



# THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

## SPORTS INFORMATION

December 6, 2009

FedEx Orange Bowl press conference transcripts

### **DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS GARY BARTA**

#### *Opening statement:*

“Thank you everybody for coming. We’ll cut right to the chase. I had an opportunity to talk to President (Sally) Mason a little while ago and on behalf of her, the athletic department, the entire university and Coach Ferentz, obviously when we were offered an invitation to go to the FedEx Orange Bowl we accepted with a big smile on our face. In my opinion, and this is the way it always is and always should be, it’s a tribute to our student-athletes and what they did starting last season and preparing to go into this year. It’s a tribute to our coaches. When you think about some of the trials along the way regarding injuries, it’s really a great credit that we received this invitation. The final thing I would say, before I turn this over to Kirk, is it’s really a combination of several factors. One, they earned it on the field. It was an exciting performance throughout the season. And two, our fans get a lot of credit. We have tremendous fans both at home and historically as we’ve traveled to bowls. I know that played a big role, as well. With that, I’ll turn it over to Kirk. Kirk, congratulations, these are exciting times.”

#### *On when he received the Orange Bowl invitation:*

“I talked to Eric (Poms) after it was announced on television. Kirk and I were in his office when we officially accepted the invitation. I’ve been talking with the bowls several times a day, actually working with the reps as well as the commissioner. Then ultimately what happened this afternoon is the bowl commissioners, the BCS bowls and the television networks had a meeting late in the afternoon or early in the evening. It was at that time they decided. I had a sense, based on all my conversations at the end of last week, but officially we didn’t learn the official word until the television announcement. We then accepted after the show. I talked to (Big Ten) Commissioner (Jim) Delany right before the show that that was going to be confirmed.”

### **HEAD COACH KIRK FERENTZ**

#### *Opening statement:*

“Well thank you, Gary. Obviously we’re thrilled to death. We were very excited to get the news today. We’re very appreciative to the folks at the FedEx Orange Bowl for the faith that they’ve put in us. We’re excited to be matched up with a tremendous football team. (Georgia Tech) Coach (Paul) Johnson and his staff have done a tremendous job there in two years time. It’s going to be a great challenge for us. We’re very appreciative to our players. They’ve done an outstanding job, as Gary said, really back to last January preparing and persevering through a very challenging season. I think our coaching staff did a tremendous job and I too want to thank our fans because that’s one of the things that really helps us when it comes time for bowl selection. Our fan support is notorious and very, very well known. I think it’s something everybody is certainly excited about and we’re thrilled to be going to south Florida. The last time we were in a BCS game, interestingly enough, was the Orange Bowl and it was our worst bowl performance without a doubt. Hopefully, this time we’ll have a chance to go down and play a little bit better football game. We’re excited to participate in what should be a very interesting and exciting game.”

#### *On his reaction to being selected to a BCS Bowl Game:*

“We were just thrilled to find out that we are going to the Orange Bowl. We were hopeful to be going somewhere in a BCS game. This is just a nice bonus for us. None of our players on this team have been involved in this game. The last



**Director:** Phil Haddy **Associate Director:** Steve Roe **Assistants:** Matthew Weitzel, Traci Wagner, Aaron Blau, Chris Brewer  
157 Carver-Hawkeye Arena, Iowa City, IA 52240-1020 P: 319.335.9411 F: 319.335.9417 e-mail: [sports-information@hawkeyesports.com](mailto:sports-information@hawkeyesports.com)



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time down there we had a tremendous experience; we didn't play nearly as well as we would have hoped to. But, everything else about the trip was extremely positive. We're all very excited."

*On the implications and watching the Texas-Nebraska game last night:*

"I did watch it and I heard some talk today that we would have been paired up with Nebraska in the Fiesta... that was news to me. There is just so much talk in general, but I thought last night that it would have been good for us if Texas won, so I experienced a little bit of anxiety, like a lot of Iowa fans last evening. Bottom line is that we are just thrilled."

*On how many things associated with Iowa football this year coming down to the final seconds:*

"It was probably appropriate last night -- I wasn't quite sure if that second was going to be left on the clock; what an ending there. I've been able to watch a lot of crazy endings the last couple weeks and last night fit right into what we've seen all season long."

*On this year being so rewarding:*

"Having a chance to watch games over Thanksgiving and the last 24 hours -- if you look at football, any time you win you should be appreciative. It's such a fine line in college football - its competitive, teams find ways to win, particularly at the end of the game. That's why we've had a good feeling about this football team all season long. If it wasn't for their resolve, the way they persevered during the course of the year, we wouldn't be sitting here tonight talking about a BCS bid. The credit really goes to our players. They've done a wonderful job all season. They've handled all the challenges that we've had, and there were many, especially on the injury front. Our guys just kept pushing forward. We're really proud of what they've done and very excited about the opportunity ahead of us. That being said, we know we have a great challenge in Georgia Tech. They've had an exceptional year. Coach Johnson has done a great job there in a short amount of time. It will be very tough preparation, I know that much."

*On Iowa's last Orange Bowl performance:*

"I draw a parallel between that experience and our 1981 Rose Bowl from my personal experiences. I think we were just happy to be there. Back in 2002-03, there was a lot of hoopla surrounding our team at that point and we probably got all caught up in the euphoria of the whole thing. We enjoyed the experience, there is no question about that, and we played a good football team, too (USC)."

*On when the team will leave:*

"Roughly around December 27<sup>th</sup> or 28<sup>th</sup>, that's when we will travel. We want to make sure we have enough time to get acclimated to the temperatures, since they are a little different than what we are used to up here."

### **SENIOR TIGHT END TONY MOEAKI**

*On reaching a BCS game:*

"This is going to be pretty exciting. Obviously, it's going to be a big game, the biggest game all year for us. We're just excited as a team, I'm excited for everybody. It should be fun."





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### *On waiting for the announcement:*

“I think we were all kind of anxious to find out and now we know where we’re heading. Going to a BCS bowl is pretty nice. We were hoping for a BCS bowl, so thanks to the fans and having Coach Ferentz on our side helps. We’re just excited.”

### *On Georgia Tech:*

“I’ve seen them on TV a couple times. Their offense will be different than what we’re used to. Other than that I haven’t seen too much on them. I’ve heard of them and know they’re a good team.”

### *On the importance of having Stanzi at quarterback:*

“It’ll be good. He has a lot of big game experience. He’s a great player and it will really help us a lot.”

## **SENIOR LINEBACKER A.J. EDDS**

### *On hearing the bowl announcement:*

“The reaction was nothing too crazy. Had we not been in that bowl, the reaction might have been greater, but I think we all thought we deserved it. We thought we played well enough through the course of the season and we were able to put ourselves in that position in the end, and we were happy it paid off.”

### *On Georgia Tech’s option offense:*

“It’ll be different, but Coach Parker has been around forever and this is old school defense versus old school offense. He’s seen all kinds of offenses and schemes; he’s seen it all. He’ll have us in a great scheme. Both teams are well coached, so we’ll have to go out there, play, and see what happens.”

### *On getting back in rhythm after the time off:*

“It depends on the mindset. I think we saw last year at the Outback Bowl, we hit our stride pretty quick. I think a lot of it depends on how you handle December and early January, with practice and getting ready, and your mindset on game day. I think it’s easy to let the excuse of having over a month off creep in, but if you do a good job preparing and you have the right mindset, it’s easy to pick up where you left off.”

### *On the experience from last year’s bowl game:*

“It’s huge. It’s our groundwork for how to be successful in a bowl game as far as preparation, not just trying to get through practices, but doing a good job and trying to get better. You know how to handle yourself once you get to the bowl site. I think we did a good job of that last year. It’ll be a good experience, last year kind of springboarded us to this year.”

### *On getting a BCS bowl:*

“It’s huge. We knew it would be a good bowl wherever we ended up and it would be a great venue playing against a really good team. To get to a BCS bowl is great. To finish 10-2 and have a chance to get to 11 and be the second team in school history to do so is a huge opportunity. You can’t ask for a whole lot more.”



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157 Carver-Hawkeye Arena, Iowa City, IA 52240-1020 P: 319.335.9411 F: 319.335.9417 e-mail: [sports-information@hawkeyesports.com](mailto:sports-information@hawkeyesports.com)



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### **JUNIOR QUARTERBACK RICKY STANZI**

*On being invited to the Orange Bowl:*

“It is a great honor; a great opportunity for our football program to play a great opponent in Georgia Tech in a BCS game. I know our fans will be very excited and very supportive like they always are. We have a lot to look forward to and a lot to be thankful for.”

*On returning from injury:*

“Getting back to practice was very exciting. Sometimes you take things for granted when you do them all the time. When it is taken away from you and you don’t get to practice you realize how much you miss it and how bad you want to be out there. Being back out there, I was more excited than worried about shaking off the rust. Practice has been a lot of fun.”

### **JUNIOR DL ADRIAN CLAYBORN**

*On playing against Georgia Tech’s option attack:*

“We are going to have to play fundamentally sound; no playing out of your gap or out of your position. We are going to have to watch a lot of film. We have to be focused and disciplined because they have some great running backs, a great quarterback and a great team.”

*On playing in a BCS Bowl Game:*

“It is good to know who we are playing now. It has been a long wait since the Minnesota game. We are glad we know the opponent and we will be well prepared. We are respected around the nation and it is going to be a good game.”

*On waiting for the bowl announcement:*

“It has been a good wait. We knew we had some good possibilities. It is going to be fun; it is going to be the only game of the night. We are going to have to be well prepared. I am glad they picked us; the Orange Bowl is a great bowl and Miami is going to be fun.”



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