

OUTBACK BOWL HEAD COACHES NEWS CONFERENCE

Wednesday, January 1, 2014

IOWA COACH KIRK FERENTZ

Opening statement:

“I have to start out by saying this was just a fantastic experience for our entire football team. Being in a bowl is special, certainly coming to Tampa, this committee does a wonderful job of hosting teams and providing a great experience and the Outback company is a big, big part of that. They’ve supported this thing for 19 years now and six more coming so it just shows through top to bottom what a great experience it is and we’re very appreciative of the opportunity to be here. Congratulations to LSU. Certainly they made a lot of big plays today and did the things they had to do to get the victory. It was a hard fought game out there and I’m just very, very proud of our football team. They handled this month well, they’ve certainly done a good job since we came down here and they competed today. We came up short, credit to them, but I’m very proud of our players, our team and our coaching staff.”

On LSU utilizing the run and Iowa’s defensive performance:

“There was no surprise by that. They’ve run the ball and thrown the ball really well this year. It’s kind of not ironic but interesting, I guess, they took that first possession and pretty much drove it at ease and then the last possession as well if you’re not including taking the knee. Outside of those two possessions, but they all count certainly. The fact that our guys were out on the field probably too much affected us in that last one maybe a little bit, but they’ve got a good football team as you know. I thought our defense competed extremely hard.”

On quarterback Jake Rudock:

“He got hurt. He had a knee injury and reinjured that knee. At that point, he’s going to be fine, much like the last game. This month helped him certainly. I think having an out of season will really get him healthy. Nothing to be alarmed about and C.J. (Beathard) jumped in there and did a great job.”

On the offense struggles moving the ball:

“I don’t think it was anything magical; they played us a little bit differently than maybe we had seen, and that’s a credit to them. We adjusted a little bit. But they’re a tough defensive ball club. They’ve got a lot of good players, they’ve played pretty well traditionally and they certainly did this year. They just made it tough for us to move the ball consistently. I thought we did a little bit better job in the second half but to me it was a good defensive game. Overall, both teams were playing tough defense and sometimes that’s what happens when good teams get together.”

On a play that was held up because LSU was not allowed to substitute:

“Yeah, I think there was confusion on that. Typically if you don’t sub, they don’t hold up the play up. They must have thought we subbed, I guess, because they allowed them to do whatever they did. It’s part of the game. That was not the deciding factor, but it happens.”

On John Lowdermilk's interception return for a touchdown later reviewed and placed at the one yard line:

“It was a great play, first of all. When you get in a game like that, a defensive ball game, you’re looking for a spark anywhere, it would be him. Jordan Cotton certainly gave us a spark on the kick return. We were hoping obviously it was a touchdown. It didn’t work out that way, but that’s part of the deal too. That’s a good play by Johnny.”

On LSU running back Jeremy Hill compared to Big Ten backs:

“He’s a very good back, obviously. The first guy that comes to mind for me is the running back at Ohio State. He’s awfully good too. They’re both excellent; I don’t want to pick one over the other. But if you were picking one, you’d be happy to have either one, I can tell you that.”

On LSU's power running game:

“That’s who they are. When they run the ball they’re not a finesse team at all. They’ve got several different schemes that they utilize. They run them well. They’re a well-conceived offense. They execute well and they have good players. Obviously they had a new quarterback out there but we had a lot of respect for him, certainly. He played a good game.”

On the legacy of the three Iowa senior linebackers:

“We’ve had a lot of good players through the last 15 years, longer than that certainly. These three guys have just done an outstanding job. They’re all very different stories, although they all played as true freshmen. All different stories, but they’ve all just had tremendous careers and all three of those guys to me are a big part of us being here today. Certainly those three guys are at the head of the class.”

On how his team responded in the second half:

“That’s who they are. I don’t say it in an arrogant way. We wanted to win today, there’s no question about that. I’ll tell you, we’re all disappointed. But the bottom line is they deserved to win. They made the plays you have to make to get it done, credit to them on that. To be around this football team, to coach them, to go to the practice field every day with those guys, weight room, wherever they’ve been, it’s been a really great group of guys to work with. The guys have played hard, competed hard each and every step. That’s where it all starts. Everything you do in life starts with that and working hard. We came up short today, but I’m extremely proud of these guys. It’s been a lot of fun to be around them on a daily basis. It’s been a great 13 months.”

2014 Iowa Outback Bowl Postgame Quotes

WR Jacob Hillyer

On making big plays and getting back into the game:

That's our team. You know it's been a long journey here and we knew that we were going to be facing a good LSU defense and a good LSU team. We knew we weren't going to give up. You just never know with us.

On his thoughts when Jordan Cotton returned the kickoff inside the five yard line:

I was thinking don't think that we're going to sleep. We don't give up; we don't quit.

On what changed when QB C.J. Beathard came into the game for QB Jake Rudock:

Really nothing. C.J. has been there; during the off season and especially this bowl month, he definitely stepped up as a player. We knew he could do it, and he came in and did it.

On getting into a rhythm offensively to start the fourth quarter:

When we came into halftime we knew that we needed to play smart and get something going. The ball was just thrown deep my way and I just did something with it.

QB C.J. Beathard

On the play he threw his interception:

It was fourth-and-one and we knew we had to get it (the first down); but I knew I was going to get sacked, so I just threw it up and tried to give someone a shot at it.

On how frustrating it is to have third-and-one and not get the first down:

It was a little frustrating. There were a couple that we did pick up later in the game, and there were a couple that we didn't finish with. But it is frustrating. When it is third-and-one, you do want to make those high percentage first down plays.

OL Brandon Scherff

On what the next step is for Iowa:

We just need to keep improving for 2014. It starts right when we get back to school for strength and conditioning, becoming more detailed and watching more film.

On whether they stuck to the game plan due to the weather conditions:

The weather was not a problem; we've played in rain, we've played in snow, we like that kind of weather. We want to be the most physical team and dominate the running game. That didn't happen the first quarter and the first half. They were the better team and they came out with the victory.

TE C.J. Fiedorowicz

On if he feels that he helped turn Iowa football around:

Yea, I think that we gave great senior leadership all year and all during this bowl prep I think we did a great job practicing; I think we practiced hard every day. We just played an athletic team and they made more plays than we did.

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On what his next step is:

I'm going to enjoy a little time off here. I have the Senior Bowl coming up, but I'm going to enjoy a couple days with my family. I'm going to worry about that later; that's the next step. I'll probably work out with the Iowa coaches when school starts up. But for the Senior Bowl, there won't be anybody from Iowa so I'll probably go somewhere down south and train there.

WR Jordan Cotton**On whether he could sense the LSU player running him down on the kickoff return:**

I thought I had it all the way, but then I heard the guy behind me and I knew he had an angle on me. All of a sudden he dove at me and I tried to extend for the pylon but I was out of bounds before I did that. But we needed a spark right then and I did that.

On what the mentality was going into that kick off with it being a two score game:

This game is not over yet. We've been down and we've been at this point before. That's the way Iowa football is; we keep fighting until the clock says zeroes. It just shows the leadership that we have from our seniors and all of the guys that put in the extra work. We're just dedicated.

On what he will remember about this football team:

What I'll remember are all of the great friends that I have made during the last five years. Being from Iowa and being around these guys; they are just like brothers to me.

On whether he'll remember this kickoff return more than his kickoff return for a touchdown at Penn State:

This one I'll remember more. This is the first bowl game that I have actually got to contribute in. And being able to go out with a huge kickoff return and giving our team momentum was great.