

Ferentz walking with Big Ten legends

Written by Jim Ecker

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Woody, Bo, Amos Alonzo Stagg, Hayden and JoePa.

Those are the only coaches in Big Ten history who have won more conference games than Kirk Ferentz.

And if Ferentz sticks around for the length of his new contract through the 2025 campaign, he could rise to No. 3 on the all-time list behind only Woody Hayes and Bo Schembechler, two of the true legends in Big Ten annals.

Ferentz collected his 81st victory in conference games Saturday when the Hawkeyes blanked Illinois, 28-0, on a cold, blustery day in Champaign for their first shutout in six years and their first shutout of the Illini since 1985.

Ferentz climbed into a tie for sixth place in Big Ten history with former Michigan coach Lloyd Carr with those 81 victories in conference games only. Ferentz has 134 victories overall in 18 years at Iowa, which puts him seventh in league history.

You don't think of Ferentz as a Big Ten legend, but someday people might look back on his career and his track record and proclaim him one of the most successful coaches in Big Ten history. A couple of more Big Ten titles and trips to the Rose Bowl would help, but there could be no disputing his overall record in the league.

Hayes won 153 conference games and Schembechler claimed 143, putting them 1-2 on the list. Then comes Stagg, the famous coach at the University of Chicago who won 115 league games in the early stages of the 20th Century.

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Hayden Fry, the man Ferentz succeeded at Iowa, retired due to health reasons after the 1998 season with 96 league wins. Paterno garnered 95 victories in Big Ten conference games after Penn State joined the league in the 1990's.

Then come Carr, who led Michigan to a national title, and Captain Kirk. (All coaching records courtesy of Big Ten website).

Ferentz received a shiny new contract in September that calls for him to be paid \$4.5 million annually (plus bonuses) through the 2025 season. If both sides honor that contract, it means Ferentz would be Iowa's head coach for nine more campaigns after this one before the deal expires in January of 2026.

The Big Ten is currently playing nine league games per season, so that means Ferentz would be the head coach for 81 more conference games through 2025. If he compiles a modest 41-40 record in those 81 games, it would give him 122 Big Ten victories and put him third behind only Woody and Bo.

Hayes tops the victory chart for most total victories at a Big Ten school with 205, counting conference and non-conference games. Then come Stagg (199), Schembechler (194), Paterno (162), Fry (143), Henry Williams of Minnesota (136) and Ferentz (134).

If Ferentz averages eight victories in the next nine years, those 72 wins would give him 206 and lift him past Hayes for No. 1 on the all-time chart.

You have to admit, that's pretty cool.

DANIELS + WADLEY = 1,716

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LeShun Daniels and Akrum Wadley, who have packed a 1-2 wallop for the Hawkeyes in most games this season, did it again Saturday against Illinois.

Daniels galloped for 159 yards and two touchdowns, including a 50-yard jaunt. And Wadley ran for 82 yards and another TD for himself.

Saturday's production give them a total of 1,716 yards and 17 touchdowns in 11 games. The numbers are almost exactly even, with Wadley sitting at 861 yards and nine touchdowns and Daniels now at 855 yards and eight TDs.

Both tailbacks have a chance to crack 1,000 yards this season. The Hawkeyes host Nebraska this Friday and then will be headed to a bowl game, so the magic number is within reach.