

Surprise! Brooksie likes the Hawks

Written by Bob Brooks

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I am continually asked why I, here at KMRY, pick Iowa to win its football games all of the time. Well, when Kirk Ferentz and his staff win 60 percent of their contests, there's not much reason to pick against them.

For instance, if you had a horse that was winning 60 percent of the time, I presume you would bet on him all the time. And so it is with the start of another Iowa football season.

Yes, I'm picking the Hawks for Saturday's game against Northern Illinois that could be played in the rain on a soggy Soldier Field, which I presume would keep the scoring for both sides down a bit. Meaning that the Hawks should win, 28-10.

For the year I'm picking the Hawkeyes to win nine games. So that would be slightly above the cutline of Ferentz's overall mark.

FOR IOWA STATE, they come in against Tulsa Saturday as a one-point underdog. I think Paul Rhoads has enough line depth that his team should be able to beat the Golden Hurricane something like 21-14. And that puts Iowa State in Kinnick next week.

I think, at least for the start of the season, that ISU quarterback Steele Jantz will be the thrilling player he was early in the season a year ago.

NORTHERN IOWA against Wisconsin: I think the Badgers will have to break more than a sweat to look impressive against a Panther team that starts a new quarterback, but has players who will stand up to the Badgers' preseason hype.

The Panthers will do more than just show up at Camp Randall and Wisconsin Coach Bielema

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knows that. The fourth quarter, after all of Wisconsin's running, will be tough for the Panthers to handle. But I am sure that they will be satisfied with the effort, even in defeat. Then in two weeks it's on to Kinnick for Mark Farley and the Panthers.

On the high school front, the most impressive team in this area last week was Marion with its 70-point performance against Mount Pleasant. Now the Indians will be on their home turf against No. 1-rated Decorah in Class 3A this Friday night.

In 4A, Xavier put on a workmanlike performance and showed promise in winning Game 1 against Dubuque Hempstead. And I was at Kingston Stadium for the Kennedy-Washington game and I was surprised at the Warriors' workmanlike win over the Cougars, showing good team speed and another star running back in Mitch Bredeson. Now the question for Washington will be consistency.

If the weather holds, it should be another great high school weekend in the Metro.

(Bob Brooks is sports director at KMRY and has been one of the leading voices of college and prep sports in Eastern Iowa for more than 65 years. He is a 10-time winner of the Iowa Sportscaster of the Year Award, and was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in South Bend, Indiana in 2004. His sports reports can be heard weekday afternoons at 4:30 and 5:30, and Saturdays at 6:40 for the Hawkeye football wrap-up.)