

# 9/21/2012: I-Club breakfast video

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – As he does every Friday morning before a home football game, Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz spoke at the Johnson County I-Club Breakfast inside the Sheraton Hotel. This week, he discussed the Hawkeyes' upcoming game against Central Michigan.

Ferentz was introduced by former Iowa defensive end Aaron Kampman, who was a senior on the 2001 squad that defeated Texas Tech in the Alamo Bowl. Kampman also went on to play in the NFL for both the Green Bay Packers and Jacksonville Jaguars.

Below are videos of both Kampman's and Ferentz's speeches:

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## Iowa vs. Central Michigan (What to expect)

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

To get you all ready for Saturday's game between Iowa and Central Michigan, I put together a list of things you ought to know before heading to Kinnick Stadium.

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

*Iowa Hawkeyes (2-1) vs. Central Michigan Chippewas (1-1)*

*Kinnick Stadium; Iowa City, Iowa*

*Sept. 22, 2012*

*11 a.m. Central*

*TV: BTN (Kevin Kugler, Danan Hughes, Tom Helmer)*

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

*Weather: [51 degrees; sun; wind from NW](#)*

## **Brendan's Three Keys to the Game:**

### **1. Offensive patience**

While Central Michigan's 4-2-5 defense might be unique in terms of the Iowa offense's preparation for Saturday, the Chippewas have only recorded a total of two sacks in two games. As long as the offensive line does its job in pass protection, quarterback James Vandenberg should have enough time in the pocket to hit passes downfield. If the Hawkeyes are patient enough, the passing game should be at its best and that's going to open up the run game should Iowa build enough a lead early on.

### **2. Keep Chippewas' ground game in check**

Central Michigan enters Saturday's game with (statistically speaking) the worst passing offense in the MAC and one of the worst passing offenses nationally. In other words, expect the Chippewas to come in wanting to ground and pound. If Iowa manages to keep the run game in check and make Central Michigan one-dimensional, there will be opportunities for the Hawkeye defense to cause turnovers Saturday afternoon.

### 3. Early statement

This is the closest thing to a sure win on the Hawkeyes' schedule, so all three phases will need to set the tone early on if Iowa is going to win as handily as many on the outside expect. Not to mention that with Central Michigan coming off a bye week and playing its first road game of the season, some rust and maybe even a few jitters will come into play early on. As long as the Hawkeyes step on the Chippewas' throat from the get-go, they should be fine. If Iowa allows a team like Central Michigan to hang with it deep into the second half though, that could be a troubling sign for the team moving forward into Big Ten play next week.

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## 9/20/2012: Talkin' Hawks podcast (Iowa vs. Central Michigan)

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.

This week, we preview Iowa's game on Sept. 22 against the Central Michigan Chippewas 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 Nate Schneider, who covers Central Michigan for [The Morning Sun](#) in Mount Pleasant, Mich. This week's edition is approximately 50 minutes long, so enjoy:

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

**Twitter handles:**

*HawkeyeDrive.com* – [@HawkeyeDrive](#)

*Brendan Stiles* – [@thebstiles](#)

*Chris Rowell* – [@Crowell34](#)

*Nate Schneider* – [@natejschneider](#)

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

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## **9/18/2012: Iowa football notebook**



Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz discusses the Hawkeyes'

upcoming game against Central Michigan during his weekly press conference on Tuesday, Sept. 18, 2012, at the Hayden Fry Football Complex in Iowa City.

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – While football is considered by those who have either played or coached to be “the ultimate team game,” it’s the stories of specific individuals that have resonated lately around the Iowa Hawkeyes.

In their 27-16 win over Northern Iowa last weekend, the Hawkeyes’ storyline was sophomore fullback Mark Weisman. A year after transferring from Air Force, Weisman earned the opportunity to start as Iowa’s fullback. Against Northern Iowa, he was asked to do even more.

As the Hawkeyes watched both of their available running backs – sophomore Damon Bullock and true freshman Greg Garmon – leave the game with injuries, it was Weisman having to fill the void. After starting the game with a pair of one-yard touchdown runs while lining up at fullback, Weisman went off on the Panthers to the tune of 113 yards rushing on 24 carries and recorded an additional two-yard touchdown run as a running back.

It wasn’t just what he was doing, but how he was doing it, that proved evident to his teammates as they got a chance to watch the film on Sunday.

“You could tell he really wanted the ball and he was running hard,” senior wide receiver Keenan Davis said. “When you see that kind of guy working hard, it rubs off on you. You want to do more for that guy. You want to be that last block to get

him into the end zone.”

Weisman will make the start at running back when the Hawkeyes play their final non-conference game of the season at 11 a.m. Central on Saturday against Central Michigan (1-1). Ferentz said he wasn't optimistic of Bullock being back this week after the running back left the game with a head injury (Ferentz didn't say specifically whether Bullock suffered a concussion or just has concussion-like symptoms). Meanwhile, Garmon hasn't been completely ruled out after injuring his right arm, but whether or not he returns to action this week will be determined by what he is or isn't able to do in practice.

Weisman knows he'll be the feature back this week, but plans on preparing the same way he has all season – with the mindset that he could be heavily depended on at anytime, like last weekend.

“The coaches always have these stories about people coming in, stepping in and knowing their job and everyone is really dependent on them,” Weisman said. “You really have to, every week, even if you're not the starter.”

Nicknamed “The Juggernaut” by his teammates, Weisman has managed to stay incognito on campus despite the amount of publicity since last weekend's game. While he's not an attention-seeker off the field, he continues to make his presence felt on it.

“I think the best way to describe Mark is he's your typical Iowa football player,” senior center James Ferentz said. “I think he's a great reflection of this program. He just wants to contribute any way possible.

“He's quick to pass the success to other guys, but Saturday, he did that all out on his own. He deserves all the credit. He's just a great example of what it means to be an Iowa Hawkeye.”

## **Donatell showing consistency**

While the overall play has been inconsistent at times, the Iowa defense has shown consistency in a few areas – some good and some bad.

One of the noticeably bad traits has been getting off to sluggish starts, allowing both Iowa State and Northern Iowa to score touchdowns on their opening drives in each of the past two games. But making up for that has been the ability to adjust on the fly, as those are the only two touchdowns Iowa has given up in the last two weeks.

As far as individuals go, one player who has emerged has been senior strong safety Tom Donatell after recording interceptions in each of Iowa's last two games against the Cyclones and Panthers. The consistency he brings to the field is ultimately what won Kirk Ferentz over in deciding to have him start in the secondary.

"He's the perfect Iowa safety," Ferentz said. "He just shows up every day, works, and I think the plays that he has made is a result of him practicing and watching tape, just playing smart football. I'm not saying he's like a lot of the safeties that we've played, but a lot of the safeties that we have had that have played well have had those attributes."

Players such as senior cornerback Micah Hyde and junior linebacker Christian Kirksey observe the progress Donatell has made and aren't surprised by it in the least. Both of them said his knowledge of the entire defense since he has playing experience at both safety and linebacker have made the entire defense feel comfortable around him, not only because he knows his role, but everyone else's as well.

"You can see it throughout practice. He always brings a high energy," Kirksey said. "Just to see him go out there and make plays like he's doing right now, it makes us as a defense feel great that we have a good safety back there."

## **Cotton getting his chance**

Injuries to Bullock and Garmon are the roots to the Weisman story. But Garmon's arm injury, along with some concerns with Iowa's passing game thus far, have led to another player who has patiently waited his turn and might now be showing his progress in games.

Junior wide receiver Jordan Cotton had a reputation as a player who worked hard in the offseason, having drawn praise in the past from both Ferentz and wide receivers coach Erik Campbell. Last weekend against Northern Iowa, Cotton found himself being used not just as a receiver when Iowa went to three-receiver packages, but also on kickoff return after Garmon left the game with his injury in the second quarter.

Cotton hauled in one catch, an eight-yard completion in the fourth quarter from Vandenberg. That one catch came on a 3rd-and-4 and helped move the chains on a clock-chewing possession where Iowa marched all the way to the Panther 1-yard line and took more than seven minutes off the clock.

"That behind the shoulder, flipping his hips, it's a difficult catch to make and he has been making it all of camp," Davis said. "When you're making that catch during practice, it's easier in the game and he proved it.

"Now everybody has more confidence in him."

Time will only tell if Cotton is to ultimately emerge as a reliable third-option at receiver alongside Davis and sophomore Kevonte Martin-Manley. But between being able to make plays last weekend and his teammates gaining that confidence in him, Cotton could be someone worth keeping an eye on going forward.

"He's just being consistent right now and just taking care of his business, handling all the small things," Martin-Manley said. "He has talent. He has the ability and the potential to

do big things.”

### **Fiedorowicz becoming detail-oriented**

Sometimes a player’s impact on a game goes beyond the box score. This is probably the best way to summarize the season junior tight end C.J. Fiedorowicz has had to this point.

Prior to the season starting, there was speculation of Fiedorowicz being the biggest beneficiary of Greg Davis coming in as offensive coordinator. Given his frame and what coaches had said about him during the offseason, there’s justification in why some felt this way about him.

Through three games, Fiedorowicz is third on the team in both receptions (10) and receiving yards (109). While those numbers might not jump off the charts, Ferentz insists those numbers are more representative of opposing defenses game-planning for Fiedorowicz as opposed to him having any struggles.

“The ball goes where it has to go based on how they play us. But when we call him, we really need him,” Ferentz said. “He has done some good things and I’m really optimistic he’ll have a good year this year.”

One aspect of Fiedorowicz’s game Ferentz said he noticed was better against Northern Iowa was his attention to smaller details such as not leaving his feet once he touches the ball.

“He talked to me yesterday about staying on my feet,” Fiedorowicz said. “Like Mark [Weisman], he’s a big guy and most DBs don’t really want to tackle him. So lowering my shoulder is probably more of an advantage than me trying to jump over someone. It’s just paying attention to the details and knowing what I’m supposed to do.”

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# 9/18/2012: Iowa player audio with photos (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

IOWA CITY, Iowa – On Tuesday, 12 members of the Iowa football team spoke with the media to discuss the Hawkeyes' upcoming game on Sept. 22 against Central Michigan.

Below is audio from each of the following players – sophomore fullback Mark Weisman, senior quarterback James Vandenberg, senior center James Ferentz, junior tight end C.J. Fiedorowicz, junior linebacker Anthony Hitchens, junior fullback Brad Rogers, junior free safety Tanner Miller, junior linebacker Christian Kirksey, sophomore wide receiver Kevonte Martin-Manley, senior defensive end Joe Gaglione, senior wide receiver Keenan Davis and senior cornerback Micah Hyde:



Mark Weisman, Sept. 18, 2012

[Mark Weisman, sophomore fullback](#)



James Vandenberg, Sept. 18,  
2012

[James Vandenberg, senior quarterback](#)



James Ferentz, Sept. 18,  
2012

[James Ferentz, senior center](#)



C.J. Fiedorowicz, Sept. 18,  
2012

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



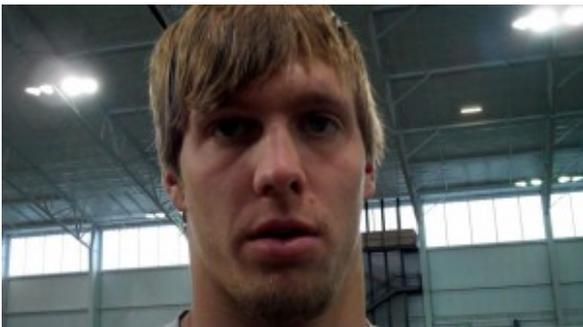
Anthony Hitchens, Sept. 18,  
2012

[Anthony Hitchens, junior linebacker](#)



Brad Rogers, Sept. 18, 2012

[Brad Rogers, junior fullback](#)



Tanner Miller, Sept. 18,  
2012

[Tanner Miller, junior free safety](#)



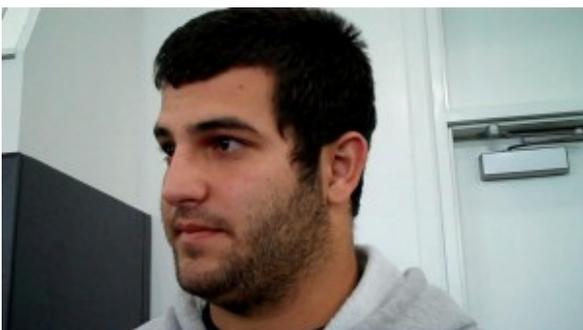
Christian Kirksey, Sept. 18,  
2012

[Christian Kirksey, junior linebacker](#)



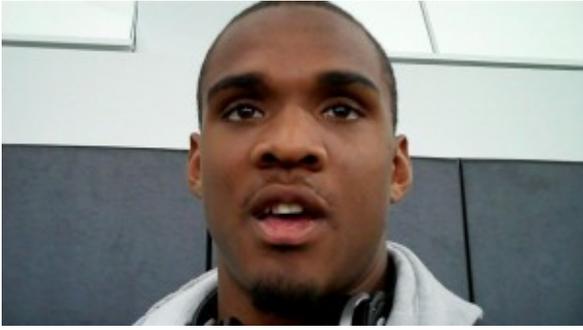
Kevonte Martin-Manley, Sept.  
18, 2012

[Kevonte Martin-Manley, sophomore wide receiver](#)



Joe Gaglione, Sept. 18, 2012

[Joe Gaglione, senior defensive end](#)



Keenan Davis, Sept. 18, 2012

[Keenan Davis, senior wide receiver](#)



Micah Hyde, Sept. 18, 2012

[Micah Hyde, senior cornerback](#)

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# 9/18/2012: 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 9 18 12](#)

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# 9/18/2012: 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:**

*"It was good to get the win, obviously. We needed to play well and play hard. I think our guys did that, so it was good to get the win. Now we turn the page and get ready for Central Michigan. We've got them coming in here this weekend. So it was a positive step for our team and we've certainly got a lot of work in front of us."*

## **On the running back situation for Saturday's game against Central Michigan:**

*"We're still waiting to find out. But I think it's probably a precarious situation for Damon Bullock. We'll see how that plays out, but I'm not overly optimistic there. And then Greg Garmon, I think we'll know more as the week goes on and we'll just see how he performs out on the field."*

## **On if the performance of fullback Mark Weisman last weekend surprised him or not:**

*"Yes and no. I don't think anybody would've predicted him getting over 100 yards. But the one thing he has done, he*

*emerged in the spring. We didn't know a lot about him. He transferred here from Air Force and was ineligible last year, so we learned more about him in the spring. He really looked like a good fullback candidate and then he had an exceptional month of August. We felt very confident about him. I don't think anybody has worked harder or practiced any better than him over those two periods.*

*"Coincidentally, we started working him a little bit at running back last week – Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday – but certainly didn't envision that happening. It's got to be a little bit of a surprise. But on the other hand, I'm not surprised that he performed well because he has practiced well."*

On his reaction to those who say the Big Ten is down based on non-conference performance:

*"You know, my response, I really don't... I'm not trying to be cute, but I really don't follow that stuff all that closely. We've got plenty of work to do right here, so that's really what I've kind of been focused on. But my reaction would be to any of those things is we all want to know the outcome before anything ever happens and I think, you know, just let the season play out. To me, evaluations of anything should be done more so at the end rather than the beginning. That's just my feeling. But that won't go over well with most people."*

**On if he finds himself rooting for other Big Ten teams when they play quality non-conference opponents:**

*"Typically, we're more worried about what we've just done or what we're going to do. I pay attention, but I pay more attention to the teams that we're going to play, first of all, and then as far as really watching it closely, I don't know if I've really had an opportunity to do it yet this year. Maybe during the bye week, I'll probably sit down and watch a game or two then. But otherwise, I really haven't done that."*

### **On how Weisman ended up transferring to Iowa from Air Force:**

*"Well, I think you'd have to ask Mark. But the story I got was that he was tired of having guys bounce quarters off his bed and he got to the point – I don't know if this is a story or legend now at this point – but he got tired of sleeping on the floor because he figured out if he made the bed perfectly once and then had to sleep on the floor, then he'd have to go through that aggravation again, so I think after sleeping on the floor a little bit, he decided it wasn't the path that he wanted to take.*

*"We knew some people that had coached Mark in high school. Bill Mitz and some other folks. I think that had something to do with him coming here. But all this kind of stuff has just surfaced. We were really impressed with Mark and he did a nice job last fall, but he was ineligible so our focus was on the guys who were really playing in the games. He really got on our radar screen strongly in spring practice. He just really practiced well and I don't know if we had anybody who practiced better in August than he did.*

*"So you know, that's the fun part of college football, seeing guys emerge and do a good job like that. In this case, it just so happened to show up on the game field."*

### **On whether he has to make adjustments with Weisman or if he has the speed to be a running back:**

*"Well, the thing that's surprising, more typically with our program at least, it seems like the trend has been for guys to move from middle linebacker to fullback, if you look back as far as Edgar Cervantes back in 2002. He was a frustrated linebacker. Tom Busch, right on through. We had a lot of linebackers playing fullback. Mark Weisman, and Brad Rogers is the same way, we actually have two guys on our roster that actually carried the ball in high school. So it's unusual for us and that's a good thing."*

**On what he attributes the success he has had with guys like Weisman being able to step in like he did:**

*"I think you have to give credit, first of all, to the players. The players that have stepped up, they're the ones that are doing all the work. So that part of it is where it all starts. And then Lester Erb has done a great job with our backs – coached them, instructed them – and they're just like any other position. It takes a lot of work and thought to become proficient at that position, so it's a credit to him. But it's like anything that happens on the field. When something good happens on the field, it's because the players are doing a really great job. I think that has been the case."*

**On if he sees the Big Ten being more wide open than in years past:**

*"I don't know. My guess is, and I'm speculating, but my guess is it's probably more wide open than the experts thought it would be. But again, I think that's just football. That's college football. I'll go back two years ago. I think if you look back and look at Oregon and Auburn, where they were in the preseason rankings and then where they were in January, I'll rest my case right there."*

*"Again, I'm not saying this in a critical way because it's what makes sports so intriguing. But everybody wants to know how things are going to turn out, who's going to win the Heisman, who's going to be the NFL MVP and all of that stuff. But the fun of it is playing the season and seeing how things do unravel."*

*"I mean, I'll go out on a limb and tell you Alabama's a heck of a football team. I did see part of their game on the bus coming back from Chicago and they're an awfully strong football team. That's not a huge surprise to anybody. But beyond that, there are a lot of good teams out there. I haven't seen them yet because I'm not watching. But let's let*

*the season play out and then we'll all have a better grip of what's what and who's who."*

**On what he would attribute to the defense's slow starts and also its ability to adjust on the fly and play better as the game progresses:**

*"Which part – Us playing poorly early or us playing better in the second half? I'm hoping it's maybe our inexperience and age. I think we're not a real veteran group on defense right now, so I'm hoping it's just us catching up to the speed of the game a little bit and catching up to the way our opponent has been playing.*

*"Right now, we've played three teams that play very differently than we play and what our guys are used to in practice. I'd also like to think the coaches have done a good job communicating with the players during series and just getting them to settle down a little bit. But it's something we have to do better at.*

*"We have to play better in the first half because it caught up to us two weeks ago and it's going to hurt us moving forward. So we've got to find a way to play better early. But the good news is we have played better as the game has gone on. But you do have to play 60 minutes and that's something we've got to work on."*

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## **9/17/2012: State of the Big Ten, Volume 65 (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*

Three weeks into the 2012 college football season and the Big Ten only has three undefeated teams remaining – Ohio State, Northwestern and Minnesota. Only two of those teams are bowl-eligible this year.

That this is what the Big Ten has going for it at the moment pretty much sums matters up. It's not surprising that the Big Ten is a down conference in 2012. What is shocking is that the conference having a down year in 2012 seems so shocking to so many. Quite frankly, it's baffling that anyone couldn't see this sort of year coming.

Yes, the Big Ten had a team win a BCS bowl (Michigan) and had a team win a bowl game over a quality SEC opponent (Michigan State) last January. But those things mean so little now.

The play at the quarterback position is the first glaring contrast from the past two seasons until now. In 2010 (and even last year), this was a strength for the conference. Now, the first quarterback that comes to anyone's mind when the Big Ten's discussed is Denard Robinson, who is still known more for what he does with his feet than with his arm.

Next, consider the amount of coaching changes that have been made. More than half of the Big Ten's head coaches when the 2010 season began are no longer coaching. As a result, teams have gone through massive changes in identity and the type of personnel being brought in. Also, the two longest-tenured head coaches – Iowa's Kirk Ferentz and Wisconsin's Bret Bielema – have undergone numerous transitions along their coaching staffs.

Another factor is parity. While it's a good thing in general for football, it's what is hurting the conference's reputation right now. There isn't that clear cut team or clear cut two or three teams that have separated themselves from the rest. For instance, leagues like the SEC and Pac-12 are so top heavy this year that they're both locks to have two teams playing in BCS bowl games this season. The same could be said about the Big 12 and even perhaps the ACC. The good teams in these conferences are all really good and are all really better than the majority of their counterparts.

Now look at the Big Ten in contrast. Perhaps if Ohio State didn't have a postseason ban, it'd look like a team that's heads and shoulders above everyone else in its division at the very least. But both Wisconsin and Purdue – probably the two best bowl-eligible teams in the Leaders Division – both have losses already and both look like they could be vulnerable more times later in the season.

As for the Legends Division, there could be a team such as Michigan this season that ends up 8-4 overall, but earns a trip to Indianapolis possessing a 6-2 conference record and then secures a trip to Pasadena with a 9-4 record. This scenario is very realistic and something that only further highlights why this conference is still being frowned upon nationally.

There were a lot of factors that led to the preseason hypothesis of the Big Ten having woes in 2012 and thus far, they've come to fruition. It really doesn't matter what Michigan does against Notre Dame this weekend or how the division races shape up when Big Ten play gets underway Sept. 29. The conference is going to continue having a bad stigma around it for the foreseeable future and it's just something that needs to be accepted right now.

Maybe a day arises where the Big Ten is considered an elite college football conference. Just don't anticipate it

happening anytime soon unless a season in the near future has each of the following: Strong quarterback play across the board, continuity along the coaching staffs and a handful of teams that clearly demonstrate on the field they're head and shoulders above the rest.

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## **Iowa vs. Central Michigan Game Notes, 2-deep**

### **OFFENSE:**

WR 6 Davis, 17 Hillyer

LT 68 Scherff, 78 Donnal

LG 60 Tobin, 58 Simmons

C 53 Ferentz, 59 Bofelli

RG 63 Blythe, 65 Walsh

RT 70 Van Sloten, 76 MacMillan

TE 86 Fiedorowicz, 82 Hamilton

QB 16 Vandenberg, 15 Rudock

WR 11 Martin-Manley, 83 Staggs

RB 45 Weisman, 26 Malloy

FB 38 Rogers, 92 Gimm

### **DEFENSE:**

DE 99 Gaglione, 94 McMin

DT 54 Bigach, 71 Davis

DT 90 Trinca-Pasat, 97 Cooper

DE 79 Alvis, 49 Spears

OLB 20 Kirksey, 39 Perry

MLB 44 Morris, 52 Alston

WLB 31 Hitchens, 55 Collins

LCB 19 Lowery, 2 Castillo

SS 13 Donatell, 21 Law

FS 5 Miller, 37 Lowdermilk

RCB 18 Hyde, 14 Buford

**SPECIAL TEAMS:**

P 98 Kornbrath, 14 Wienke

PK 96 Meyer, 1 Koehn

LS 61 Kreiter, 54 Bigach

HOLDER 14 Wienke

PR 18 Hyde

KR 6 Davis, 23 Cotton

[Iowa vs. Central Michigan Game Notes](#)

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# 9/17/2012: Dan Enos teleconference (premium)

By Brendan Stiles

*HawkeyeDrive.com*

Central Michigan head coach Dan Enos took part in the MAC's weekly teleconference on Monday to discuss the Chippewas' game on Sept. 22 against Iowa at Kinnick Stadium.

Below is the audio from Enos' teleconference:

[Dan Enos Teleconference](#)