Hawkeyes in the NFL: 2012 Preseason Week One

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

The first week of the 2012 NFL preseason begins Thursday. As of Wednesday, there are currently 41 former Iowa football players listed on NFL rosters, with three of those 41 players listed on injured reserve. Those three players are former tight end Brad Herman (Patriots), former linebacker A.J. Edds (Colts) and former defensive back Shaun Prater, who was a fifth-round draft pick of the Cincinnati Bengals last April.

Below is a list of this week's preseason games in the NFL, including which former Iowa players are with which teams. For those in Eastern Iowa, two NFL preseason games will be shown Thursday and Friday nights respectively. KFXA-TV (FOX affilate) will carry the Chicago Bears' preseason game against the Denver Broncos on Thursday, while KGAN-TV (CBS affiliate) will have the Minnesota Vikings' preseason game on Friday against the San Francisco 49ers.

There are also six nationally televised preseason games this week including Sunday's contest on NFL Network between the St. Louis Rams and Indianapolis Colts, which features four former Hawkeye players who are currently active.

Thursday, Aug. 9:

Washington at Buffalo, 6 p.m. — **Redskins:** Jordan Bernstine, Adam Gettis; **Bills:** Scott Chandler

Baltimore at Atlanta, 6:30 p.m. — *Ravens:* Sean Considine, Marshal Yanda; *Falcons:* Jonathan Babineaux

New Orleans at New England, 6:30 p.m. - Patriots: Jeff

Tarpinian, Markus Zusevics, Brad Herman (IR)

Pittsburgh at Philadelphia, 6:30 p.m. — *Eagles:* Marvin McNutt, Julian Vandervelde

Green Bay at San Diego, 7 p.m. **(ESPN)** — *Packers:* Bryan Bulaga, Mike Daniels; *Chargers:* Nate Kaeding

Denver at Chicago, 7:30 p.m. (KFXA-TV)

Friday, Aug. 10:

NY Jets at Cincinnati, 6:30 p.m. (NFL Network) — Jets: Shonn Greene, Matt Kroul; Bengals: Shaun Prater (IR)

Cleveland at Detroit, 6:30 p.m. — *Lions:* Ryan Donahue, Riley Reiff, Amari Spievey

NY Giants at Jacksonville, 6:30 p.m. - Giants: Tyler Sash

Tampa Bay at Miami, 6:30 p.m. — *Buccaneers:* Dallas Clark, Adrian Clayborn, Eric Guthrie; **Dolphins:** Eric Steinbach

Arizona at Kansas City, 7 p.m. — *Chiefs:* Rob Bruggeman, Tony Moeaki, Ricky Stanzi

Minnesota at San Francisco, 8 p.m. **(KGAN-TV)** – **Vikings:** Christian Ballard, Chad Greenway, Tyler Nielsen, Allen Reisner

Saturday, Aug. 11:

Houston at Carolina, 6 p.m. (NFL Network) — Texans: Mitch King; Panthers: Charles Godfrey

Tennessee at Seattle, 9 p.m. (NFL Network) — Titans: Karl Klug

Sunday, Aug. 12:

St. Louis at Indianapolis, 12:30 p.m. (NFL Network) — Rams: Bradley Fletcher, Bryan Mattison; Colts: Pat Angerer, Seth Olsen, A.J. Edds (IR)

Monday, Aug. 13:

Dallas at Oakland, 7 p.m. (ESPN) — Raiders: Brandon Myers

*All times listed are Central Standard Time

8/6/2012: Iowa Media Day notebook



Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz speaks to assembled media during his Media Day press conference held on Monday, Aug. 6, 2012, at Carver-Hawkeye Arena in Iowa City.

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

IOWA CITY, Iowa — Depth. Football teams — heck, any sort of team in the world of athletics — crave it. Depth is what makes the difference in a particular part being viewed as either a strength or weakness. It's what allows teams to handle adversity in a successful manner. It's what football coaches everywhere are looking for right now as the 2012 season looms.

In the case of the Iowa Hawkeyes, depth has slowly and painfully been depleted through the years at the running back position. Just since the Hawkeyes' win over Georgia Tech in the 2010 Orange Bowl, seven running backs have left the program — either by their own accord, or, in the most recent case involving sophomore De'Andre Johnson last week, by being dismissed altogether.

Johnson was initially suspended from all team activities by head coach Kirk Ferentz back on July 29 after compiling two offenses over a three-day course. Three days later came Ferentz's more recent decision to remove Johnson entirely from the roster.

"Nothing has been decided in either case, but it's like every player. Every player has a chart and they're either adding to it or taking away from it," Ferentz said. "I just made the decision that I think was best for all parties."

Ferentz believes he currently has players at running back who are "capable." But to put this conundrum into further perspective, two of the four players currently in contention are true freshmen while the other two both rushed for fewer yards last season than quarterback James Vandenberg.

Currently atop the 2-deep is sophomore Damon Bullock, who spent the majority of last season as a wide receiver before moving back to running back last winter prior to Iowa's 31-14 loss to Oklahoma in the Insight Bowl. Featured right there with Bullock now in light of Johnson's dismissal is junior Brad Rogers, who is also listed as the team's No. 1 fullback. Then there are the two true freshmen — Barkley Hill of Cedar Falls and Greg Garmon, who hails from Erie, Pa.

"We'll just see how it goes, but the guys are working hard out there," Ferentz said. "I think we certainly have enough talent out there and hopefully we can bridge the experience gap as well."

Canzeri not completely ruling out return this season

When spring ball began last March, Jordan Canzeri was poised to become the Hawkeyes' starting running back. As a true freshman last season, he had 114 yards on the ground with 58 of those yards coming against Oklahoma in the Insight Bowl.

However, Canzeri tore his ACL in late March after making a cut during a non-contact drill. The initial prognosis was a lost season.

"It wasn't really the pain that bugged me. It was just the fact that I knew that it definitely was something that wasn't normal," Canzeri said, reflecting back on how the injury occurred. "It was the first main injury that I ever had and I felt like I was doing really good with the team at that point.

"With injuries, you just have to hold your head up high and just can't look at the negatives."

On Monday, Canzeri said he was told by doctors how his recovery had gone faster than normal, which naturally leads to the question whether his return to the field might still happen this year. While that return shouldn't be expected anytime soon, Canzeri didn't completely dismiss the notion, saying it would be an option barring any future setbacks.

"I'm hoping that I can be able to work my way to that point and I would definitely love to be able to play this year," Canzeri said. "The possibility for it is a 'maybe.' The hope for it is a 'yes.'"

Alvis, Davis return to D-line

Two players who are back and could have an impact on the defensive line in 2012 are junior defensive end Dominic Alvis and sophomore defensive tackle Carl Davis. Both are back on the practice field now after missing all of Iowa's spring practices due to recoveries from knee operations. Alvis tore

his ACL during the Hawkeyes' 24-16 win over Michigan last season, while Davis had a procedure done in the offseason shortly after the team returned from the Insight Bowl.

"The first practice, I had a lot of energy and honestly, it just feels really good to be back out here running around," Davis said. "I missed it a lot."

Both players stressed the importance of being able to take mental reps during spring football since neither was able to take part in any practices. Whether the observations they made came during practices or from watching film, the fundamentals being taught by first-year defensive line coach Reese Morgan have been taken to heart.

"There's only so much you can do when you're injured," Alvis said after describing himself as being rusty after the first few practices back on the gridiron. "I did as much as I could. Now it's just actually physically doing the work."

Morgan said he has noticed Davis' hunger for being back on the field, as well as Alvis continuing to re-develop the confidence he played with prior to his knee injury last November.

"I think they're coming along," Morgan said. "Both of them are certainly great young men and they're going to be an important part of our defense."

Sleeper suspended, Getz taking medical redshirt

During his press conference Monday, Ferentz made two announcements in his opening statement regarding player personnel. Senior safety Collin Sleeper will serve what Ferentz said was "a multi-game suspension" stemming from a team rules violation committed last year (Sleeper wasn't on the sidelines with the team during last year's Insight Bowl). Aside from the suspension being a minimum of two games, no timetable was given for when Sleeper could return.

Ferentz also revealed that linebacker Dakota Getz would take a medical redshirt this year. Getz, who would've been a fourth-year junior, injured his knee on the opening kickoff during Iowa's 44-41 loss to Iowa State last season and Ferentz said Getz's recovery hadn't been going according to plan this offseason.

"Our first concern obviously is him graduating," Ferentz said. "He may come back and help in the program in some phase down the road, but I think he just wanted a little time."

Kirk Ferentz, Iowa Media Day press conference transcript (Aug. 6, 2012)

Johnson dismissed from team

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

De'Andre Johnson is no longer a member of the Iowa football team, head coach Kirk Ferentz said in a release sent Wednesday afternoon.

Johnson, who was a running back entering his sophomore season, was dismissed three days after being suspended from all team activities. Last week, he was charged with both a disorderly house citation and then two days later was <u>arrested on eluding charges</u> by University Heights police.

"I am disappointed that things didn't work out better for De'Andre," Ferentz said in a statement. "We wish him all the best moving forward."

Johnson rushed for 79 yards on 18 carries last season and was

listed second on the team's preseason 2-deep behind sophomore running back Damon Bullock.

Johnson suspended following run-in with law

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

Iowa sophomore running back De'Andre Johnson has been suspended from all team activities following his arrest Saturday evening by University Heights police on eluding charges. The announcement came Sunday afternoon from head coach Kirk Ferentz, who said through a statement the suspension was effective immediately. No timetable was given for suspension length.

According to KCJJ-AM 1630 in Iowa City, who first reported his arrest, Johnson was spotted driving 60 miles per hour in an area where the speed limit was 25 MPH and didn't initially pull over when police began their pursuit.

This occurred two days after Johnson was issued a citation by Iowa City police on July 26 for a disorderly house. He's also the second running back to have legal issues this summer after incoming freshman running back Greg Garmon was arrested in June on charges of drug possession in his hometown of Erie, Pa. Ferentz said at Big Ten Media Days last week that Garmon would not face any game-suspension.

Johnson, who is the Hawkeyes' returning leading rusher from last season, was listed as the No. 2 running back behind

sophomore Damon Bullock on the 2-deep released prior to the start of fall camp, which begins Aug. 3.

7/27/2012: Big Ten Media Days, Day Two video

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

CHICAGO, Ill. — Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz's contingent of players at the 2012 Big Ten Media Days consisted of senior quarterback James Vandenberg, senior center James Ferentz and senior cornerback Micah Hyde.

Below are video interviews featuring Vandenberg, Ferentz and Hyde taken place Friday morning at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place:

2012 Big Ten Media Days: Day One Observations

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

CHICAGO, Ill. — It was an interesting day to say the least

over at the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place, where the 2012 Big Ten Football Media Days kicked off on Thursday.

As I have the last few years, I compiled together a list of observations I made throughout the afternoon that I want to share in this space:

1. The elephant in the room

Let's get this out of the way now because we all knew this was going to be the hot topic of conversation Thursday — Penn State.

Earlier this week, the university saw sanctions placed on its football program that include a four-year postseason ban, reduction in scholarships and most significant of all, now has to deal with other programs being able to lure away Penn State players and allow them to be eligible this season if transfers are done early enough.

There was definitely a variety of opinions shared by Big Ten coaches on that last part, especially given how some schools have had contact in the last few days with some Penn State players. One unidentified Penn State player reached out to Iowa, prompting head coach Kirk Ferentz to send a courtesy call to Penn State coach Bill O'Brien. Michigan coach Brady Hoke admitted to glossing over Penn State's roster but not really pursuing anything beyond that.

Then there were programs such as Illinois who were identified as having assistant coaches in State College attempting to reach out to Nittany Lion players. Even more intriguing here was that Illinois head coach Tim Beckman once worked as an assistant at Bowling Green under Ohio State coach Urban Meyer, who said Thursday he had a problem with other teams trying to lure players away from Penn State.

The question is not about whether other schools are playing by the rules because they technically are. It's more the ethics that come into play here, especially when it involves another Big Ten school.

2. Penn State going forward

Now that sanctions have been established, the question for Penn State moving forward, from a football perspective, is how O'Brien deals with all of the distractions surrounding his team.

Postseason ban aside, the Nittany Lions should still be an 0.K. team in 2012 and they seem to have at least a handful of current players who have taken on leadership responsibilities that Penn State is going to need if it's going to have any success on the gridiron this fall.

As far as O'Brien goes, I think Penn State made a pretty decent hire here. Yes, he doesn't have a coaching background that jumps out at you like Urban Meyer over at Ohio State does. But O'Brien, at least to me, comes off as a guy that's a straight shooter, that's no-nonsense and that you know is going to put everything he has into this job, even though Penn State won't be able to compete for any Big Ten titles over the next four years.

This doesn't mean the Nittany Lions won't have their struggles down the road because they definitely will. But if I was a Penn State fan, I'd at least be encouraged by what O'Brien has managed to demonstrate to this point.

3. There's Bill O'Brien, and then there's Tim Beckman

Beckman did his best to steal the show Thursday. After starting his press conference by sending birthday wishes to his mother, he pulled off his best impression of Tim Tebow with the number of times he used the word "excited."

Then came two moments from his press conference that really stood out to me. First, he was asked about whether or not he

had assistants out in State College, Pa., looking at Penn State players. Beckman said the following: "We were in State College, but we did not go on campus." Maybe I'm being harsh, but I find it incredibly hard to believe Illinois would send coaches out there just to call players about meeting them off campus. They'd probably be better off just staying in Champaign.

The second moment was near the end when he was asked about Illinois' rivalry with Northwestern. Beckman not only bragged it up, but referred to Northwestern as "The Team Upstate." For what it's worth, the Fighting Illini have won their last two games against the Wildcats. Sure, it's an in-state rivalry, but this would be like Tennessee trying to stir up the pot with Vanderbilt in the SEC. Just seems a bit unusual.

He might end up being a good coach for Illinois, who clearly needed to move on from Ron Zook after the Fighting Illini's 2011 season tail-spinned out of control. But that being said, it wouldn't surprise me if Beckman makes a few adversaries in the conference.

4. Leaders Division perception

Look, I get why Wisconsin has become a prohibitive favorite to win the Leaders Division now. With two of its biggest threats both being ineligible to play in the Big Ten title game, the Badgers could conceivably finish third in the Leaders and still be allowed to play in Indianapolis on Dec. 1.

On paper, Wisconsin is a more talented team than the other three teams in that division. The Badgers have played in the Rose Bowl two straight years now and return running back Montee Ball, who only compiled 39 all-purpose touchdowns last season and was a Heisman Trophy finalist.

I get all that. However, I'm not as sold on the Badgers as some might be. Keep in mind they did lose Paul Chryst, who left his post as Wisconsin's offensive coordinator to become

the head coach at Pittsburgh. I also don't think landing Maryland transfer Danny O'Brien carries the same significance as Wisconsin getting Russell Wilson last year. Anyone who watched Wilson play at North Carolina State knew he'd be a game-changer and most suspicions about him and Wisconsin at this time last year came to fruition. I just don't feel the same about O'Brien, who played on a Maryland team that really wasn't that good last season.

If there's one team in that division that I think could dethrone the Badgers, it's Purdue. I like what Danny Hope is doing there and the personnel is there for the Boilermakers to have a pretty good season. They also open Big Ten play with two straight home games against Michigan and, yes, Wisconsin. So we're going to learn a lot about Purdue by mid-October. If the Boilermakers could win even one of those games — or if they don't win either, but manage to win at Notre Dame on Sept. 8 — they could be an 8-9 win team this season.

5. A down year?

I'll be honest: The more I think about this upcoming season, this could be an ugly year for the Big Ten as a whole.

In addition to the fact that there are now two teams — who play in the same division no less — ineligible for postseason play, I just think this is going to be a year where any negative stigma surrounding this conference isn't going to just disappear.

Right now, I think Michigan has to be the favorite to win not only the Legends Division, but the Big Ten Championship Game as well and represent the conference in the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day. But with that being said, it wouldn't surprise me one bit if the Wolverines head to Pasadena with a 9-4 record. I'm not saying it will happen, but four of the biggest games on Michigan's schedule this season — Alabama, Notre Dame, Nebraska and Ohio State — are all being played away from The

Big House and it's not unrealistic to think it could lose all four of those games. But because only two of those games are in league play, losing all these games doesn't completely diminish its odds of winning the Big Ten.

As far as the rest of the conference goes, I'll just say this: If the Big Ten does only feature one team in a BCS game this season, it still might not fill its entire bowl allotment. I think this season is one where there are going to be a lot of teams who fall between the 6-8 win range and I don't really see any one team completely separating itself from the pack.

Oh, and there's also that thing about the conference struggling in bowl games, which I'm sure will be a hot topic again come December.

6. What would have been my preseason ballot

Last year, the Big Ten completely changed its preseason ballots for the media at these things. I personally liked the old way of being able to vote on teams that would win the conference (or in this case, divisions) and submit who would've been my preseason Offensive and Defensive Players of the Year. So here's what would've been my list:

- LEGENDS DIVISION Michigan
- LEADERS DIVISION Wisconsin (I actually have Wisconsin second behind Ohio State, but that postseason ban thingie...)
- OFFENSIVE PLAYER Montee Ball, RB, Wisconsin
- DEFENSIVE PLAYER William Gholston, DE, Michigan State

7/26/2012: Big Ten Media Days, Day One video — Kirk Ferentz

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

CHICAGO, Ill. — Following his press conference with the national media during the 2012 Big Ten Football Media Days on Thursday, Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz spoke to the local press out in a hallway inside the Hyatt Regency McCormick Place. Among the topics discussed were injuries, Iowa's defensive line, the running back situation and Ferentz was asked his thoughts following the sanctions handed to Penn State earlier this week by the NCAA.

Below is video of Ferentz's interaction, broken down into two parts. Also included is audio from a session Iowa athletics director Gary Barta held with the media Thursday afternoon:

KIRK FERENTZ, PART ONE:

KIRK FERENTZ, PART TWO:

AUDIO: Gary Barta, 2012 Big Ten Media Days

2012 Iowa preseason 2-deep

OFFENSE:

WR 6 Davis, 8 Shumpert

LT 68 Scherff, 78 Donnal

LG 60 Tobin, 50 Clark

C 53 Ferentz, 57 Gaul

RG 63 Blythe/59 Bofelli, 65 Walsh

RT 70 Van Sloten, 76 MacMillan

TE 86 Fiedorowicz, 85 Derby/82 Hamilton

QB 16 Vandenberg, 15 Rudock/19 Sokol

WR 11 Martin-Manley, 83 Staggs

RB 32 Bullock, 30 Johnson

FB 38 Rogers, 92 Gimm/45 Weisman

DEFENSE:

DE 99 Gaglione, 94 McMinn

DT 71 Davis/97 Cooper, 98 Hardy

DT 90 Trinca-Pasat, 78 Tsopanides

DE 79 Alvis/54 Bigach, 49 Spears

OLB 20 Kirksey, 39 Perry

MLB 44 Morris, 52 Alston

WLB 31 Hitchens, 36 Fisher

LCB 19 Lowery, 27 Lomax

SS 21 Law, 13 Donatell/10 Sleeper

FS 5 Miller, 49 Lowdermilk

RCB 18 Hyde, 2 Castillo

SPECIAL TEAMS:

P 14 Wienke/15 Mullings

PK 96 Meyer, 1 Koehn

LS 61 Kreiter, 54 Bigach

HOLDER 14 Wienke

COMMENTARY: What should happen on Oct. 20

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

The Penn State story makes me sick.

Everything about it — from what Jerry Sandusky did to innocent children, to what Joe Paterno and other higher ups knew and neglected to act on — makes me sick. The more details that emerge about what took place at Penn State, the more I want to cringe. Having had a summer job all throughout high school where I was a summer school associate and worked with kids between the ages of 5-8, hearing about any child being harmed by a pedophile just disgusts me.

A lot has been written over the past week about what should happen to the Penn State football program going forward after The Freeh Report, which was revealed publicly on July 12, provided further evidence of a cover-up taking place. There have been arguments made both for and against Penn State

receiving the "Death Penalty" (i.e. the football program suspends operations for this season and possibly for multiple seasons). Valid points have been made by those from both sides.

Exactly three months from now, the Iowa Hawkeyes and Penn State Nittany Lions are scheduled to play a football game versus each other at Kinnick Stadium. The more I've thought about everything, the more I find myself on the side that says Penn State shouldn't play football this fall (I would prefer to see it self-impose this along with other punishments as opposed to the NCAA and/or Big Ten having to come down on the school).

As unfair as it might seem to those currently associated with the Penn State program that had nothing to do with anything that occurred, I keep coming back to the fact that children were harmed and that nothing was done to keep more children from being abused. A young boy having his innocence taken from him by a monster like Sandusky is a hell of a lot more unfair than some football team not being able to play games.

Even if it's just for one year, I don't think Penn State should play football, and right now, the thought of walking into Kinnick Stadium on Oct. 20 to observe a football game between Iowa and Penn State seems guite unsettling.

I don't want to hear about logistical problems with scheduling and how this would affect Iowa. For one thing, if Penn State's forced to forfeit, this game would go down in the win column for the Hawkeyes, so that alone should prevent the majority of fans from complaining.

More importantly, however, it's worth repeating: Children were harmed on a college campus by a football coach and those in power at that school didn't do anything when they should have. It doesn't get more despicable than that.

Here are two options that Iowa ought to consider in the event

Penn State doesn't play football this fall: 1. Treat that week like a bye week (which is probably what Kirk Ferentz would do), or 2. Hold a 60-minute scrimmage inside Kinnick Stadium that night and allow fans who would've gone to the game to use their ticket stub to enter for free. If it went the scrimmage route, there could also be a donation box set up at each gate and fans could be asked to give money to charities such as the Rape Victim Advocacy Program and others across the state that help victims of child sex abuse.

(I realize from a football-playing standpoint, a scrimmage might not be wise. It's merely an idea that could go towards a good cause and at the same time maybe make it up to those who already spent or will be spending money in Iowa City that weekend. Again, if the team wants to treat it like a bye week, so be it.)

But with all that being said, I wouldn't anticipate Penn State football being shut down this fall. Maybe it is next year. Maybe other punishments end up being in play instead. None of us know yet what will ultimately happen long-term.

So now let me provide a scenario for what should happen if there is a game on Oct. 20: Similar to the scrimmage idea, have every fan attending the game donate \$10 at the gate to charities that help child sex abuse victims. Assuming all 70,595 seats are filled, that would make \$705,950 in donations right there. Not to mention that with it being a night game, there could be UI student organizations that go all around campus throughout the day and collect donations from tailgaters to help add to that total.

There could potentially be over \$1 million in donated money towards a worthy cause. How many of you currently with intentions of being at Kinnick Stadium that night wouldn't want to be a part of that?

Basically, there's two scenarios at play here: Either Penn

State doesn't play football this season, or it does. Whichever outcome occurs, the UI has three months to create a positive for that weekend. Three months should be plenty of time to properly organize a fundraiser that would likely have enormous success, whether it's during a game, scrimmage, or just something done in Iowa City if the stadium isn't put to use that night.

No matter what happens, this Penn State story isn't going away anytime soon and there's a good chance it just keeps getting worse. All I know is it would be a lot less unsettling to be in Kinnick Stadium that day if something could be done to ensure that heinous crimes like what took place in Pennsylvania aren't done to children in the state of Iowa.

Binns no longer on football team

By Brendan Stiles

HawkeyeDrive.com

Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz released a statement Tuesday saying that sophomore running back Marcus Binns is no longer on the team. The announcement comes one day after *The Cedar Rapids Gazette* reported Binns had been cited by Coralville police on fifth-degree theft charges at Dillard's inside the Coral Ridge Mall.

Marcus, who is the younger brother of former Iowa defensive end Broderick Binns, didn't appear in any games for the Hawkeyes in 2011 after redshirting in 2010.

"Due to injuries, Marcus Binns has not been an active member of the Iowa football program for over one calendar year," Ferentz said. "Following the completion of spring practice, it was determined Marcus was no longer a part of the football team."