

5 Metro stars ready for Shrine Bowl

Written by Jim Ecker
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The 90 players in the Iowa Shrine Bowl had one week to practice, learn all the plays and get ready for Saturday night's football game at Jack Trice Stadium in Ames.

It's a lot of material to absorb in a short period of time, but they always seem to grasp the basics in a hurry and put on a good show for the fans.

"We have some top-notch athletes," said Kennedy strong safety Josh Jahlas, who will play for the North squad. "They're really smart, so they'll be able to get it down."

The players are selected for their athletic ability, leadership and academic performance, and all three factors are necessary to learn a new offense and defense in just a few days.

"These are the best football players in Iowa," Jahlas remarked earlier this week. "They'll get it eventually."

The kickoff of the 40th Annual Shrine Bowl is scheduled for 7 p.m.

This will be a special game for all the players, but it's extra special for Jahlas because he'll be joining the Iowa State Cyclones in a few weeks. He'll be playing on his future home field Saturday night in Ames and the ISU coaches will be in the stands watching.

Jahlas is joining Iowa State as a walk-on and undoubtedly will be redshirted this season as a true freshman, but he's hopeful of earning playing time and a scholarship as time goes by.

Jahlas will be joined on the North team Saturday night by quarterback Mark Atwater from Linn-Mar, receiver Flynn Heald from Cedar Rapids Washington, defensive back Jordan Weber from Xavier and linebacker Jake McDonald from Marion High School.

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The annual North-South Shrine all-star game has raised more than \$2 million for Shriner's Hospitals Children during the past 39 years, and one of the highlights each year for the players is visiting a Shriner Hospital and spending time with the young patients.

The players attended a pre-game banquet in Ames Friday night. The North leads the all-time series, 20-18-1.