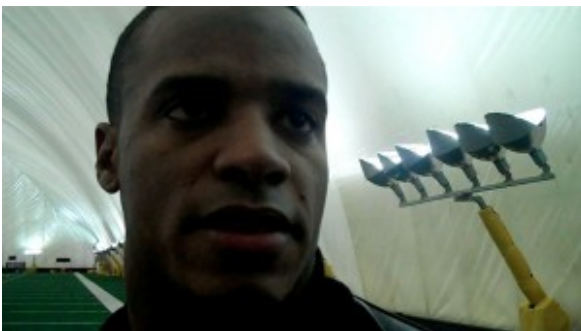
James Ferentz, Nov. 22, 2011

[James Ferentz, junior center](#)



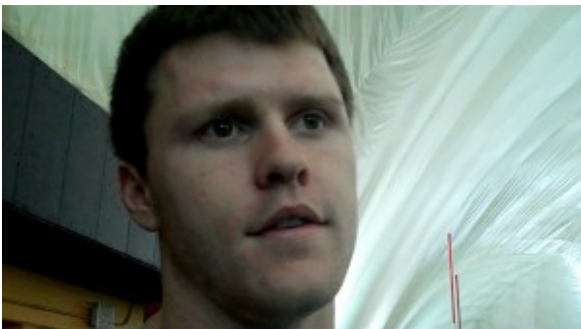
Jordan Bernstine, Nov. 22,
2011

[Jordan Bernstine, senior strong safety](#)



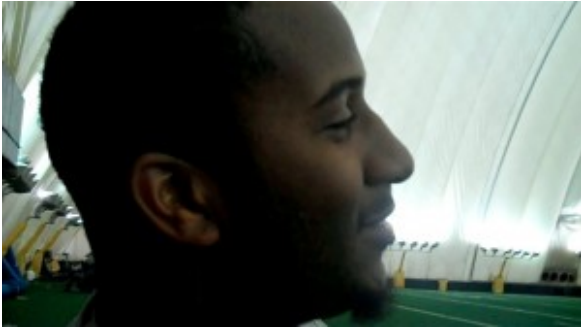
Shaun Prater, Nov. 22, 2011

[Shaun Prater, senior cornerback](#)



James Vandenberg, Nov. 22,
2011

[James Vandenberg, junior quarterback](#)



Mike Daniels, Nov. 22, 2011

[Mike Daniels, senior defensive tackle](#)



Broderick Binns, Nov. 22,
2011

[Broderick Binns, senior defensive end](#)

11/22/2011: Kirk Ferentz teleconference transcript (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

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

Ferentz's opening statement:

"Just to follow up on what you just said [about the Heroes Game], we're proud and honored to be associated with such a great concept. I think the thought behind the trophy is really, I think, extraordinary, and we appreciate Hy-Vee being involved in that, so that's a great thing obviously. On our front, we're real happy to get a win Saturday, whether it be on the road or at home. But being on the road made it that much tougher. I thought both teams competed hard. I'm just happy to get the victory, and now we're right back to it. We face a real challenge traveling over to Nebraska and playing a very, very good Nebraska team. So we're back at it and trying to get ready for a tough game."

On his reaction to not seeing Marvin McNutt on the list for the Biletnikoff Award:

"Well, first of all, I didn't know it came out. Secondly, I didn't know he wasn't on it. So I've got to be honest, I don't pay real close attention to those lists. I don't really know. I know the guy at Oklahoma State is having a heck of a year, but I haven't really paid too much attention nationally to what's going on. But I can just tell you Marvin's playing really well for us. I think he's a great story in that he has pretty much set just about every record you can set around here. As I said last week, three of the players that he moved beyond – Tim Dwight, Danan Hughes and Ronnie Harmon – all went on and had great careers in the NFL. I think the interesting part is if you look at the per-catch, Marvin's a full yard ahead of anyone in that group, and those are three outstanding players. So I can only speak to the players who have played at this school. You know, he certainly has done a great job of distinguishing himself. I think the biggest compliment I can pay Marvin is that he's improving with every week. He just continues to work hard and has done a lot of great things for us. He certainly gives us a lot of energy out there on the field."

On how much interests NFL scouts have shown in McNutt:

“Well, I think they’re looking at a lot of our seniors. I think the thing I would just say is I don’t know where he ranks on the boards or anything like that, but I know he has probably helped his cause, which is the whole idea about playing well throughout your career. Hopefully you improve with each week, and I know that’s something NFL people like to see, and Marvin has done that.”

On Mike Daniels’ performance at Purdue last weekend:

“Yeah, Mike has been nicked up a lot this year, unfortunately, and I think that has affected his performance. But he had a great week of practice last week. It’s probably the first week in quite some time where he really felt 100 percent from start to finish, and it showed up on the field. He played with a lot of energy. He has really been working hard, and he’s a really good football player. That was a big part of us playing well Saturday was some of the energy that he has and our other veteran linemen. Broderick Binns did a great job, too. So having those two guys leading the way up front really helped us.”

On Marcus Coker and how he continues to grow:

“Yeah, I think that’s a key point. He is a young guy. I think he started 4-5 games for us last year and had a slow start this year. We just talked about Mike Daniels. Marcus caught some injuries, too, during camp, and I think finally has become pretty healthy. He has just done a great job. He’s a consistent guy, a really hard-working guy, and again, a player that’s really respected by everybody on our team and the coaching staff just because of his work ethic and his production out there on the field.”

11/22/2011: Kirk Ferentz press conference transcript

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

Below is a PDF from the Iowa sports information department featuring the complete transcript from Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz's press conference on Tuesday in Iowa City:

[Coach Ferentz – 11 22 11](#)

11/21/2011: State of the Big Ten, Volume 43 (premium)

Every Monday, we will be running a weekly series titled "State of the Big Ten," which will be made available to all members of HawkeyeDrive.com. This series of columns will focus on one major headline regarding the conference and go in-depth on the subject at hand.

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

At this time two months ago, Illinois was a top 25 team coming off a giant victory at home over Arizona State and looking like a team that could be a serious threat in the Big Ten.

Yet after starting the 2011 season 6-0, the Fighting Illini enter their contest at Minnesota on Nov. 26 with the possibility looming of them ending the season 6-6, which is what Illinois was last season prior to its win in the Texas Bowl over Baylor.

Between this current five-game losing skid and what transpired during his weekly press conference in Champaign last week, it has become clear that Illinois head coach Ron Zook has worn out his welcome. Keep in mind, this is the same head coach that last July said it was mind-blowing that he was entering his seventh season as the Fighting Illini coach.

Given how Illinois ended last season and the favorable schedule it had entering this season, 8-4 should have been the minimum for this Illinois squad. With eight home games on the schedule (including all but one of your biggest conference showdowns), this season was designed for Zook and the Fighting Illini to succeed, and for awhile there, it looked like they would do just that.

But then came Oct. 15, when Illinois played at home against a reeling Ohio State squad. The Buckeyes came into Memorial Stadium and beat the Fighting Illini despite 51 of their 55 offensive plays from scrimmage coming on the ground. Then things began to snowfall. Illinois went to Ross-Ade Stadium the following week and lost to Purdue. Then it visited Beaver Stadium and lost a game in extremely snowy conditions to a Penn State team it demolished a year ago.

After a bye week to start the month of November, the Fighting Illini lost their last two home games of the season to Michigan and most recently to Wisconsin.

Now Illinois faces a 2-9 Minnesota squad on the road, which on one hand could be a good thing because it's being played in Minneapolis as opposed to Champaign. But while the Golden Gophers are 2-9, they did beat the Fighting Illini at Memorial

Stadium last season. They also beat an Iowa team in their regular season finale at home last year in a game where the Hawkeyes were uninspired, much like Illinois could be this weekend after having lost five straight games.

If the Fighting Illini were to lose to Minnesota, what bowl game is going to want them? Who would want a team that ended the season with six straight losses?

And let's not forget, Illinois has a new athletics director now in Mike Thomas, who was previously at Cincinnati before taking over for the retired Ron Guenther. He might not hesitate pulling the trigger on dismissing Zook after everything that has taken place over the past month. At the end of the day, results matter.

Zook is currently the second-longest tenured coach in the Big Ten behind Iowa's Kirk Ferentz. But at least Ferentz consistently gets Iowa to bowl games on a near-annual basis. If Illinois does still go bowling this season, it will be just the third time it will do so under Zook.

Finally, let's get back to this press conference last week when Zook stormed out after being asked about his job security. The way he handled that made a clear indication that it isn't a matter of if he gets fired at this point, but when.

If and when Zook is no longer coaching Illinois, Thomas is going to need to make a splash because not every season is going to be set up the way 2011 was for the Fighting Illini.

Iowa at Nebraska Game Notes, 2-deep

OFFENSE:

WR 7 McNutt, 83 Staggs

LT 77 Reiff, 78 Donnal

LG 60 Tobin, 68 Scherff

C 53 Ferentz, 59 Bofelli

RG 73 Gettis, 95 Orne

RT 56 Zusevics, 70 Van Sloten

TE 86 Fiedorowicz, 85 Derby/39 Herman

QB 16 Vandenberg, 14 Wienke

WR 6 Davis, 11 Martin-Manley

RB 34 Coker, 3 White

FB 38 Rogers, 92 Gimm

DEFENSE:

DE 54 Bigach/58 Daniel

DT 87 Nardo, 71 Davis

DT 93 Daniels, 99 Gaglione

DE 91 Binns, 96 Forgy

OLB 20 Kirksey, 13 Donatell

MLB 45 Nielsen, 52 Alston

WLB 44 Morris, 31 Hitchens

LCB 28 Prater, 19 Lowery

SS 4 Bernstine, 10 Sleeper

FS 5 Miller, 40 Swanson

RCB 18 Hyde, 2 Castillo

SPECIAL TEAMS:

P 6 Guthrie

PK 96 Meyer, 8 Mossbrucker

LS 61 Kreiter

HOLDER 14 Wienke

PR 18 Hyde, 7 McNutt

KR 4 Bernstine, 11 Matin-Manley

[Iowa vs. Nebraska Game Notes](#)

2011 Big Ten football TV schedule: Week Thirteen

Every week, we will post the TV schedule for all games featuring Big Ten teams. Here is where and when you can watch them this week:

Nov. 25:

Iowa at No. 22 Nebraska, 11 a.m., ABC

Nov. 26:

Ohio State at No. 17 Michigan, 11 a.m., ABC

No. 11 Michigan State at Northwestern, 11 a.m., BTN

Purdue at Indiana, 2:30 p.m., BTN

Illinois at Minnesota, 2:30 p.m., BTN

No. 20 Penn State at No. 15 Wisconsin, 2:30 p.m., ESPN

***All times listed are Central Standard Time.**