

## Hawkeyes put lipstick on the pig

Written by Jim Ecker

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Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, so any victory looks pretty when you're playing for an old pig.

Akrum Wadley popped through for a 54-yard touchdown behind a reshuffled offensive line and the Iowa defense rose to the occasion in a gritty 14-7 over Minnesota on Saturday to retain Floyd of Rosedale.

Iowa fans can breathe again after going into a funk last week when the Hawkeyes dropped a home game to Northwestern. The Hawks did not play like Big Ten West Division champions Saturday, but they did not enough to win a road game and keep their playoff hopes alive.

The next challenge will be winning on the road again next Saturday at Purdue. If the Hawkeyes prevail in West Lafayette, then UI fans can start thinking about the possibility of whipping Wisconsin, Michigan and Nebraska at home.

The Hawkeyes still have a lot of room for improvement, but they're sitting 4-2 overall and 2-1 in the Big Ten with their hopes alive.

The Hawkeyes shuffled their offensive line after allowing six sacks against Northwestern and the maneuvers appeared to pay off, even though the offense produced only one touchdown and two field goals.

Cole Croston, who had a rough outing against Northwestern, moved from left tackle to right tackle. Boone Meyers switched from left guard to left tackle, and Ike Boettger moved from right tackle to left guard. James Daniels remained at center and Sean Welsh stayed at right guard.

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Iowa quarterback C.J. Beathard absorbed some tough licks, mostly on scrambles, but he was sacked only once. And even though the offensive line did not create any gaping holes for the running backs, the Hawks did run for 179 yards and the left side of the O-Line created enough of a crease for Wadley to break loose for his game-winning touchdown on the first play of the fourth quarter.

Minnesota was averaging 36 points per game, so holding the Gophers to just seven points was a good sign for the UI defense that has sprung a few leaks this year. Iowa cornerback Greg Mabin, who has struggled at times, had a good game with six tackles and he made a big play when he successfully defended a potential game-tying touchdown pass into the end zone on 4th-and-15 in the final minute.

Croston and Myers, two of the offensive linemen who changed positions, symbolically carried Floyd of Rosedale off the field Saturday as the Hawkeyes beat the Gophers for the 12th time in their last 16 meetings.

It's probably going to be a bumpy ride for the Hawkeyes all season, but at least Floyd had a smooth trip home from Minneapolis.