

November 5, 2011



Final Score:

Iowa – 24
Michigan – 16

An Interview With:

COACH KIRK FERENTZ

COACH FERENTZ: Obviously just thrilled to get the victory today. Really proud of our football team. That was a very good football team that we played today, and they competed extremely hard. We knew that and expected that, but a lot of credit goes to our football team. They just -- our guys really battled and competed, played through the tough moments, and there were a few of them out there, and came up with plays when we had to. So just really proud of their effort, and it's great to get a win certainly.

Q. You played with the lead the whole way.

COACH FERENTZ: That's not a bad deal. Hopefully we can do that more frequently. But the guys did a good job. We got off to a good start on that first drive, and for the most part had fair balance during the course of the game, too, which is really important against a team like that because they're tough to move the ball against.

Q. Talk about your defense from the 3 on the last series.

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, just showed a lot of heart down there. It's almost better that we ended the game that way because that was a tough circumstance certainly. You're kind of rolling the dice a little bit because he's a dangerous thrower, but also he can squirt out of there and run that ball in there, so the guys really had to play good team defense, something we've struggled at at times. We have not been the most sound at

times, and that's given up some big plays. It was good to see our guys make them earn it and great to come up with stops clearly at the end there.

Q. What kind of spark do you get from Nardo and Nielsen and Lowery on that last play?

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, it's a little bit ironic. The only irony here is that I felt like this was the healthiest we've been probably since we started camp back in August going into the game, and the irony is that we lost Dom Alvis here in the fourth quarter, which was really tough. But it's good to get anybody back anytime, any player that you're counting on to help you, and certainly when you get older guys back, guys that have a little bit more experience, that's a good thing, too, not that Tom Nardo is a vastly experienced guy but he's an older guy that's been through a lot here, and I think just gave us a little bit more stability out there. And Mike Daniels is a little bit healthier and able to play harder, too.

Q. Does it make it a little more gratifying trying to make up for a loss, getting a win today against the Michigan team?

COACH FERENTZ: You know, if you beat Michigan, whatever they're ranked coming in here, top 20, top 15, you beat a team that's ranked, and certainly we're not, that's a good thing. It was great to win in front of our crowd. Our crowd was just outstanding out there, like they usually are. It was a great crowd that got into the game and they were a big part of the win today.

Q. They use the phrase bend but don't break a lot of times describing your defense. Would the last minute and a half of this game be a perfect example of that?

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, you go back to last week, we came up short, red zone offense, red zone defense, something we had been doing

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pretty well, and if you are a bend-but-don't-break team, you'd better not break when you get down in there, and today that was a critical thing. Then the other part is we played clean. We held onto the ball, and fortunately we were able to turn one of their turnovers into three points and then came up with a turnover to keep them out of the end zone or at least from getting those three points back, so that ended up being a big factor, as well.

Q. Talk about Coker's play.

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, those yards came tough today. I just told Gary and that on the radio. Not saying Michigan is like Penn State, but it's a little bit like that '08 here. Those yards Sean got that day, those were hard-earned yards, really hard-earned. That's a very physical, tough, athletic defense that we played today. Marcus, you've got to earn those yards. It's amazing I looked, he got 4.6 a carry, and that's hard work. He's going to be sore tomorrow, I know that. I thought he started hitting stride there in the Northwestern ballgame, and I think he's in the gear that we're hoping for.

Q. What's the status on Alvis?

COACH FERENTZ: I mentioned that a minute ago. That's really the biggest downside right now to the game. We lost him to an ACL injury. The only thing that could have been worse is if he was a senior, but you hate for any player to deal with something that's going to require surgery and rehab and all those types of things. He's a young guy that's been working really hard and playing a lot better and improving each week, so it's a loss to our team, but our thoughts are more so with him right now.

Q. With your destiny in your own hands, do you allow yourself to start thinking three more and we can win this division?

COACH FERENTZ: Only if we're idiots. What we've got to do is worry about next week, so I hope we don't have any idiots on our team. We'll talk about that tomorrow, but we've got a tough game coming in here next Saturday, I know that.

Q. At the end of the game Hemingway made that catch in the back of the end zone. Did you think he was in?

COACH FERENTZ: You know, I've got the worst seat in the house. It looked from where I was standing, it looked like he came down on the white and then seeing the replay it made me feel a little bit better.

Q. The 24-hour rule, how hard is it to get a team to buy into that on Sunday and Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday?

COACH FERENTZ: It was hard last week and it'll be hard this week for a different reason. That's one of the tricks I think anybody involved in sports would talk about. But I want guys to enjoy things, too. It's okay to feel bad. Last week we deserved to feel bad and we earned that, and this week is the flip. These guys earned a chance to really feel good about themselves. They should be proud of their effort. They get tomorrow and when they get up Monday morning, so it's a little bit more than 24 hours, I guess. They get up Monday morning, we've got to flip the page because we've got another tough challenge here.

Q. Did they put the Minnesota loss behind them until practice started?

COACH FERENTZ: I doubt it. You'd have to ask our players, but I think it was lingering with all of us a little bit. Losses stay longer typically, and wins stay longer with immature teams, but I don't think we have an immature team right now.

Q. Is the approach any different in a week after a game like that?

COACH FERENTZ: Well, yeah, obviously it is. I mean, the psyche of a team and where they're at, it's different. It's not just wins and losses, it's time of the year, circumstances, how much flak, shrapnel is flying around out there, those kinds of things. But it's just part of the deal. You just handle every week as it comes and try to do your best to evaluate and then do what we can.

Q. You guys forced a couple of big turnovers. Can you talk about that?

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, they were critical. We'd prefer to come up with -- I think we got the ball on the 31, be better to come out with a touchdown. But at least we came up, Mike Meyer hit a big field goal there, and that was not easy, so it was a big play, and then certainly on the other end of the field, coming up with the turnover, so Michigan didn't have a chance to get the 3 or 7, that was a big thing, too.

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