

# 2013 Big Ten Media Days – Day Two observations

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

CHICAGO, Ill. – The second and final day of Big Ten Football Media Days concluded at the Hilton Chicago Thursday morning. The format for the second day is much different in that there are no press conferences, podiums, or anything considered “made-for-TV.”

The second day’s format was similar to what it has always been – players and coaches sitting at individual roundtables and reporters walking up to them asking questions for two hours straight. Because I changed my coverage format a little during Day One with the list of takeaways I made hearing each coach, I decided what I’d write for Day Two would be what I’ve typically written on Day One – a list of observations about the conference as a whole and providing a glimpse into what I foresee with the Big Ten in 2013.

## **1. Ohio State is the clear front-runner**

*And this isn’t close, either. This is a team that overcame sanctions and went 12-0 last season – Urban Meyer’s first – despite not being allowed to play in the Big Ten Championship Game or a bowl.*

*Regardless of the legal issues that surfaced at Ohio State earlier this week, the spotlight this week was always going to be on Meyer and it was always going to be on his junior quarterback, Braxton Miller. Right now, Meyer is being viewed as the league’s top coach and Miller the league’s top signal-caller.*

*Aspirations are high in Columbus and rightfully so. This is a team that's going to be viewed nationally as a team that can play in the final BCS National Championship Game before next year's college playoff. The two potential road blocks I see are both road games – Oct. 5 at Northwestern and Nov. 30 at Michigan. The latter is obvious for anyone who has ever watched Big Ten football. The former is a game that features a Northwestern team on the rise after winning its first bowl since the 1949 Rose Bowl. It's also the school's Homecoming game and it's already been scheduled for prime time. Looking at it from an Iowa perspective, this Ohio State/Northwestern game has some parallels to the Hawkeyes' contest against then-No. 1 Ohio State back in 2006 at Kinnick Stadium.*

*Now I don't necessarily think Miller ends up winning the Heisman Trophy (although I can definitely see him being a finalist). But he's the Big Ten's best quarterback right now and I think he'll be enough of a difference-maker again for the Buckeyes, which is why I would be surprised if anyone else wins this conference in 2013.*

## **2. No coach really on the hot seat**

*Every year, there's talk about which coach is on the proverbial hot seat, and in all honesty, I don't think any of the 12 coaches currently in the Big Ten are.*

*Some might suggest Bo Pelini is at Nebraska, but the schedule is tailor-made for the Cornhuskers to be in position for a return to the Big Ten Championship Game. Others might say Tim Beckman and Kirk Ferentz because of how their seasons went last year at Illinois and Iowa, respectively. But I think both their ADs are committed to sticking by them. Most of you who visit or subscribe to this site already know how Ferentz is viewed by his players, and from talking to Illinois defensive tackle Tim Kynard on Thursday, I got the sense Beckman is someone who his players respect a ton.*

*In a league where the last three years have brought in eight new head coaches (nine if you want to count Pelini when Nebraska joined, even though he was already well in place as its head coach beforehand), I have a feeling the offseason will be rather quiet on the coaching front and the only two newbies you'll hear about are the guys currently in place at future members Maryland and Rutgers – Randy Edsall (Maryland) and Kyle Flood (Rutgers).*

### **3. Indiana will go bowling in 2013**

*I said it two years ago after Indiana first hired Kevin Wilson that the move eventually pay off for the Hoosiers and I think this is the season it happens.*

*Indiana has eight games at Memorial Stadium this season. Eight of them, and all eight games are winnable. Of course, part of this hinges on the return of Tre' Roberson at quarterback after he tore his ACL in the Hoosiers' second game of last season against Massachusetts. If he's back healthy, and Wilson said on Wednesday he should be, he's clearly Indiana's best option at quarterback and the pieces are in place. Wilson has the guys he wants in his system. This is a team that hung with the likes of Michigan State and Ohio State last season and beat on some of the worse teams in the league like Illinois and Iowa.*

*Assuming the Hoosiers can handle their business at home (because the four road games they have are absolutely brutal), there's no reason to think Indiana isn't a bowl team this season. Enough is in place for the Hoosiers to get at least that far.*

### **4. November will decide the Legends Division**

*Right now, the consensus would probably be that any one of four teams could win the Legends Division in 2013 – Michigan, Michigan State, Nebraska and Northwestern.*

*And as it turns out, all six of the games involving two of these four teams take place during the final month of the regular season. Nov. 2, the Wolverines and Spartans meet in East Lansing, while the Wildcats and Cornhuskers play in Lincoln. Nov. 9, Nebraska travels to Michigan and looking at both teams' schedules, it's not out of the realm of possibility that both teams could enter that game undefeated (assuming they both win the week before). Nov. 16, Michigan State travels to Nebraska and Michigan plays at Northwestern and then on Nov. 23, the Spartans get their turn at Ryan Field against the Wildcats.*

*Simply put, whichever team of these four plays the best during November is going to be the one playing in Indianapolis against (most likely) Ohio State on Dec. 7.*

## **5. Big Ten will be better, but not much better**

*From an overall perspective, 2012 was a year to forget for the Big Ten. It had two teams that went a combined 20-4 on postseason bans, a team that finished third in its division won the Big Ten Championship Game and its head coach left to take another job three days later, and the league had only one team in a BCS bowl for the first time since 2004.*

*The Big Ten won't be much better in 2013, but it also isn't going to be as bad as it was last year. I do think there will be two BCS bowl teams again this season, and if Ohio State lives up to the hype it'll have, there will probably be two teams in Pasadena over a span of six days.*

*On a national scale, this conference obviously isn't better than the SEC at football, but no one is. After the SEC though, what exactly is there? The Big 12 is going to be more wide open than ever before and both the ACC and Pac-12 have situations where its two best teams play in the same division.*

*The Big Ten is going to end up with a better title game than what transpired last December and I would venture to guess*

*that it gets about 8-9 teams into bowl games as opposed to just seven in 2012. The big question then will obviously be how the conference fares in said bowl games, but the perception around it doesn't appear as bad as it was, which has to be encouraging for the Big Ten going forward.*

## **6. How the Big Ten's Media Days could be going forward**

*When Maryland and Rutgers officially join in 2014, the question I have is what eventually happens with the format of this event going forward.*

*On one hand, there are going to be 14 teams. From a reporter's perspective, if the format stays the same, that's 14 different head coaches plus Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany conducting press conferences all in one day. Believe it or not, burnout can happen and that probably had somewhat to do with why so few questions ended up getting asked of Ferentz during his press conference, which was the 12th and final coaches' presser. A lot is being said, therefore a lot is going to be written and time is obviously of the essence for those on deadline.*

*On the other hand however, there's the Big Ten Kickoff Luncheon that takes place the second day, which is an event for fans of every school that the coaches and players all take part in. As long as this is in place, the format probably won't change.*

*That leads to me asking this – Is the luncheon that necessary? Because if the answer is no, then the Big Ten could do what the SEC does (and did last week) where they make this three days instead of two, but divide it up so certain days feature certain schools and whatever day a school is listed is the only day its coaches and players are available. With two TV networks in place – ESPN and BTN – this is an opportunity I'm sure will at least garner discussion at Big Ten headquarters.*

## **7. What would be my preseason ballot**

*As I do every year when I write this, I put together what would've been my preseason Big Ten ballot had the conference continued providing the media with those as it once did once upon a time. Here's what my list would be for division winners and preseason picks for Big Ten Offensive and Defensive Players of the Year:*

- LEGENDS DIVISION – Nebraska
- LEADERS DIVISION – Ohio State
- OFFENSIVE PLAYER – Braxton Miller, QB, Ohio State
- DEFENSIVE PLAYER – Ra'Shede Hageman, DL, Minnesota

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## **2013 Big Ten Media Days, Day One video – Iowa players**

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

CHICAGO, Ill. – Three Iowa seniors – linebacker James Morris, linebacker Christian Kirksey and offensive tackle Brett Van Sloten – took part [along with head coach Kirk Ferentz](#) in a 30-minute Q&A session with media members during the 2013 Big Ten Football Media Days on Wednesday at the Hilton Chicago.

Below are snippets of video featuring the three players. Morris addressed recently having surgery to remove his appendix, while Kirksey talks about making big hits and how the new “When in doubt, throw them out” rule entering the Big Ten in 2013 could impact defenses and Van Sloten discusses how the offensive line is shaping out to be:

***James Morris:***

*Christian Kirksey:*

*Brett Van Sloten:*

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# 2013 Big Ten Media Days, Day One video – Kirk Ferentz

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

CHICAGO, Ill. – Following his main press conference at the 2013 Big Ten Football Media Days, Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz held a smaller, much less magnified press conference with media at the Hilton Chicago on Wednesday. The Q&A session was approximately 30 minutes long.

Below is video from the first 10 minutes of Ferentz's Q&A session. Among the topics discussed were sophomore wideout Tevaun Smith, player health following summer workouts, experience along both lines and his reaction to [the list from Sports Illustrated's Stewart Mandel earlier this month](#) that labeled him as one of the worst coaches in college football:

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# 2013 Big Ten Media Days – Day One takeaways



Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz responds to a question asked during the 30-minute Q&A session done following his main press conference at the 2013 Big Ten Football Media Days on Wednesday, July 24, 2013 at the Hilton Chicago.

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

CHICAGO, Ill. – In the past whenever I've covered Big Ten Football Media Days, I would listen to head coaches' press conferences and then compile a list of general observations I've made over the course of the day. But the Big Ten had a slightly different format in place this year, one that I found more than welcoming over the course of the day.

This year, for the first time I can remember anyway, coaches and players both were made available to the media on the first day of this two-day event here in the Windy City. In the past, only television reporters got access to players. Each coach and the three players they brought with them were given their own individual podiums for 30 minutes allowing reporters to



fire away with whatever questions they had.

Now the only players I ended up speaking to were the three guys from Iowa – linebackers James Morris and Christian Kirksey and offensive tackle Brett Van Sloten. However, I got different perspectives hearing each head coach than what I've been accustomed to and found myself spending time around all 12 of them Wednesday. So with that in mind, I've compiled a list of takeaways I took hearing each of them speak. I'll go in the order they were presented by the conference:

***Pat Fitzgerald, Northwestern:***

With the Wildcats coming off a season where they won 10 games as well as their first bowl victory since the 1949 Rose Bowl, expectations have risen in Evanston and Fitzgerald has embraced it.

The main takeaway from hearing the Big Ten's second-longest tenured head coach speak Wednesday is that he knows exactly what he has and what his team is capable of. Fitzgerald called his current group of players "the most confident and experienced" he has coached and the momentum surrounding his program has skyrocketed this year. But he also realizes none of it means anything if Northwestern isn't able to take advantage of that positivity currently existing.

"We're excited about the future, but that's talk," Fitzgerald said. "It's all about action now."

***Darrell Hazell, Purdue:***

Hazell enters his first season at the helm at Purdue, but he's far from a Big Ten rookie. Prior to his previous head coaching stint at Kent State, Hazell was the wide receivers coach for seven seasons at Ohio State under the influence of former Buckeye coach Jim Tressel.

From hearing him speak Wednesday, I think Purdue made a very

good hire that could pay off for the Boilermakers down the road. But it appeared rather obvious that he's trying to build a new culture. So much so that he even coined a new nickname for Ross-Ade Stadium earlier this spring – "The Furnace."

"I thought Purdue needed a stadium identity," Hazell (again, a guy who once coached at a school who plays at "The Horseshoe") said. "So I was down in Naples, Fla., with one of our alums. We were talking during breakfast one morning and he started throwing some things out and came up with something-furnace, so I came up, 'The Furnace.'"

### ***Gary Andersen, Wisconsin:***

There are plenty of Big Ten teams whom currently have a quarterback dilemma on their hands. The most intriguing case might very well be at Wisconsin.

Andersen enters his first season as the head honcho in Madison and actually had the experience of coaching at Camp Randall Stadium last year while in charge at Utah State. Except the Badger QB he faced that night is no longer with the program. In fact, he got demoted as the starter shortly afterwards. Joel Stave looked poised to take over for the foreseeable future, only to suffer a season-ending injury that set the stage for Curt Phillips (who was recently given a sixth year of eligibility by the NCAA) to lead Wisconsin to a win in the Big Ten Championship Game and a third straight appearance in the Rose Bowl.

So the question for Andersen is this – go back with the guy who led Wisconsin to a string of victories before getting injured, or stick with a guy who had his struggles, but came up in some huge moments late last season? Despite neither playing against his Utah State squad, Andersen said he knows what both signal-callers are capable of from watching tape. But he also made clear the spot was up for grabs.

"It's a different coaching style, it's a different coaching

staff, it's a whole other 4-5 months, it's a different offense," Andersen said. "So they walked in with a pretty clean slate, but we had an idea of what they had done the year before."

***Tim Beckman, Illinois:***

Before hearing Tim Beckman speak for myself, I noticed he was the "Mr. Worldwide" of Twitter. I didn't see what he said in his main press conference, but heard his trending on the social media site was in correlation to how loud he spoke at the dais.

Voice volume aside, there was something else I took away when I got to hear him – I get the feeling he's more worried about the perception of his team (which wasn't good last season and probably won't be again this season) than he lets on. I asked him directly what he took away from his first season in Champaign and how it might allow him to grow as a coach and he said the following:

*"We're going to be a positive atmosphere. We're not going to let the negativity infiltrate our program."*

Maybe I'm reading too much into it, but I would think after a season like Illinois had, it would almost be better off confronting the criticism head on and using it as a motivator. The question I have about the Fighting Illini going forward is whether it can learn from mistakes when they happen. Because mistakes will happen and criticism will come of them. It happens everywhere.

***Kevin Wilson, Indiana:***

Say what you will about Indiana's football program, which hasn't exactly lit the world on fire over the past two decades. But this is a team going in the right direction, mainly because of the guy in charge – third-year head coach Kevin Wilson.

He wouldn't say his team turned a corner winning back-to-back games against Illinois and Iowa like it did last season, but the guy has a confident aura about him that I feel is going to eventually rub off on his players this season, so much so to the point where I'd be surprised if Indiana wasn't bowl-eligible in 2013.

The most telling moment from the seven minutes or so I was around him Wednesday came when a reporter asked him a question about Nebraska.

*Reporter: What do you think of Nebraska? I know you don't get them this year...*

*Wilson: We'll get them. Championship Game.*

*Reporter: OK. So if you get there...*

*Wilson: IF? I don't answer "If" questions.*

### ***Brady Hoke, Michigan:***

Simply put – Hoke was made to coach at a school like Michigan. I can see why he might rub people the wrong way, especially those in Columbus, Ohio. But there was a moment that stuck with me when I was around Hoke Wednesday afternoon.

It came when a reporter asked him about how [he recently offered tickets to Michigan's game against Ohio State to a 12-year boy in Ohio, a Buckeye fan, who named his recently removed brain tumor "Michigan."](#) Standing there as he explained his act of kindness, Hoke showed a side of himself that people probably rarely see publicly, even up in Ann Arbor.

*"We're glad, in this instance, he beat 'Michigan,'" Hoke said. "That's probably the only time I'll say it, but it's important.*

*"I think we've got a great, unbelievable opportunity to help kids and help people understand this is a great rivalry, it's*

*the greatest there is, and it's competitive and it's passionate. But at the end of the day, there's a heck of a lot more things important than just that rivalry."*

***Bo Pelini, Nebraska:***

Every coach has a buzz word. The one I heard Pelini use repeatedly Wednesday was "potential."

Whether it was in response to a question about a very inexperienced front seven he has on the defensive side of the football, or in response to being asked about having a four-year starter at quarterback in Taylor Martinez, Pelini kept harping on "potential."

But in saying (and repeating) this word, Pelini also threw out a bit of caution.

"At the end of the day, potential doesn't win football games," Pelini said. "It's going to be how they execute and how they compete."

***Mark Dantonio, Michigan State:***

As he explained what he believed led to Michigan State's fall from grace last season where it went 7-6 following two seasons that featured a co-Big Ten title and an appearance in the first Big Ten Championship Game, Dantonio made the comment that he needs "leaders" in 2013.

I asked him to elaborate on that particular part of his statement and the vibe I got from Dantonio on Wednesday is that he has more leadership in place this coming fall not just because he has a larger senior class, but because of how those seniors presently distribute out on the Spartans' depth chart.

"I think when you have a great season, your seniors usually have their best season at that respective school," Dantonio said. "That's what we're looking for. Last year, we had nine. Nine guys. Some of those guys didn't play as much of the

others.

“This year, we have 18 guys and all of them travel. Quite a few of them are starters and all of them have major roles on our football team. Probably 95 percent have a major role.”

***Urban Meyer, Ohio State:***

Between the arrest on murder charges of his former tight end Aaron Hernandez at Florida and [recent legal issues surrounding the Buckeyes earlier in the week](#), the spotlight was clearly on Meyer Wednesday. It was going to be anyway because many see Ohio State as the runaway favorite to win the conference, but this just added to the frenzy.

No coach had a larger crowd surrounding him Wednesday than Meyer, and it wasn't even close. What I found interesting from the time I spent as part of this hoard of reporters around Meyer was that while he said he typically ignores whatever negativity is mentioned with him, it's when “stereotyping” (as he put it) comes into play when he feels he needs to address a matter.

“There have been incredible kids at the University of Florida, there are incredible kids at Ohio State and unbelievable coaches with great hearts,” Meyer said. “A guy makes a mistake and it impacts everybody. We're not the only program in the country that makes mistakes.

“We've made too many. I've self-evaluated and I've evaluated our staff and how we do our business and we're continually making sure we do it the right way. That's never changing.”

***Jerry Kill, Minnesota:***

The theme sticking with me after hearing Kill speak Wednesday is identity. The Golden Gophers are coming off a bowl appearance last season (his second in Minnesota) and has an opportunity to build off that.

Kill understands that success comes with establishing an identity (at least one that's not anything like his predecessor's) and if I were a Golden Gopher fan, hearing the following ought to be somewhat encouraging at this particular point in time:

*"I think that our state is very hungry for success and a good football program," Kill said. "That's our job, to give them a program that resembles the state of Minnesota and I think that's why we're a good fit."*

*"When we were at Northern Illinois, we always recruited that kid that had the edge, the hard nose. I think that's the same thing at Minnesota. It's who we are. Let's be who we are."*

**Bill O'Brien, Penn State:**

A year after inheriting an absolute mess in State College that includes Penn State still having a postseason ban each of the next three seasons, stability is starting to form for O'Brien, at least more of it than he had 12 months ago.

I asked O'Brien a question similar to the one I asked Beckman earlier about what he learned from that first season in charge. The one area in his coaching he believes has significantly improved is with organization. There's familiarity between the players and his staff. There's continuity on his staff. O'Brien is starting to put more of a structure in place, and he believes being more organized has a lot to do with that.

"The main thing I learned from last year was what to be prepared for in the second year," O'Brien said. "On game day, practice days, early training camp, end of training camp, how it relates to class schedules. All these different things."

"I think I'm better than I was organizationally than I was a year ago."

## **Kirk Ferentz, Iowa:**

Ferentz repeatedly brought up being “enthused” and “excited” for this upcoming season and the reason why is simple – inside the trenches.

Two groups he spoke glowingly about Wednesday were his offensive line (which got torpedoed with injuries right when the Hawkeyes’ six-game losing streak to end last season began) and his defensive line (which was very inexperienced in 2012). Not only is there experience now on both lines that didn’t exist last fall, but there’s also depth. And if Iowa does rebound from 4-8 and return back to the identity it has always been known for under Ferentz, these are the two areas to look at.

Ferentz on the offensive line: *“We’ve got five guys back that had starting experience last year and Nolan MacMillan has had some in his past, so I think we’re further along in that regard.”*

Ferentz on the defensive line: *“With all of these up-tempo offenses, it probably wouldn’t hurt to have 8-9 guys in the rotation. So we’re hoping to get to that point.”*

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# **2013 Iowa preseason 2-deep**

## **OFFENSE:**

SE 4 Smith, 8 Shumpert

LT 68 Scherff, 78 Donnal, 76 MacMillan

LG 59 Boffeli, 58 Simmons



C 63 Blythe, 58 Simmons, 57 Gaul

RG 65 Walsh, 74 Keppy

RT 70 Van Sloten, 73 Ward

TE 86 Fiedorowicz, 82 Hamilton, 87 Duzey/80 Krieger-Coble

WR 11 Martin-Manley, 23 Cotton/17 Hillyer

QB 15 Rudock/19 Sokol/16 Beathard

RB 45 Weisman/5 Bullock, 33 Canzeri

FB 34 Cox, 42 Plewa

**DEFENSE:**

LE 95 Ott/98 Hardy, 56 Ekakitie

LT 71 Davis, 67 Johnson

RT 90 Trinca-Pasat, 97 Cooper

RE 79 Alvis, 94 McMinn, 91 Venckus-Cucchiara

OLB 20 Kirksey, 39 Perry

MLB 44 Morris, 52 Alston

WLB 31 Hitchens, 55 Collins/36 Fisher

LCB 19 Lowery, 28 Fleming

SS 37 Lowdermilk/21 Law, 25 Lile

FS 5 Miller, 12 Gair

RCB 27 Lomax, 7 Draper, 35 Smith

**SPECIAL TEAMS:**

P 98 Kornbrath

PK 96 Meyer, 1 Koehn

LS 61 Kreiter

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# **Big Ten reveals Iowa's 2016 and 2017 football schedules**

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

Big Ten football schedules were released for both the 2016 and 2017 season by the conference Thursday and they features Iowa playing games against the five East division teams it will not face during the 2014 and 2015 seasons when Maryland and Rutgers both become official members.

The Hawkeyes' 2016 slate in Big Ten play begins Oct. 1 with Northwestern visiting Kinnick Stadium, which is then followed by a stretch where Iowa plays four of the next five away from home. After consecutive road games at Minnesota on Oct. 8 and at Purdue on Oct. 15, the Hawkeyes return home to face Wisconsin, then play two more road games against Rutgers on Oct. 29 and Penn State on Nov. 5. The contest against Rutgers will mark the first time Iowa faces the Scarlet Knights as a member of the Big Ten, while the game with Penn State will mark the Hawkeyes' first trip to Beaver Stadium in State College, Pa., since 2011.

Iowa then concludes its 2016 season with a home game against Michigan on Nov. 12, a road game at Illinois on Nov. 19 and the annual season finale against Nebraska at Kinnick Stadium on Nov. 25.

In 2017, the only East team Iowa has a rematch with will be Penn State, while Michigan State and Ohio State replace Michigan and Rutgers on the schedule. The Hawkeyes' Big Ten slate that season starts Sept. 30 with a road contest against the Spartans in East Lansing, Mich., followed by a stretch of four out of five at Kinnick Stadium.

Illinois (Oct. 7) and Penn State (Oct. 14) will make consecutive trips to Iowa City before the Hawkeyes head back on the road Oct. 21 to play at Northwestern. After that game in Evanston, Minnesota comes to town Oct. 28, followed by Ohio State on Nov. 4. Iowa then finishes with two of three on the road, starting with a trip to Madison, Wis., on Nov. 11 to face the Badgers. The home finale will be Nov. 18 against Purdue and the regular season finale Nov. 24 takes place at Nebraska.

Below are the new complete 2016 and 2017 schedules for Iowa, including non-conference games in 2016:

**2016:**

9/3/2016 – vs. North Dakota State

9/10/2016 – vs. Iowa State

9/17/2016 – vs. Central Michigan

10/1/2016 – vs. Northwestern

10/8/2016 – at Minnesota

10/15/2016 – at Purdue

10/22/2016 – vs. Wisconsin

10/29/2016 – at Rutgers

11/5/2016 – at Penn State

11/12/2016 – vs. Michigan

11/19/2016 – at Illinois

11/25/2016 – vs. Nebraska

**2017:**

9/30/2017 – at Michigan State

10/7/2017 – vs. Illinois

10/14/2017 – vs. Penn State

10/21/2017 – at Northwestern

10/28/2017 – vs. Minnesota

11/4/2017 – vs. Ohio State

11/11/2017 – at Wisconsin

11/18/2017 – vs. Purdue

11/24/2017 – at Nebraska

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## **6/25/2013: Iowa player audio with photos (premium)**

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

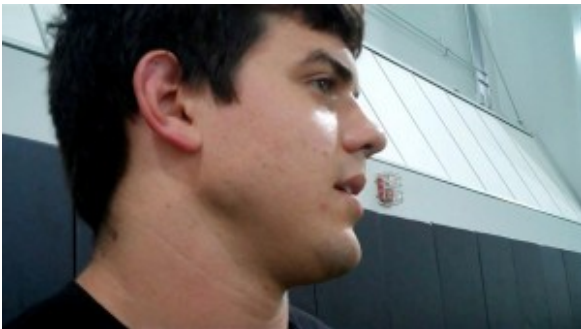
IOWA CITY, Iowa – Seven members of the Iowa football team spoke with the media Tuesday inside the Kenyon Practice Facility to discuss summer workouts and a variety of other topics.

Below is audio from five of those seven players – senior offensive lineman Conor Boffeli, senior linebacker James Morris, junior running back Mark Weisman, senior linebacker Anthony Hitchens and senior cornerback B.J. Lowery:



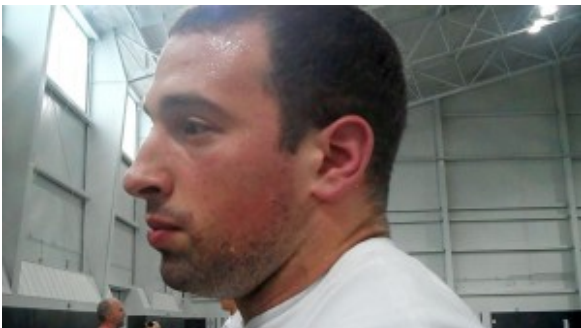
Conor Boffeli, June 25, 2013

[Conor Boffeli, senior offensive guard](#)



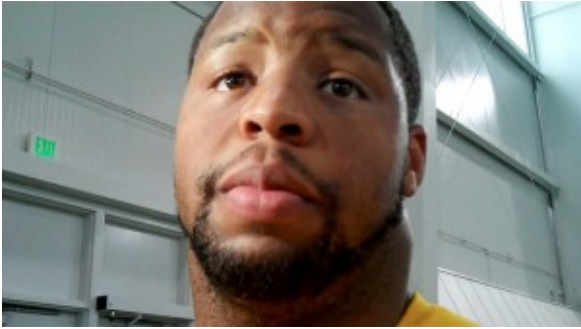
James Morris, June 25, 2013

[James Morris, senior linebacker](#)



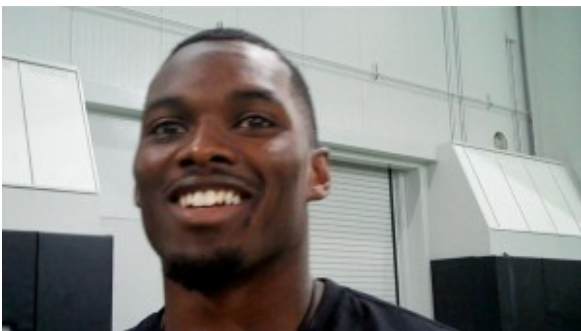
Mark Weisman, June 25, 2013

[Mark Weisman, junior running back](#)



Anthony Hitchens, June 25,  
2013

[Anthony Hitchens, senior linebacker](#)



B.J. Lowery, June 25, 2013

[B.J. Lowery, senior cornerback](#)

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## 6/25/2013: Kirk Ferentz audio



Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz  
discusses a variety of

matters with the local press on Tuesday, June 25, 2013, at the Kenyon Practice Facility in Iowa City.

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz met with the media Tuesday afternoon inside the Kenyon Practice Facility and discussed a variety of topics, ranging from the Hawkeyes' summer workouts to which areas of the team he believes will be better in 2013 following a 4-8 campaign in 2012. Ferentz also provided an update on redshirt freshman linebacker Dalton Shaul, who was hospitalized June 14 following an accident that involved him and his moped.

Below is audio of Ferentz's meeting with the press Tuesday afternoon in its entirety (approximately 15 minutes):

[Kirk Ferentz \(6/25/2013\)](#)

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## **COMMENTARY: Shake-up with new Big Ten bowls unnecessary (premium)**

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

One month after announcing a new partnership beginning in 2014 with the Pinstripe Bowl, the Big Ten made two more bowl

alliances official Monday by announcing agreements with the Pac-12 to compete in both the Holiday and Kraft Fight Hunger Bowls.

The Holiday Bowl is played annually in San Diego, Calif., while the Kraft Fight Hunger Bowl – currently played at AT&T Park in San Francisco – will be held down the road at the new Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara beginning in 2014, when the six-year deal begins.

The one caveat revealed with the Holiday Bowl agreement specifically is that no team will play more than twice in the game over the six-year span that deal is in effect. In other words, the Big Ten is going to have more of a say than ever before with regards to which Big Ten teams play in what bowl games.

While Delany deserves credit for being able to tie the conference in with bowl games played in more ideal locations such as the state of California, the Big Ten taking control from the bowls seems unhealthy if these bowl games are going to continue on once the new College Football Playoff replaces the current BCS structure after this upcoming 2013 season.

Yes, there's the "fatigue" factor of schools' fan bases not wanting to go to the same bowls or same destinations in consecutive years. But unless the league is going to be cut and dry about who goes where (i.e. Big Ten champion goes to the Rose Bowl, Big Ten runner-up goes to the Capital One Bowl, third place goes to Holiday Bowl no matter what, etc.), the decisions of who goes where should be made solely by those running the bowl games.

They're not intentionally trying to anger fan bases by bringing certain teams back over and over again. They're looking for the best possible match-ups. With stipulations like what's being done with some of these bowls the Big Ten is now aligning itself with, that decision-making power is being



taken away and quite honestly, that shouldn't be the case.

Let's say for argument's sake Wisconsin goes to the Holiday Bowl in 2014 and 2017. If the Badgers can be a viable candidate for the Holiday Bowl again in 2018, why should the game be prevented from taking Wisconsin a third time if it helps present the best possible match-up that particular season?

There's also a new wrinkle Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany revealed Monday afternoon that the Big Ten is going to set up tiers for its bowl selection process. The first tier would consist of the Holiday, Capital One and Outback Bowls, the second tier would feature games such as the Pinstripe and Kraft Fight Hunger. Now what if there's a season where the conference is top heavy enough that whoever finishes fifth, for example, suddenly ends up in a "second-tier" game because of something like the new arrangement with the Holiday Bowl? It's a hypothetical, but not impossible to consider.

In theory, what the Big Ten and other conferences are wanting to do makes sense. But it's easier said than done. And let's be honest – if you're a team that doesn't win your conference and take part in the college football playoff, does it really make that much of a difference if you end up going to the same bowl multiple times over a 5-6 year span?

There was a time where bowl games were considered "a reward." But there are so many of them today that when a coach of a 6-6 team is saying, "Any bowl is a good bowl," or "We're thrilled to be in the Bowl," it rings hollow. Unless one has some sort of association with the city of Detroit, being there for a bowl game in late December sounds less than ideal.

That being said though, fans shouldn't direct anger at a bowl if their 6-6 or 7-5 team ends up in said bowl game twice in a row or three times out of four years and neither should media whose job it is to cover said 6-6 or 7-5 team. As long as the

bowl system still exists, there's always going to be something.

One last thing to consider is this – travel. While going to places like Florida and California in late December/early January sound like fun, it's also not going to be any cheaper for fans to travel to these places. Even New York City around New Year's Eve is going to be a chore.

No matter how much “freshness” is emphasized in bowl selection order, there's no guarantee of a school that plays in four different bowl games over four years selling out its entire ticket allotment simply because, “Hey, it's not Orlando two years in a row.” Not to mention that as long as ticket prices continue going up at most of these schools playing in these bowl games, fans are probably going to have to prioritize how much money they spend watching their favorite school even more than they already are doing now.

The Big Ten having more say in who plays where isn't going to change perception or reality. The perception right now is the conference is inferior to others in football and the reality is unless the quality of play drastically improves, the conference dictating who goes where might actually lead to worse match-ups as opposed to better ones.

As long as a bowl system remains in place, bowls (presuming they're not being operated like the Fiesta and Insight Bowls once were) should be allowed to handle their business in terms of who they invite to their respective games. The repeat trips shouldn't be a referendum on the bowls, but rather on the football programs involved.

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# Shaul in stable condition following accident

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

Iowa redshirt freshman linebacker Dalton Shaul is in stable condition at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics following a vehicle accident June 13 in Iowa City, the school announced in a release Friday afternoon.

The Oskaloosa native joined the football team as a walk-on in 2012. No other details regarding the accident have been released at this time.