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An interview with:

COACH KIRK FERENTZ COACH DAVID SHAW

KAREN LINHART: Hello, everyone, welcome to today's teleconference for the Rose Bowl Game presented by Northwestern Mutual. I'm Karen Linhart, the media director for this game. The Tournament of Roses is thrilled to be hosting teams from our partner conferences in this year's Rose Bowl Game. The Big Ten team in this year's game will be the Iowa Hawkeyes; and the Stanford Cardinal will represent the Pac-12 Conference.

I'm joined today by Iowa head coach Kirk Ferentz, and Stanford head coach David Shaw. I'd like to ask both coaches to give an opening remark. Coach Ferentz?

COACH FERENTZ: We're just absolutely thrilled to get the news today that we've been invited to the Rose Bowl. I'm speaking on behalf of our entire football team and everybody here, it's just a really exciting thing for us. We're honored to be involved in it.

The Rose Bowl is the most traditional Bowl by far, and if you hear anything about it, you always end up facing a top-notch opponent, and we certainly are playing an excellent Stanford team, the champions of the Pac-12. So we're just really excited about the opportunity. We've got great respect for what Coach Shaw has done with his program and the success they've had overall, but certainly this year they've had just a tremendous season.

You know, we're really excited about our guys too. They've done a great job. It's been a lot of fun to coach this team and be with this team on a daily basis. We know we have one more big challenge left and a lot of work to do between now and New Year's. But just really excited about what's in front of us.

KAREN LINHART: Thank you so much, Coach Ferentz. Coach Shaw?

COACH SHAW: Thank you. I first want to say hello to Coach Ferentz. I've heard so much about you in my four years in Baltimore and all those guys talked about spending time with you in Baltimore and Cleveland, and the intelligence and toughness and all those things that those places always talk about, and your name came up repeatedly throughout the year.

I'm a college football fan, and I love to watch and see what's going on, to really watch Iowa. I loved what Iowa did during the course of this year as far as being one of those under-the-radar teams that kept winning, that had to earn the respect that it deserved throughout the year and finally people started to notice the phenomenal job that was going on there by the coaches and players. And I want to say that after our first game stumble, we kind of felt the same way. Just trying to every game get better, every game be physical, every game be tough, every game be smart, and every game try to find a way to win. That's what this season has been about for us.

We too are excited about going back to Pasadena. The Rose Bowl people have been phenomenal the times that we've gone, and we expect the exact same this time. It's a phenomenal event. Each day seems like something great is going on, but at the same time they let you do your work and prepare to play a football game. I think that's a rare occurrence nowadays with all the things that go on around it.

But we're looking forward to the week down in Pasadena. Looking forward to the game against a great opponent in the Iowa Hawkeyes.

Q: Just wondering, you guys are the next two teams rated outside the top four. Wondering how you feel if you would prefer there be an eight-team playoff or if you prefer things the way they are?

COACH FERENTZ: Go ahead, David.

COACH SHAW: Yeah, thanks. You know, for me, I'm not going to say anything different than I've said since the playoff began, which was I think



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it's great. I think the four-team playoff is great. But I've always thought that it's a beginning, and I've said it over the first five or six years what we're going to do with this thing is poke holes in it, find out what works, what doesn't work.

But I do believe at some point it's going to be an eight-team playoff. I think it's going to be unavoidable. I'm not upset by any stretch of the imagination. I just know that this year is part of the process where you have these teams in Stanford and Iowa, and Ohio State that you can make a case that could be in a playoff, and it would be a phenomenal playoff. So I have no problem with where we are now. I just do believe eventually it will become an eight-team playoff because it's the only thing that makes sense.

We've done all this work to separate the Power Five conferences, and now to say we have four spots for a Power Five conferences doesn't make any sense. So I think at some point we'll make it eight.

But I'm fine with it the way it is now. To be honest, I'm excited about playing in the Rose Bowl.

COACH FERENTZ: I feel really the same way. I can see change coming down the road, but to me it's just fine where it is right now. Everything worked well last year. I think it's worked well this year, and to David's point, if this is the consolation prize, what a deal it is for both of us: Two outstanding teams getting a chance to play together in the best bowl. So it's just we feel very, very fortunate. I just think it's good for college football the way it is right now.

Q. Kirk, what does it mean to your program to be in the Rose Bowl for the first time in more than 20 years?

COACH FERENTZ: Well, it's really exciting. Coincidentally, my first year as an assistant here was Iowa's first appearance there in 19 years back in 1981, and then we were able to go back a couple times under Coach Fry. That was here in '85. And the year I left, I think they went back in '90. So there is a run there three times in a decade. We thought we were going in 2002. I think a lot of people at the Rose Bowl thought we were going as well. We ended up being undefeated in the Big Ten that season, and that was the first year, I believe of the BCS system, so we ended up going somewhere else. But we're just excited.

I can tell you, the fans of Iowa are just great fans in general, but I think I can speak for all of them and just say they're really excited about this as well. It's always had a very special place in Iowans'

hearts. They traveled well there in the '50s, certainly did during Coach Fry's time, and my guess is our fans will be well represented again this year.

Q. Coach Shaw, you've been to the Rose Bowl before. And I'd like Coach Ferentz to follow on this. How much of a big deal is it just to kind of have the whole nation watching at one time? I mean, it's the only game on during that time slot. I'm just curious if you've seen an advantage recruiting-wise or otherwise for your program?

COACH SHAW: Well, first of all, for me personally in particular being a son of a coach that coached in the Pac-8 and the Pac-10, for me the world stopped for the Rose Bowl. No matter what was going on, you were stopped and watching the Rose Bowl. We were getting up in the morning and watching the Rose Parade. That's just part of my entire life growing up, and that's exciting to me.

I love the way things have been orchestrated repeatedly year after year that nobody overlaps at the Rose Bowl. I think that's exciting. And I think it has a special place in America's heart and that's part of what we do on New Year's. So that's exciting to me.

As a football team, and once again I mentioned it earlier, the week of the Rose Bowl is awesome, just the different events and things that go on. But at the same time, being able to put the work in and get ready to play a football game is truly special. I mean, the Rose Bowl has the formula to produce a phenomenal game, a phenomenal experience and I can't wait.

COACH FERENTZ: I feel probably much the same way. I didn't grow up with that background, but when I alluded to 1981, it was really a magical year in Iowa football history after 19 years of not going to a Bowl game or having a winning season, Iowa broke through that year under Coach Fry. You might imagine it was a really special time, and everything about being out there was special. It was really a great education for me.

As far as it being such a spotlight game, a little bit like my six years in the NFL. If you played in a Monday night game, and I was in the NFL during the '90s before they had Sunday night, Thursday night, Wednesday night, Friday night NFL games too, that was really a big deal. It's interesting how the players just played at a little bit of a different level, and I think that's probably comparable to the Rose Bowl experience. It's just a really special thing.

Q. Starting with Coach Shaw, you mentioned you had an appreciation for Iowa this year and watching them compete. How often did you get to see Iowa play? And then Coach Ferentz, you played a common opponent with Stanford and Northwestern. Did you watch that game as some of your preparation for Northwestern?

COACH SHAW: Well, for me, I didn't get a chance to see. I probably saw a quarter here and a quarter there during the course of the year just because, I mean, for the first -- for most of our season, we're playing 7:30 p.m. games at night, so I got a chance to see the beginning of a lot of games. But for me it was just that Sunday getting up and saying, oh, you know what, there is Iowa. They won again and they're still not getting the respect that they deserve. For me, I love that. I love well-coached teams. I love teams that fight and scrap and find a way to get what they deserve.

So that was the appreciation for me throughout the course of the year, because I always watch to see what's going on in college football and who the talking heads point to. But then what my eyes tell me as far as the teams that go out on game day and find a way to get it done.

COACH FERENTZ: The first game of the season seems like it was five years ago, let alone four months ago or three months ago. So I really don't think that game is totally representative of Stanford. You think about a West Coast team playing early in the morning, central time here. And the other part is Northwestern is a very, very good football team, as we all know. But I think it's all about football, college football especially is all about the progress a team makes, and certainly I think our team has grown during the course of the season week by week.

I do know I got a chance to see Stanford, bits and pieces along the way, and got to see the end of their Notre Dame game a week ago Saturday. You know, what a fantastic game that was, just two teams again just really competing hard and really dramatic ending. Good players coming up with big plays in critical moments, and just all the nice things David said about our team, I would echo that about Stanford football. When I think about Stanford football, and we've watched our tape through the years with great admiration for the way they play, the attitude they play with, and they've been good for a long, long time. Certainly this is an outstanding Stanford team that we're going to be facing.

Q. This is for both of you, when you look at your styles of football, it kind of pales in comparison as far as the perception that some of the teams that like to spread it out, throw it up, score 60 points a game. However, the way you've been effective proves the value of what some people may call old-man football. I guess your philosophy, obviously, Kirk, we've known yours over the years. But Coach Shaw, where did you develop your philosophy, and how close do you think you are to Iowa in just style or the formula to success?

COACH SHAW: Well, as I mentioned before, I'm the son of a football coach. My dad was a defensive coach his entire career. I think I always had an appreciation for defensive football and the mentality it takes to be great on defense.

Offensively, I grew up a child of the '80s, and, you know, grew up four years in Michigan and before we moved out here to California and before that in Arizona. That's how we played. That was football. I had a high school coach that said if you could get me four yards a carry running the ball on every pass. Just that mentality of setting the tone on offense, being physical up front, and then my years of playing football and playing for some really, really good football coaches and trying to be just precise in the passing game with explosive capabilities and playing situational football. That's just the football that I grew up with that was reinforced by the coaches that I had.

I do kind of chuckle sometimes when we're referred to as a 1950 football team, which I think is cool, because the style of football works, the style of football wins, the style of football, to me, builds character in young men because not everything is going to be fast, and loose, and easy. Some things are going to be hard, and tough, and physical. And the guys learned that style of play and they learned the lessons it has to life.

Q. I was hoping you could show us your primary takeaway from working with Coach Belichick? And David, if you could do the same for your years with Coach Walsh?

COACH FERENTZ: Yeah, it would take a long time to give you the full book. But the biggest thing I would say that really stands out in my mind, and there are a lot of things I could tell you, but his organizational skills and then his thoroughness are just unbelievable, unsurpassable. He had a good grasp of everything in the organization, and I think what enabled him to do that.

He grew up starting at the bottom. He was a quality control guy, the guy that ran people to the airport and all that stuff when he started out for Coach Marchibroda in Baltimore. So he basically worked every job in the organization and had a good, not only knowledge of, but an appreciation for, and so any time he was critiquing someone in any role, you knew that he had walked in that path before. The information he was sharing was usually pretty valuable.

He's just got a tremendous passion for the game and for the people involved in the game. So to be able to spend three years with him was really a real treat for me.

COACH SHAW: As far as me and Coach Walsh, I played for him for two years, and then he was really my first mentor in this profession. Just being around Bill Cowher, you always felt like you were with the smartest guy in the room. Of course it was years of experience, but much like Coach Ferentz just said, a lot of it had to do with his experience, but also his intuition on people, motivating people and putting people in position to be successful. Then what do you do? Take the time to be an expert in it. Don't just be a guy that knows what you're doing, but be an expert in all facets of what you're doing. That's what you always felt around Bill. There was nothing that was going to come across his desk that didn't have, if not three years, but the best answer for, and that's what I try to challenge myself and challenge my coaches to know the answers before they're asked by our guys.

You have a bunch of guys that ask a lot of questions being the Stanford kids that they are, of course. But that is the thing with Bill, which was let's explore everything before we ever get to game day. So by the time we get to game day we have the answers to the questions when they present themselves.

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