

December 5, 2010



An Interview With:

KIRK FERENTZ and GARY BARTA

KIRK FERENTZ: Welcome, and certainly we're thrilled to be selected into the Insight Bowl. We had heard speculation during the course of the week. I'm not sure that anybody really knew. So it's good to get that news this evening. We're absolutely thrilled, very appreciative of John Junker and his board, everybody involved at the Insight Bowl for their selection of Iowa, and we're just really excited about playing a first-class opponent in Missouri in a great venue.

We'll look forward to the upcoming month. It's going to be a real busy month for us, a lot of work to do certainly with the football team, and our guys are going to be very busy with finals like all college students across the country, and once the finals are over we'll really get serious about getting ready for the game. But we're just excited about the opportunity and looking forward to hopefully a great trip to Arizona.

Q. How much would it mean to leave Tempe with a win?

KIRK FERENTZ: It's been a tough month for us. Certainly the next game is really important to us. It would have been anyway, but to finish up like we did was I think -- left certainly a real bad taste in everybody's mouth, and we're anxious to get back on the field and have a chance to compete again. But we've got a lot of work to do between now and then. But we're really appreciative of the opportunity.

Q. When all this was starting to play out, did you just try to ignore it because you

knew something was going to happen and you had no influence over it?

KIRK FERENTZ: I mean, really all I knew, probably nine days ago, was if we won our last ballgame that pretty much would have assured us, I would assume, a real good venue or a good place to go. And we didn't do that. So we left all this stuff out to the fate of the selection committees and what have you.

But at the end of the day, we're thrilled about our opportunity. This is just a tremendous opportunity for us to go to a first-class bowl. The Insight Bowl made a major move during this out-of-season, this past out-of-season, and Gary (Barta) explained to me about that back in the summertime I believe it was. So I think, you know, it's a little bit like the Alamo Bowl, which was in a similar slot for us, and that was a great experience for us, and now the Insight Bowl has moved up in the tier. They've got a great venue, great committee with people that have great experience in the bowl business.

You know, and I think we're very, very fortunate. So at the end of the day all this stuff is out of our control like every year, and the only thing you can do is try to win as many games and then you go from there. But we're thrilled to death to be going to such a good place and playing such a good opponent.

Q. Have you had a chance to see Missouri on TV during the year?

KIRK FERENTZ: I think I might have seen the last quarter, maybe less than that, of the Oklahoma game. It was a Saturday night and I can't remember where we played. We must have been at home. And it was certainly a big win for them and they looked like an excellent football team. They're a 10 win football team. Gary Pinkel has done a great job ever since he got to Missouri, and they've had a lot of good football teams in recent history. This looks like another good

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version. I know they've got an outstanding quarterback and a lot of good football players.

Q. Did you get caught up during the day? There was some speculation you might be playing Nebraska. Did you hear any of that or did that matter to you at all?

KIRK FERENTZ: I really haven't paid attention to it, and I haven't heard it to answer the question. I've heard everything, I guess, during the course of the week, but really didn't pay much attention to it, because it's out of your control. It's just good now to know where we're going and who we're playing, and we're excited about both of those things.

Q. Do you know Gary very well? You guys are from the same part of the world, Ohio, Pennsylvania.

KIRK FERENTZ: Yeah, I believe Gary was on the staff when we played Washington in '81 out there -- not out there, but in the Rose Bowl. We got throttled. I've had the chance to meet Gary at a clinic, and we visited another time. Phil Parker worked for Gary at Toledo and had great respect for the job Gary did at Toledo. Did an excellent job there and certainly has done a great job at Missouri. He's a tremendous football coach. They've got a good staff, a very stable staff, and just nothing but positive things to say about what they've done there and what they've accomplished.

Q. A few years ago you were slated to play Missouri a few times and that didn't work out. Is there any lingering feelings about it?

KIRK FERENTZ: I've never had any feelings anyway. It didn't work out, it didn't work out. We moved on, they did, too. I know just they've got an excellent football team and it's going to be a real challenge for us to play them.

Q. Is there an air of excitement just to go somewhere new and different for a bowl game?

KIRK FERENTZ: Yeah, Florida would have been great, also. Bill Brashier said it best years ago: There's no such thing as a bad bowl game. Some are better than others but there's no such thing as a bad one. I think this will be exciting for our team and our fans to have a new venue. We already know it's a great venue. Certainly the Phoenix area is -- I don't know how you can have anything but a great experience there.

You know, that coupled with the fact that we're playing an outstanding opponent, to me that's all positive, and the only drawback is we're playing on the 28th so we're going to have to move a little quicker, but we'll get around that.

Q. Will your preparation be about the same?

KIRK FERENTZ: It's going to be a little tougher to squeeze the workouts in just because of the time, and I don't think our professors are going to excuse our players from finals. We could ask maybe but I'm not sure that will go anywhere. So we'll work around the finals schedule, but we'll get it done. There's going to be ample time to get ready, and we'll be ready to go when kickoff comes. No excuses, we'll have enough opportunities.

Q. You know, you look at it, and you go in with a lot of momentum in 2002 and the result isn't what you want but then you're struggling in '06 and you give Texas a whale of a game. Talk about the different momentum, momentum just doesn't carry over, and with that break how do you --

KIRK FERENTZ: I'm not sure momentum really factors in good or bad. You know, the bottom line is how you prepare for a bowl game, the attitude you take is really to me the most important thing. We didn't have the right attitude in 2002. That was clear. Anybody that was at the game or watched the game would say that was not a good result.

Outside of that, I think we've been ready to play in our bowl games, so hopefully we'll take the right attitude this month and get ready, and we're going to need to because the opponent we're playing right now, if we're not ready to go, it could be out of control real fast. So we'd better be ready to go at kickoff.

Q. How much healthier do you think you'll be? Is Robinson still expected to come back?

KIRK FERENTZ: I expect he is, yeah, he had a concussion. I don't think it was anything more serious than that. So we're expecting him to be back. Tarpinian is still questionable, and outside of that I'm trying to think -- I haven't thought about that in a while. But I think we should be fairly healthy.

Q. Corners are all right, too?

KIRK FERENTZ: Yeah, the guys -- I don't think we had anything serious last week outside of Tarp not being ready to go. You know, and then the guys that have had -- I'm trying to think of who else. The guys we lost for the season we've lost for the season, but Jeff is a guy we're hoping to get back for the bowl game. That would be a real plus if we could get him back.

Q. After the Minnesota game you weren't kind of in a mood to reflect what happened last month. I guess since that time what have you thought about?

KIRK FERENTZ: I've thought about a lot of things. Just in a nutshell -- and again, I'm not ready to evaluate the season. We'll do that when the last game is done. But in a nutshell, we lost some close ballgames. I think that's -- I've read a lot of papers since Saturday, and I think the concerns and the shortcomings have been pretty well documented and pretty easy to see. The real question right now or the real key is what we can do to find some solutions.

You know, just in a nutshell, we've lost some close ballgames, and then pure and simple last week for whatever reason we didn't show up ready to compete the way you have to be ready to compete if you're in a competitive conference. When you don't do that, you get what you deserve, and that's what happened to us. We played a team that was playing at a higher level than we were, and they beat us.

We'll see if we've learned a lesson. But that was very disappointing and hasn't happened many times in 12 years, so it's really disappointing.

Q. How much of a role will Norm Parker have at the bowl game?

KIRK FERENTZ: Well, I think last week was a good week for him, and that's encouraging news. Maybe I'd link him with Jeff Tarpinian, although Norm did more than Tarp last week, so I guess that's a good thing. But we think Tarp is on schedule maybe to have a chance to play in the bowl, and certainly Norm I think is gaining ground.

But it's going to be a process. You know, we maybe underestimated that back two months ago. It's been a long road back, and we're just going to take it a day at a time. But he's had a good week. He was in the office, as painful as it was, going back through the Minnesota game and spending time on that, and he was also on the field

a couple days. We worked our younger players twice, and he was out there for both practices.

Hopefully that's an indication where we're heading. I understand he was at the basketball game yesterday, too, which was great. Those are all positives.

GARY BARTA: Just a couple of comments in general and then if you have any questions I'd be happy to try and answer them. First of all, just thinking about the bowls in general in the Big Ten, I think it's worthy of saying that we have great partnerships from top to bottom, and that got even better -- a little different, we lost the Alamo Bowl, but we brought in the Gator Bowl, and then the Insight as Kirk mentioned made a bold move to move up in the order. So that's been terrific to see.

They increased their payout. They moved television networks. They were on the NFL Network, moved on to ESPN, moved their date, so we were thrilled to get the invitation a little bit earlier this afternoon, earlier this evening, and you can imagine didn't hesitate to accept that invitation.

One of the things I like about the bowl, I know the group real well. They are experts at putting on bowls. One of the things I like about this bowl is it's very fan friendly in terms of getting to the location, getting to Phoenix, the prices are reasonable, and it's just a bowl, I think, that our fans are going to enjoy.

We're playing a great opponent, as Kirk said. To play somebody that's 10 and 2 is just a great opportunity for your student athletes and your fans, so that's a good match-up. When we received the call, we were thrilled to accept. So happy to answer any questions.

Q. How closely did you follow that and how close did anything with Nebraska come?

GARY BARTA: Well, I wouldn't be on that side of the discussion. I know that it's probably a discussion that that bowl was having even this morning, so I know that we didn't get our phone call with the confirmation that our opponent was going to be Missouri until late in the afternoon, and I know that Nebraska is somebody that they were talking about at least. I don't know, you'd have to ask the bowl committee if they'll share with you what their conversations were.

You know, we knew that going in whether

it was a Nebraska or a Missouri that we were going to play a tremendous football team either way, and it was likely going to be a team with only two losses. So we knew we were going to have a terrific match-up.

Q. At what point did you find out, like was it today then that you found out that it was going to be the Insight Bowl?

GARY BARTA: I found out today it was going to be the Insight Bowl and it was sometime right at the end of the women's basketball game while we were at Carver Hawkeye watching Lisa's team play. We were in conversations all week with the Outback, with the Gator and with the Insight, so I talked with all of them several times and was starting to get a sense that it was heading this way. What day is today? Starting to get a sense maybe Friday or so that it was starting to head this direction. But still no confirmation at all until today.

Q. Was it one of those things where the Outback and Gator Bowls first said we're not taking Iowa and then the Insight said -- gave you the invitation?

GARY BARTA: Well, the way that the selection goes is that Outback had the first and then this year Gator was next -- of those three Bowls we're talking about, Outback was first, Gator was next and Insight went after that. Next year that will be reversed between Insight and Gator Bowl. You know, I had great conversations with all three bowls about Iowa and who they had played during the year and the games we had played well and our fan base traveling to those other bowls, particularly the Outback Bowl. Gator Bowl is new this year but had some great conversations with them about our fan base. They're very aware, very familiar. Talked about our television ratings this year. We had terrific viewership this year and last year, so made sure that they were aware of that.

And then knew at the end of the day they were going to look for a great match-up and we'd fall wherever the chips came out.

Q. I guess where I'm coming from is like was it one of those things where the Outback Bowl people called you up first and said we're taking Penn State and then the Gator Bowl people notified you --

GARY BARTA: I see what you're saying. Well, you find it out today when the selections are made. So they didn't call us and say, we're going with Penn State. They just called Penn State and

invited them. Same with the Gator Bowl; they didn't call us to say who they were inviting; they just didn't give us a call. And then my first phone call came from John Junker and his committee this afternoon.

Q. Do you have a sense for why those two passed on Iowa?

GARY BARTA: You know, I can only speculate. We do have great fan base, great tradition in bowls, great tradition of being ready for bowls, television ratings. The two teams that were selected ahead of us, we were fortunate enough in those games head-to-head to beat those teams. But at the end of the day we didn't have a great November, so my guess is that factored into it. But that's my speculation, not them directly giving me that feedback.

I think Kirk put it well. When you finish the season the way we finished, that probably came with it, not finishing in one of the higher bowls. And I say higher, but if you look at the three-bowl structure, those three bowls, they're very similar in terms of their makeup, in terms of who you're playing. One is SEC -- two of them are SEC, one of them is Big 12, but the level of opponent that you're playing and the payouts and the television audience are all very close in nature.

Q. Is there any consolation that you're going to be playing easily the best opponent of the three? Missouri has two losses, ranked 15th or something.

GARY BARTA: You know the way I know Kirk looks at it and I look at it, that's a big positive. One of the things that's exciting for our players, our student athletes and our fans and our coaches and the athletic director is to take on a great opponent. Missouri of all the Bowls that -- of all the opponents that were selected in those three Bowls, I think Missouri -- certainly they're ranked the highest. I think I'm right in saying that.

That makes it exciting. It makes it exciting leading up to the game, makes it exciting when your fans go to purchase tickets and the television audience gets excited. So I think it's terrific. And there's positive in everything, and that's certainly one in this case.

Q. Do you think that you have a border state and here you go to play out in Arizona?

GARY BARTA: Well, they didn't offer to



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play it in Iowa City or Mizzou or Columbia. I think what you're saying is here we are, we have really a rivalry between our fans and their fans and the two programs, but we're going to play it down in a great location. I don't know if that's what you were getting at. But I think both sides will travel well.

Q. Do you think Missouri will back out of the contract?

GARY BARTA: Missouri is a great team. Can't wait to play them.

You asked about tickets. The ticket allocation for both sides is 11,000, and one of the things -- Pam Finke is our ticket director. She's here. One of the things that is unique, back to talking about there's positives in everything, this bowl and the way they set up their bowl tickets, they give each school sideline tickets. They give us one whole side of the stadium, so the tickets that they're providing us that we'll be selling are in great location. We'll have 50-yard line seats all the way from goal line to goal line at all levels. I think the pricing is tiered.

So this bowl does it a little bit differently in that they really provide us with great tickets for our fans. We had sold -- and again, Pam is here if you want to ask her questions afterwards, we had sold -- even before we knew the opponent, not even the opponent, the bowl, even before we knew the bowl, we had sold over 2,000 tickets to this particular Bowl. We know we're going to have a great showing by our fans, and now that we've announced it, I'm sure that people will start trying to make their way to Phoenix.

And you can fly into Phoenix, you can fly into Las Vegas or San Diego and drive there from several locations, so I think this is going to be a fan-friendly Bowl match-up.

Q. You touched on 2,000 tickets that were sold before the match-up was announced. Was there ever concern brought up to you from fans about making a second trip to Arizona in four months since Iowa had a game at Arizona down in Tucson back in September?

GARY BARTA: I haven't had anybody contact me. I'm guessing there might be people who feel that way, but I haven't had anybody contact me and talk about that.

I walked from the stadium over to this complex, and feeling that wind tonight, I think Phoenix feels pretty good right about now.

Q. Is there any residue from the Missouri backout of that series? You weren't around, so you wouldn't --

GARY BARTA: First of all, I think a lot of time has passed. In football years five years seems like a lot of years. They're a great football program. Coach Pinkel is somebody that I'm very familiar with. He has ties back to Washington, and of course I was at Washington for seven years, so I've gotten to know him. He's a terrific coach. It's a great program. I know Mike Alden well.

So I would say no. I know that there was a lot of pent-up feelings about that particular situation when it all occurred, but it had sort of run its course before I got here, and I really haven't heard any of it in this building. We're just ready to take on a great opponent.

Q. Aren't there three bowl games being played down there at this site? Am I right in saying that?

GARY BARTA: No, you're right in saying that.

Q. How does that affect the whole thing do you think?

GARY BARTA: Well, we're the first one so we'll get it all warmed up. They do a great job. I'm very familiar with the Fiesta Bowl people, the bowl committee and all their volunteers, and they ramped that up significantly several years ago when they took on the Insight Bowl, and now they're going to be running the National Championship, as well.

They're very well-versed. The city of Phoenix is used to having multiple bowls. So I think it'll be terrific.

One thing I thought of, and I thought of it in a roundabout way when you mentioned multiple bowls, one thing I like about the 28th and the time slot is we'll be the only game that night at that time, so in between Christmas and New Year's, on evening game, a night game during prime time should be a great audience with those two opponents.

Q. Do you feel it helped, considering that you established that relationship with the Fiesta Bowl people a year ago when they were looking at possibly taking Iowa for the Fiesta before you got the Orange Bowl invitation?

GARY BARTA: Well, I've known the

Fiesta Bowl people for many, many years. The University of Iowa has had a good relationship even though we've never played in the bowl. You might recall a few years ago when we went 6 and 6 and didn't go to a Bowl, that was one of the Bowls that we were in great conversations with prior to losing that last football game, so we were familiar with them through that process.

We were familiar with them last year when it was very close to us heading to Phoenix for the Fiesta Bowl. So I think they know us well, they know our fan base well. They know that we have thousands of Iowans right there in the greater Phoenix area, so I'm excited, and I think they are, too. I know they are.

KIRK FERENTZ: If you look through the entire country right now, one thing it's pretty fair to say, make a blanket statement, anybody that won 10 or 11 games has a good football team. Certainly the 12-win teams are really good, too, so this team is in that stratosphere. They're going to be tough opponents.

Q. Did you let the team have last week off? Are you going to let them have more time off?

KIRK FERENTZ: Basically this past week, the guys that played during the year, that group had a real light week and then we did work the younger guys twice at the end of the week I guess it would have been, Wednesday, Thursday. We had two fairly short practices but just tried to get them all caught up a little bit.

But with us playing over Thanksgiving, I thought it was important for the guys that have played a lot of plays just to have some downtime and get away from some things a little bit and we'll be back to kind of business as normal here the rest of the way.

Q. Talk about Gabbert a little bit. You guys recruited him and recruited his brother, as well?

KIRK FERENTZ: Uh-huh. They both can throw the football, I know that. They both are excellent quarterbacks. Obviously the one at Missouri has got a little bit more experience than the younger one, but they're both tremendous quarterbacks. He can throw the football. He's done it. It's well documented.

Q. Any acclimation to the heat? That was the talk last year and then the Orange Bowl ends up being, as you said, Iowa weather. Any thoughts on that?

KIRK FERENTZ: Based on the last couple days, I think it's great. I think all of us are looking forward to going there. I don't think it's going to be any big deal. I would imagine 70s. I haven't really, A, researched it, or B, spent much time in Arizona. I haven't retired yet. Maybe when I retire I'll get a chance to go out and enjoy that. I know it's going to be a lot warmer than the Midwest certainly, and I think it'll be a great location. I don't think heat will be a factor at all.

Q. Do you think there's any benefit to playing these guys when you recruit in their backyard? I know you guys don't recruit in Arizona, but --

KIRK FERENTZ: I hadn't really thought about it that way. I think the good thing is we're playing a team that's really had a great season, is nationally ranked, and has proven that they're a very good football team. So I think that's exciting.

It'll be a great challenge for us, so that part, and if it helps us in recruiting, I guess it could hurt us, too, if we don't play well. But I really hadn't thought about it. But I think it's just a good match-up. I think the fans will be interested in it because of who we're playing and where we're playing it, so I think those are two positives. I haven't thought much further about it.

Q. Today the Big Ten I guess announced that it was holding firm on 12 teams. Are you aware of it? Do you have any thoughts on it?

KIRK FERENTZ: No. A, I wasn't aware of it, and B, no, I don't have many thoughts on it. C, I'm not real surprised.

Q. You're not surprised? You don't think 16 teams --

KIRK FERENTZ: I guess -- I think it's possible, but you'd have to have a good reason for it and most importantly some teams that they'd feel really good about adding. I'm not sure where those teams would come from unless there's a breakup of some of the other leagues. Anything is possible. TCU is in the Big East now, so anything is possible. My alma mater is in the Fiesta Bowl, so, you know, who knows.

Q. Did you see their (UConn) game yesterday?

KIRK FERENTZ: No, I didn't. I did see the interview after the game. Coach Edsall's interview, which was great. Randy is a guy, he's one of the good, outstanding coaches in college football just like Gary Pinkel. Gary has done a great job at Missouri. My little commentary on Randy, I flipped on -- I don't know where we were, some hotel when they played West Virginia, they had had a bad string and apparently people were barking up his tree a little bit, and I'm thinking, what are you kidding me? I do kind of know you a little bit, I went to school there. He's done one of the great coaching jobs in the country. A sign of the times. But I think he's proven his mettle.

Q. I think I read somewhere last week on ESPN that Coach O'Keefe might be a candidate for Indiana. Is he to your knowledge or have you talked with him about that at all?

KIRK FERENTZ: I don't know what's been released. My understanding is there's been probably four or five people that have been interviewed, so I don't think what's been released, and you'd probably have to ask the people at Indiana. That would probably be more appropriate.

Q. After the Minnesota game, a few of your guys indicated just maybe the focus wasn't there, as you said. Is that something you address here in this Bowl preparation?

KIRK FERENTZ: What would you think? You know, to me it really doesn't matter what your record is. If you have a game scheduled, which we had this one scheduled for a long time, when you have a game scheduled, it's all of our jobs to come and bring our best to the field every week, and that's -- we didn't get that done. It's over. It's history. There's nothing we can do about it, but we just have to try to our best moving forward, and that's what we're going to do.

Q. In '06 I recall it being a boot-camp-type mentality for that preparation for the Alamo Bowl. Is that something you go back to here?

KIRK FERENTZ: You know, we finished up '06 in less than stellar fashion, and our last game in '07 wasn't very good, either. We'll do whatever we can to try to make sure our next game is more representative of the kind of football

team that we want to be. It's going to have to be again in this outing because the team that we're going to play on the 28th could embarrass us real quick if we're not ready to play, so we'd better be ready to go.

Q. Hard to know which buttons to push?

KIRK FERENTZ: Apparently, yeah, apparently because I didn't push the right ones last week, that's for sure.

Q. You touched on how you gave the -- what the players are kind of going through this past week saying how the older guys, you want to give them downtime, younger players you want to work with more. How have you handled this past week? What's kind of going through your mind having gone through everything that you went through up to this point?

KIRK FERENTZ: You know, it's like any week after the season ends. You take a lot of time to reflect on things that happened during the course of the year, not just this past week, and then also what you're going to do for the next month, so that's really kind of what I did. It's a mixture of thinking about our team, the current team and what we've done over the last 12, 15 weeks, where we're at in recruiting, where we're at in terms of bowl preparation, our scheduling, those types of things, and that's pretty much what I did last week.

You know, that will continue here for the next couple weeks now.

Q. You guys have hit the road recruiting. What's the reception been?

KIRK FERENTZ: I think real positive. We're not hardly done with our recruiting yet right now. I guess we're about two thirds of the way or somewhere in that ballpark. But I think the reception has been great. I think things are positive, and next couple weeks will be real important for us to see how things start to fall into place for us.

Q. Are there any positions that maybe you're identifying with this class?

KIRK FERENTZ: Pretty much everything. I don't know where we're -- where we wouldn't want to try to improve right now or add to our

roster. We're looking at everything obviously. I think we're -- hopefully we're well on the right track. We'll just have to see how the next couple weeks play out.

Q. Do you have to step away at all as far as just like get your mind off football for a couple hours, more than you normally would, just relax after a 12-week grind?

KIRK FERENTZ: Yeah, I was a dad yesterday. I took yesterday and was a dad, and we gave our players this weekend. Everybody was done by Thursday afternoon, so one thing we told the players, we didn't want anyone around the building Friday, Saturday or Sunday. The coaches, not quite the same schedule because we're working on recruiting and doing some things there, too, but I did take yesterday and I was a dad. It was a good day.

Q. With this game in late December, how early do you implement the game plan that you have in place and tell the players what it is, and is it something that you do before you head down to Arizona?

KIRK FERENTZ: Yeah, for sure. We don't have a lot of time obviously before we leave for Arizona, but we've got a couple days here. But we'll probably try to have a decent idea at least by the time finals are over what we're going to do in the Bowl game, and then I don't know how much we'll implement, what our schedule will be. I'll have to look at that. But we'll probably have to get right to it after finals are over because playing on the 28th things will have to move a little quicker than what we're used to, but that's okay.

Q. So the practices you have the next couple weeks will be extremely light considering the players have finals coming up?

KIRK FERENTZ: Well, any time we're in bowl preparation we try to make things move a little quicker, less meeting time and less time on the field, but it'll be more Iowa-type things, not really -- we won't focus on Missouri at all before finals, just try to keep our guys sharp and try to build on their fundamental base a little bit and try to go from there.

Q. Make sure the team swarms correctly coming out of Sun Devil Stadium?

KIRK FERENTZ: Yeah, that wasn't a good experience, was it? I can't say I hadn't thought of that. I thought of that earlier today. But I also

thought I have good experience there in 1995, preseason game. That doesn't count. But we did have a good preseason game. I figured I was going to hear about the '04 game, but we did have a good preseason game with the Cleveland Browns there in '95. Things kind of fell apart after that, but at least that was a good day, good night.

Q. Talk about Big Ten honors, you guys getting those and your reaction to them.

KIRK FERENTZ: Just pleased to see the guys get recognized. We had a lot of guys do a lot of great things this year. It was nice to see the guys get the recognition they got. Offensively, defensively and special teams, as well, and just -- always happy for guys getting awards and getting recognition. That's kind of the culmination of a lot of hard work, a lot of dedication. I think all the players that were honored certainly are deserving, no question about that. A lot of good players in our conference like there are every year, so that was good to see.

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