

Iowa vs. Nebraska (What to expect)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

To get you all ready for Friday's game between Iowa and No. 17 Nebraska, 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 (4-7, 2-5) vs. No. 17 Nebraska Cornhuskers (9-2, 6-1)

Kinnick Stadium; Iowa City, Iowa

Nov. 23, 2012

11 a.m. Central

TV: ABC (Mike Patrick, Ed Cunningham, Jeannine Edwards)

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

Weather: [33 degrees; breezy weather; winds from NW around 23 MPH](#)

Brendan's Three Keys to the Game:

1. Dictate time of possession

After the horrendous display from Iowa's defense last weekend in Ann Arbor and given the offensive playmakers Nebraska features this week, time of possession will be important for the Hawkeyes if their going to have any chance. The offense

has to get something going, whether it's Mark Weisman on the ground or the tight ends being heavily involved like they were against Michigan. Iowa has to be able to pick up first downs and keep Nebraska's offense on the sidelines Friday.

2. Force turnovers

Whenever the defense is out on the field, it has to be able to force Nebraska turnovers. Remarkably, Iowa still has the best turnover margin of any team in the Big Ten. While Taylor Martinez has made enormous strides as the Cornhuskers' signal-caller, his passing mechanics still haven't significantly improved. The Hawkeyes are going to need to force a turnover or two early on, not only to keep themselves in the game, but to maybe get to Martinez's head a little as well.

3. Use wrinkles to keep Huskers guessing

Iowa's season ends Friday. There's no bowl game. It's a rivalry game with a trophy at stake, but in the grand scheme of things, the Hawkeyes have nothing to lose while a lot is on the line for Nebraska. Regardless of whether Iowa sticks to its main core of starters for four quarters or mixes it up personnel-wise to get younger and more inexperienced players some game action, it might as well throw its entire arsenal at the Cornhuskers on both sides of the ball. That means call plays offensively that haven't been used this season and defensively throwing in some exotic blitzes and go nickel or dime more frequently. Anything that could catch Nebraska off guard could prove to be of benefit for Iowa, because sticking to the same script is only going to result in an easy Cornhusker win.

11/21/2012: Talkin' Hawks podcast (Iowa vs. Nebraska)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

Every Thursday during the 2012 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 game on Nov. 23 against the No. 17 Nebraska Cornhuskers at Kinnick Stadium. Former Iowa defensive back [Chris Rowell](#) joins me to provide insight on the Hawkeyes and share his thoughts on all the games featured in this week's [HawkeyeDrive.com Pick 'Em](#). Rowell will be a part of the podcast every week all season long.

Joining as a guest this week in the podcast's middle segment is Brandon Vogel, who covers Nebraska for [Hail Varsity](#). This week's edition is approximately 80 minutes long, so enjoy:

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

Twitter handles:

HawkeyeDrive.com – [@HawkeyeDrive](#)

Brendan Stiles – [@thebstiles](#)

Chris Rowell – [@Crowell34](#)

Brandon Vogel – [@brandonlvogel](#)

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

11/20/2012: Iowa football notebook



Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz discusses the Hawkeyes' upcoming season finale against No. 17 Nebraska during his weekly press conference held Tuesday, Nov. 20, 2012, at the Hayden Fry Football Complex in Iowa City.

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa – While the Iowa Hawkeyes continue their preparations for their Black Friday finale against No. 17 Nebraska, the story reaching the Hayden Fry Football Complex Tuesday afternoon was the same one making its way around the entire collegiate athletic landscape.

Over the past 48 hours, the Big Ten has increased in size to 14 schools with the additions of Maryland and Rutgers to the conference. While a timetable hasn't been determined yet for

when Rutgers starts competing athletically in the conference, Maryland is set to officially join in 2014.

“It’s a sign of college football, sign of the times,” Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz said. “It’s where we’re all going, it seems like. One thing that seems inevitable is change. It’s going to happen.”

Ferentz reiterated his confidence and support in Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany, saying he has “done a great job of providing our conference with great leadership.” Beyond that though, he said very little about expansion and how it would affect Iowa in the future.

Senior cornerback Micah Hyde won’t be around to play either the Terrapins or Scarlet Knights. But the Fostoria, Ohio native did mention how unusual it is to wrap his head around, especially while still getting used to Nebraska in its second season competing in the Big Ten.

“Obviously, growing up being a Big Ten fan, you know the teams that have been in it before,” Hyde said. “Now it’s Nebraska, so that’s kind of weird. Now you’re adding Maryland and Rutgers.

“It’s going to be weird. You’re not going to be used to it for a while. But it’s going to add on and people are going to start getting used to it.”

Preparing for Black Friday

Iowa currently sits at 4-7, knowing full well that a bowl game won’t be in the picture this year. But that hasn’t changed the mindset of Ferentz or any of his players, even when that bowl preparation time in December isn’t there to develop younger and inexperienced team members.

“We’ll approach this game like we would any. We’ll do our best to win this game,” Ferentz said. “I didn’t want to alter who

goes in and that type of thing.”

Senior wide receiver Keenan Davis described Friday as “Iowa’s bowl game,” between it being the end of the Hawkeyes’ season and the Heroes Game trophy introduced prior to last year’s meeting being at stake between these two teams. Adding to that is the role of spoiler Iowa could play, as a Nebraska win secures the Cornhuskers’ spot in Indianapolis for the Big Ten Championship Game against Wisconsin on Dec. 1.

“It’s a rival game. It’s a trophy game,” Davis said. “We’re not going to go out there and be like, ‘Oh, it’s our last game. Woe is us.’ We’re going to go out and try to win that trophy.”

If Iowa’s going to have any chance though, one obstacle it will have to overcome is the short week of preparation with this game being played on Friday. These teams met on Black Friday last season, with the Hawkeyes on the losing end of a 20-7 outcome where Iowa looked flat in all three phases.

Even with the week off from classes, the players say they know the importance of managing time accordingly.

“You got to be smart as an athlete,” junior linebacker James Morris said. “We’re lucky this week to be off from school and have more time to focus on the things I need to. But we lose 24 hours.

“Twenty-four hours of doing nothing makes a big difference in the grand scheme of recovery. When you only have seven days to recover, now we only have six. It makes a difference, but we’ve just got to be smart and have a plan.”

Facing a more confident Martinez

One of the biggest reasons for the Cornhuskers’ success in 2012 has been the play of their junior quarterback, Taylor Martinez.

Perhaps best known outside Nebraska for his poor throwing mechanics over the course of his career, Martinez has wowed this fall with his arm, having thrown for 2,420 yards and being among the league leaders in pass efficiency. Even more remarkable is that he has done this while Nebraska has been mostly without the services of running back Rex Burkhead, who has been injury-plagued throughout 2012.

Morris and Hyde both made the same comment Tuesday about how they've noticed a more confident Martinez while studying him on film.

"He's more sure of himself and I think it really starts with him," Morris said. "They're better than last year. They would agree with that and I'm not going to deny it, either."

In addition to what Martinez has done through the air this season, he has still proven to be just as effective on the ground. He has 792 yards rushing thus far and combined with his passing total, Martinez leads the conference in total offense averaging 292 yards per game by himself.

"If he gets out of contain, he's a dangerous player. And he can hurt us with his arm now, too," Hyde said. "You got to contain and I think that's the biggest word of the season, is 'contain.'

"It's going to be a tough task."

Seniors' last hurrah

For 19 Hawkeye players, Friday will mark the final time they ever wear an Iowa uniform. Like past seniors before them, they'll be introduced individually before the Hawkeyes' home finale and get a chance to be greeted on the field by family members.

It will be a unique experience for senior center James Ferentz, who is the fourth of Kirk & Mary's five children and

the second of their sons to have a Senior Day inside Kinnick Stadium.

As for senior quarterback James Vandenberg, Friday will bring his career somewhat full-circle. Before signing his letter of intent with Iowa back in February 2008, the Keokuk native was being courted heavily by Nebraska during the recruiting process.

“That is cool. I’ve had a lot of experience with that program through the recruiting process,” Vandenberg said. “Obviously, they’re a tremendous program. To be able to end my career against them and just have the opportunity is something I’m really going to be looking forward to.”

Once they walk off the field Friday, it’ll be for good for some of the seniors. Vandenberg wants to follow in his father’s footsteps working in an E.R., while defensive tackle Steve Bigach looks to start medical school next fall.

Then there are those like senior strong safety Tom Donatell. He won’t be playing on Sundays next year, but like his father Ed – who is the defensive backs coach for the San Francisco 49ers – Tom said he intends to keep football a big part of his life and pursue the coaching business.

“I want to be a coach. I want to finish up Friday and then kind of get caught up in the coaching aspect of it,” Donatell said. “We’ve had a couple of talks with a couple places – GA positions, small schools, stuff like that. It’s an exciting time, but right now, I’m really just focused on this game and trying to get a win.”

Familiar face on the opposing sidelines

Among the coaches who will be roaming the Nebraska sidelines Friday afternoon at Kinnick Stadium is its defensive line coach, Rick Kaczynski.

If the name sounds familiar, well, it should. Kaczenski had previously spent seven years working on Ferentz's staff at Iowa, including five seasons as the Hawkeyes' defensive line coach. A week prior to Iowa's contest against Oklahoma in the Insight Bowl last December, Kaczenski had made the decision to leave Iowa.

Two days following that announcement, Kaczenski was brought on board by Nebraska head coach Bo Pelini and even coached in the Cornhuskers' 30-13 loss to South Carolina in last season's Capital One Bowl.

When asked about Kaczenski leaving to join Iowa's newest rival, Ferentz said he didn't think much of it aside from wishing him well and added that he didn't hold any grudge towards Kaczenski for joining Pelini's staff at Nebraska.

"People move and you really can't control where they go," Ferentz said. "I've said this before: I try not to decide for our staff members what's best for them or what's in their best interest.

"At the end of the day, you have to do what's best for you. That's one thing this profession teaches and I think all professions probably do."

Fisher family divided

While redshirting last season, linebacker Cole Fisher made the trip to Lincoln, Neb., for the Hawkeyes' inaugural Big Ten showdown with the Cornhuskers. But not because he was part of Iowa's 70-man travel roster.

Cole's older brother, Sean, is a starting linebacker for the Cornhuskers and was last season when Nebraska defeated Iowa. When they met inside Memorial Stadium last November, he sat in the visitors' section along with his father, while his mother and other relatives sat with the Nebraska crowd.

Now that Fisher will actually be on the Iowa sidelines for Friday's game, there's even more of a family divide for this year's game.

"They'll be cheering for both of us," Fisher said about his parents' rooting interests. "I'm sure my mom will whip out her half-and-half, Iowa and Nebraska shirt and all that fun stuff."

While his family members haven't been able to decide who will sit where, Fisher said it would be half-and-half like it was one year ago. He also said that playing his older brother's team hasn't kept the two of them from talking to one another, even as recently as Monday night.

"My little brother just played in the state championship game in high school, so we talked about that," the Omaha native said. "I'd talk to him right now. Usually, when I'm looking for some advice, he has been through this whole thing and been through a very similar situation, so whenever I have a hard time, I'll ask him and see what he did."

Even though the Fisher brothers won't actually see each other directly on the gridiron at the same time, having the opportunity to make add to this rivalry on a personal level is something Cole appreciates.

"Now actually being in it, it definitely means a lot more," he said. "Hopefully, I play well. It's going to be cool."

11/20/2012: Iowa player audio

with photos (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

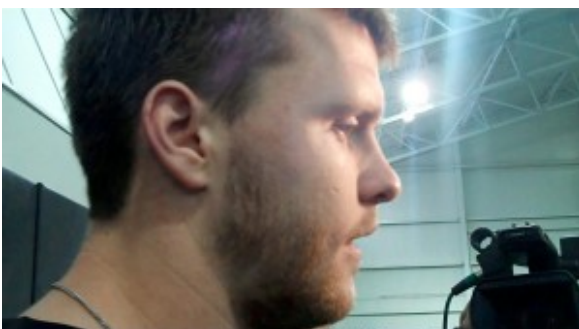
IOWA CITY, Iowa – On Tuesday, 10 members of the Iowa football team spoke with the media to discuss the Hawkeyes' final game of the 2012 season on Nov. 23 against No. 17 Nebraska.

Below is audio from each of the following players – senior defensive tackle Steve Bigach, senior quarterback James Vandenberg, senior strong safety Tom Donatell, junior free safety Tanner Miller, redshirt freshman linebacker Cole Fisher, junior tight end C.J. Fiedorowicz, junior linebacker James Morris, senior cornerback Micah Hyde, senior center James Ferentz and senior wide receiver Keenan Davis:



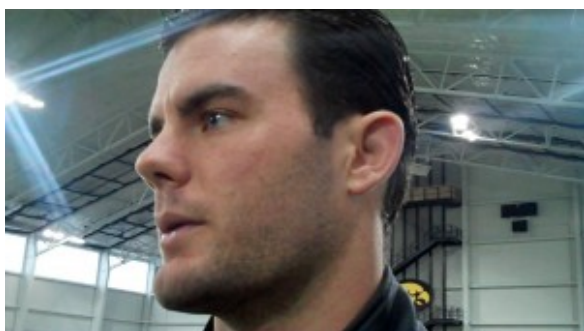
Steve Bigach, Nov. 20, 2012

[Steve Bigach, senior defensive tackle](#)



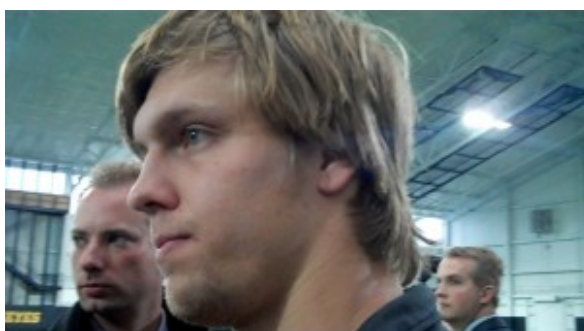
James Vandenberg, Nov. 20, 2012

[James Vandenberg, senior quarterback](#)



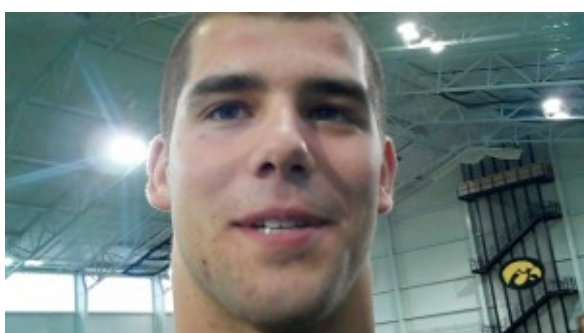
Tom Donatell, Nov. 20, 2012

[Tom Donatell, senior strong safety](#)



Tanner Miller, Nov. 20, 2012

[Tanner Miller, junior free safety](#)



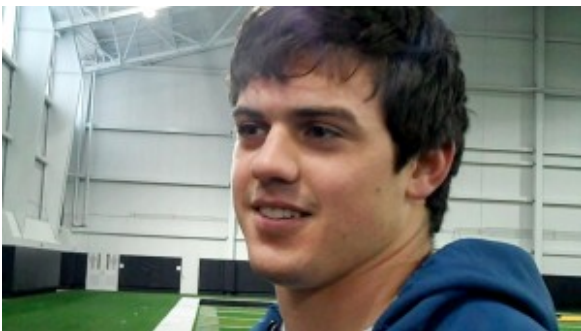
Cole Fisher, Nov. 20, 2012

[Cole Fisher, redshirt freshman linebacker](#)



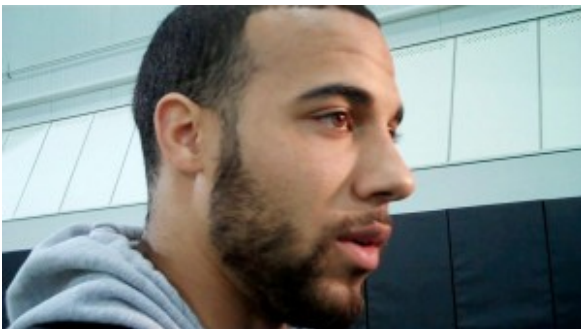
C.J. Fiedorowicz, Nov. 20, 2012

[C.J. Fiedorowicz, junior tight end](#)



James Morris, Nov. 20, 2012

[James Morris, junior linebacker](#)



Micah Hyde, Nov. 20, 2012

[Micah Hyde, senior cornerback](#)



James Ferentz, Nov. 20, 2012

[James Ferentz, senior center](#)



Keenan Davis, Nov. 20, 2012

[Keenan Davis, senior wide receiver](#)

Rutgers becomes Big Ten's 14th member

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

As speculated, the Big Ten announced Tuesday that Rutgers University would become the 14th member to join its conference, doing so one day after the University of Maryland was accepted in by the Big Ten Council of Presidents and Chancellors.

With Rutgers coming on board, the Big Ten has now further enhanced its footprint into the East Coast by entering the tri-state market that's prominently highlighted by New York City, which is approximately 40 miles from Rutgers' campus in New Brunswick, N.J.

"This is exactly the right conference for Rutgers," president Robert Barchi said in a statement released by the Big Ten just before the school conducted a press conference on its campus Tuesday afternoon.

Rutgers has been a member of the Big East since 1991. No timetable had been given for when Rutgers would begin competing athletically in the Big Ten. Maryland's move to the conference is effective July 1, 2014.

Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany denied an ESPN report Monday saying Maryland and Rutgers would both join the Leaders Division with Illinois switching over to the Legends, saying the athletics directors will make a decision on that sometime in 2013. He also attempted to downplay the role of the Big Ten Network in the conference's ability to expand to the East Coast during a teleconference held Tuesday.

"It didn't drive the decision. The decision was made on a more macro-level," Delany said. "What drove us to go someplace else was just the fact there was a paradigm shift and that institutions that get together for academics or athletics have got to be cognizant that they're competing for students, they're competing for student-athletes, they're competing for research dollars, they're competing for the best levels of collaboration.

"In looking at Maryland and looking at Rutgers, it's obvious there are rich demographics here."

As far as how divisions will be realigned, the same criteria as before when Nebraska joined in 2010 are expected to be in play – competitive balance, rivalries, geography. Delany

acknowledged that geography might have to play a bigger role this time around as a result of the conference expanding East.

“We are a national conference in many ways, but even geographically, we’re spread,” Delany said. “As a result, I think geography will have to play a more important role in the evolution of the next divisional structure.”

11/20/2012: 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 20 12](#)

11/20/2012: 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:

"We've got a busy week here this week with a short week playing Friday, so that's one challenge. Then the bigger challenge is we're playing a team that's just having a tremendous season. Nebraska's playing well, basically in all three phases. They've got an awful lot of good football players that are well-coached and they're playing at a really high level right now."

On how the additions of Maryland and Rutgers helps Big Ten football:

"You know, I haven't thought too much about it. I didn't catch wind of it really until late in the weekend. You know, first of all, I think it's a sign of the times. Clearly, the landscape in college football has changed very dramatically in the last 20 years. I think this was a continuation of that."

"Basically, the thing I can tell you is I think the people who would make those decisions in our conference do a fantastic job. We've got great leadership, starting with Commissioner [Jim] Delany. Overall, I think it's going to be the best thing for our conference, just like adding Penn State years ago and adding Nebraska most recently. It has proven to be good for the conference."

On whether he'd like to see the game against Nebraska remain on Black Friday:

"You know, it's a little bit like the last question. I haven't thought too much about that. The game is scheduled Friday and we haven't had much time to think about anything other than just trying to get ready for it. We'll have a lot of things to think about after the season's over and that will be one thing on the list. But for now, we're playing Friday at 11 o'clock"

and we're excited about that. We have a lot of work to do."

On the attitude of his players knowing that Friday is their final game for the season:

"I don't know how you measure one year towards the other, but I think we're all excited to have an opportunity to play against a very, very good football team and we haven't had too much time to think about anything. Sunday was like normal Sundays. We came in and reviewed the film from Saturday.

"The biggest difference is we didn't have Monday. With the players being away, we got going and got back on the field yesterday, had a really good practice. So I think the players, like you'd hope they are, are very excited about playing this week."

On how he'd characterize Iowa's rivalry with Nebraska:

"Well, you know, I don't know. It's called that for obvious reasons. We're border rivals, and what have you. I think we played a four-game series – I think I'm correct in saying – back in the late '70s/early '80s. A two-year series in '99 and 2000. And then this will be the second game in what will be a long-standing series.

"So it's not quite like the Nebraska-Oklahoma rivalry through the '70s, '80s, etc. But it makes perfect sense. I thought that was part of the attractiveness with expansion. It was great for our conference, but certainly it affected us and made perfect sense that way. So that's kind of where it's at right now and I think it should run into a great series."

On what the approach to this game is with postseason play out of reach:

"The same as it would be if we were undefeated or haven't won. We're going to do our best to get ready for this ball game knowing that they're an outstanding football team. Nebraska's

really good. We've seen them on film during the course of the year against other opponents and, you know, they're just playing at a very, very high level. They've got good players, they're well-coached and most importantly, they play well on Saturdays. So we're very, very impressed with them."

On how he goes around filling out ballots for Big Ten awards:

"Basically, what we've done traditionally is we'll have the defensive staff go through the offensive players and then vice versa. Then it makes for interjecting thoughts. But typically, both staffs will come up with who they think and then I'll kind of go from there.

"But for the most part, I lean on what they say. You know, you make mental notes. I think everybody does during the course of the season. Some of the players you play against just really jump out at you and that's pretty obvious. But it's kind of a collaborative effort."

On which guys have stood out to him this season:

"There are a lot of guys who are good players. The first guy I'm thinking about would be Jordan Hill from Penn State. No. 47. Every film I've seen, he's just a tremendous football player. But there are a lot of them out there. There are a lot of good players that are going to be on the field this weekend."

On if he's concerned about Iowa fans not necessarily traveling to games at Maryland or at Rutgers:

"Oh boy. You know, I haven't even thought about that at all. In fact, that would probably be the last thing I think about. But, you know, one thing about Iowa, there are Iowans everywhere. People that have some association who lived in the state or went to school here. There are Iowans everywhere.

"So it's a little bit like when I was in Cleveland. My first

year in Cleveland, we played in Seattle and there were "Browns Backers" everywhere that turned out at the Seattle Kingdome. It reminded me a lot of coaching at Iowa because everywhere you go, there are Iowa people turning out and supporting other teams. That's one of the neat things about this institution."

On if there's something lost in growing beyond what the Big Ten has traditionally been:

"Um, I mean, yes and no. You could argue that the NFL's different since free agency. Other teams that have played well through decades. But those days are gone in the National Football League. Not the same as, but I guess the parallel there is that it's not the Big Ten anymore or Big 8 or whatever."

"I mean, it's just a sign of the times. There are a lot of reasons for it, but they don't need to be discussed right now. But it's just the way college football is transitioning. I'm not a great barometer, but it seems like everybody just goes with the flow and it's happening in a lot conferences where there has been change. So you just go with the flow and go with it."

On how special it is having his son James being recognized during Iowa's Senior Day:

"Well, yeah it is. You know, the first thing I would say, well, two things. First of all, we did have two daughters, which nobody really seems to take note of or what have you. But we do have two daughters and my wife and I are very proud of all five of our kids. This one just happens to play football and he has had a really nice career here."

"He has done a great job. I'm really proud of him. He has grown a lot. Not only as a player, but as a person. I could say that about all 19 of our seniors. I think they've all really grown and done nice jobs here and I'm really proud of each and every one of them."

“So it’s a special day on that side. I’m like any parent in that way. I’m one of 19 people who are parents this weekend, so it’s a little bit of a special moment.”

BREAKING NEWS: Rutgers to join Big Ten

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

Rutgers University and Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany will conduct a press conference Tuesday in Piscataway, N.J., announcing that the school will become the Big Ten’s 14th member effective in 2014.

This announcement comes one day after Maryland was granted admission into the conference by the Big Ten Council of Presidents & Chancellors. Rutgers has been a member of the Big East since 1991.

The Big Ten Network will have live coverage of Rutgers’ press conference at 12:45 p.m. Central.

***Be sure to visit *HawkeyeDrive.com* later for more on this development.**

11/19/2012: State of the Big Ten, Volume 74 (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

On July 1, 2014, the University of Maryland will officially become the 13th member of the Big Ten Conference after its application to join the conference was approved by its Council of Presidents and Chancellors on Monday.

This move became official Monday and another one might become official Tuesday with Rutgers University reportedly seeking to join the Big Ten in 2014 as well. Once again, this conference has sent shockwaves nationally.

But unlike Nebraska's addition in 2010, there are some major differences at play here. When Nebraska joined, the Big Ten needed one more school in order to be allowed to conduct a championship game in football. Nebraska was added in large part because of its tradition of a major football power in the Big 8, which later became the Big 12.

Adding Maryland and Rutgers isn't being done for these purposes. The championship game is set and won't be going away anytime soon. This is strictly financial. From the Big Ten's vantage point, expanding to the East allows it to reach into giant U.S. markets like Washington, D.C. and New York City. Getting the Big Ten Network on platforms across those two cities only makes the conference brand stronger than it

already is.

Although Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany had said on multiple occasions he was content with 12 schools being part of the conference, this was really only a matter of time. Maryland and Rutgers need the financial stability the Big Ten can provide and if the Big Ten was ever going to expand, these were two of the schools that met its select criteria.

And guess what? This isn't over. The domino effect is continuing and there's no reason to think the notion of super conferences featuring 16 teams each won't become a reality, especially with a college football playoff being in place by 2014 (which oh by the way, is when these two schools would be joining).

Delany hinted at the league expanding to nine-game conference schedules in football and playing close to 20-22 games in basketball. Now, it's going to eventually need to do both those things.

Here's the biggest piece to the equation and why these moves could become major pay-offs for Delany and the Big Ten: Whether or not people actually attend these games, in this day and age, doesn't compare to the impact being watched nationwide does.

Even if folks in D.C. don't care about Maryland or people in New York don't care about Rutgers, the folks in those cities who care about college sports in general now have another option at their disposal for watching games, one that is as powerful as there is.

In this day and age, people all across the country will take notice of a product if it's good enough. It doesn't matter if it's Ohio State, Iowa or Maryland. A good football team or a good basketball team playing on national television is going to be watched on TV and other mobile devices that allow games to be streamed. The attention will still be there, if not

increase. That's why BTN has, in part, been successful.

This is a move that benefits the Big Ten, Maryland, and will benefit Rutgers assuming it does join as expected later this week. The pros outweigh the cons, which is why the trigger was pulled Monday on Maryland.

Maryland joining Big Ten in 2014

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

The University of Maryland announced Monday it will leave the ACC and join the Big Ten as the conference's 13th member, effective July 1, 2014. [As initially reported by ESPN's Brett McMurphy](#), the school's Board of Regents met Monday morning and approved the decision to apply for membership. Maryland's application was then unanimously approved by the Big Ten's Council of Presidents and Chancellors.

ESPN is also reporting that Rutgers University (currently a member of the Big East) is expected to become the conference's 14th member as early as Tuesday, which Big Ten commissioner Jim Delany declined to comment on during both the press conference held in College Park, Md., and later a national teleconference.

Maryland president Wallace Loh has ties to the conference, having served as a provost at the University of Iowa before accepting the role of his current title. During the press conference, he made abundantly clear the role money had in the

school's decision to switch conferences. He also said conversations between Maryland and the Big Ten had taken place on and off, but didn't really begin to intensify until earlier this month.

Earlier this summer, Maryland [had to cut seven sports](#) as a result of a multi-million dollar deficit the school was facing. Loh said Monday he and Maryland athletics director Kevin Anderson are both committed to reinstating all the athletic programs that were previously eliminated. In addition, a report from *Sports Illustrated's* Pete Thamel shows that by switching to the Big Ten, Maryland [could make close to \\$100 million in revenue by the year 2020.](#)

"Membership in the Big Ten is in the strategic interest of the University of Maryland," Loh said. "...We came up with a plan. We're going to pull ourselves out of that financial hole, but we're still living paycheck-to-paycheck. What membership of the Big Ten does is truly enable us to guarantee the financial sustainability of Maryland athletics for a long, long, long time.

With the addition of Maryland to the Big Ten (as well as the likely impending addition of Rutgers), the conference's footprint has expanded East. While a decision won't be made on revising football divisions until February 2013 at the earliest, McMurphy reported Monday afternoon that Illinois would move to the Legends Division, which would then make room for both Maryland and Rutgers in the Leaders Division.

When asked about scheduling for football and basketball during the teleconference, Delany said discussions of having nine conference football games are "on the table," and that while he'd be in favor of expanding to 20-22 conference games for basketball, a negotiation would have to be made with Big Ten coaches.

Delany reiterated the Big Ten's stance of being content with

12 teams once Nebraska became an official member. But he also said those plans were changed by two key components: The Big Ten's joint agreement with the Pac-12 on playing annually across all sports being broken off, and other realignment moves being made such as Notre Dame staying independent in football, yet being able to move all of its other programs into the ACC.

"One of the paradigm shifts relates to conferences moving beyond their boundaries," Delany said during the teleconference. "We continued to see these kinds of moves. Every one of the five conferences is outside their natural footprint.

"We looked at that and thought, 'You know, we need to explore how we might become larger.' When we looked around, we realized there was this corridor rich with people."

Delany also revealed plans of the Big Ten building a second set of headquarters after its primary headquarters moves from Park Ridge, Ill., to Rosemont, Ill. The second base would be somewhere along the East Coast.

As far as TV revenue is concerned, these additions allow the Big Ten Network to reach homes in two of the biggest national markets of Washington, D.C. and New York City.