THOSE WHO STAY IN RURAL IOWA ARE OFTEN THE ELDERLY WAITING TO DIE, THOSE TOO TIMID (OR LACKING IN EDUCATED) TO PEER AROUND THE BEND FOR BETTER OPPORTUNITIES, AN ASSORTMENT OF WASTE-TOIDS AND METH ADDICTS WITH PALE SKIN AND ROTTED TEETH, OR THOSE WHO QUILXOTICALLY BELIEVE, LIKE LITTLE ORPHAN ANNIE, THAT “THE SUN’LL COME OUT TOMORROW.”

- PROFESSOR STEPHEN BLOOM, THE ATLANTIC, DEC. 9, 2011

Bloom piece sets off furor

By ERIC MOORE

Though locals say a University of Iowa pro-

fessor had every right to compose a contro-

versial article about Iowans, some say it does-

n’t tell the whole story.

UI journalism Professor Stephen Bloom’s controversial article “Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life” appeared in the Atlantic earlier this week and stirred responses this week from Iowans offended by what they believe are inaccurate and overly generalized portrayals of the state and its people. In the article, Bloom comments on the cul-
ture and history of Iowa after living in the state for the past 20 years. He also discusses the state’s role in politics with its first-in-the-
nation caucuses.

“Personally, I wonder why he’s doing this,”

Thompson, the Iowa Landlord head, said in an email on Oct. 8, 2009.

Tuesday evening, the

Des Moines Register

reported Bloom now fears for his family’ s safety because of frightening emails and phone calls he has received in response to the article.

But Supervisor Janelle Rettig said the controversy piece can actually be positive, despite the current negative public response.

“I’m a firm believer in the Constitution, and he has the right to say almost anything he wants, and he’s used his freedom of speech to write,” said Rettig, though she added she doesn’t agree with Bloom’s analysis.

Tyson Blaser

The Iowa State University Theatre Department that he would be absent … He learned much from his experience. "What I’ve learned the most is to be flexible," he said. "Schedule are always changing. Also, just know that you’re part of a huge family at Iowa. Everybody loves being on Iowa’s campus." On the field, in the classroom, and beyond, everybody praised Blaser’s attitude. "He was very humble and unpretentious, and so conscientious," Langguth said. "Great leader and he succeeds in the result of his work." Blaser was appointed to be a starting center as a sophomore in 2010. "He hung on to the program during his rehab. It was really big for us. We had a lot of losses from the year before, and he had high expectations of himself." Through everything, Blaser never won in the classroom, said Nancy Langguth, a clinical associate professor of education. "It just attribute it to working hard every day," she said. "That’s all it comes down to. I don’t think anything for granted and I try hard every day. I went through a lot of stuff. Knowing my baseball career could end tomorrow, I was able to just do my best at everything." Blaser wrapped his Hawkeyes career with a 200 hitting average, 2 home runs, 71 RBIs, four Academic All-Big Ten honors, five sessions as a Unity Council member, a B.S. in history, and a teaching certificate, among other distinctions. He was a great fan of Tyson Blaser."
The Avoid the Stork campaign for safe sex stopped visiting the UI campus last spring, and the university has no plans to replace it. (The Daily Iowan/File Photo)

About half of all pregnancies in the United States are unplanned.

By JENNY EARL

There wasn’t a stork in sight on campus this year. The University of Iowa College of Public Health’s Avoid the Stork campaign — given to the University by the Iowa Initiative Research Program — came to an end last spring, and officials have no plans for a safe-sex marketing campaign to take its place.

“We don’t have any plans,” said Todd Schiff, the health educator for Student Health/Health Iowas. “We’re always out there for outreach, but we don’t have anything as large scale because we don’t have that kind of funding.”

The Avoid the Stork campaign, part of the Iowa Initiative Research Program, was designed to educate women ages 18 to 30 about contraception and improving behavior regarding sexual health.

The UI Avoid the Stork campaign launched in 2009. The UI National College Health Assessment Survey showed 117.7 percent of sexually active UI students reported using the “morning after pill” and 1 percent reported experiencing an unintended pregnancy or getting someone pregnant in the last 12 months.

Some say campaigns such as Avoid the Stork are a key in decreasing the amount of unplanned pregnancies.

“Because a woman sees a poster or a billboard, that is going to prevent a pregnancy? Absolutely not,” said Barb Huberman, the director of education for Advocates for Youth, an organization founded in 1980 as the Center for Population Options. “But that would make her see her partner stop and think about their relationship and think about using better methods.”

Huberman said two-thirds of teen pregnancies occur in 15- to 19-year-olds.

That means if you have 100 teen pregnancies in your city, about 66 of them are going to occur to 15- to 19-year-olds, and in general, those women aren’t in high school anymore,” she said. “Given that kind of population, we need programs that focus on a college-age population.”

The campaign wasn’t renewed, said Health behavior health consultant Susan Beecher and it was a good step toward improving sexual-health awareness at the UI.

“One thing the Stork did was a great job of creating that environment where it’s normal to talk about those things — so anything, that’s been great,” she said.

While the Stork went around campus distributing condoms, Student Health officials will now focus on efforts to educate students and test for STIs.

Student Health’s first successful initiative took place on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1, when a group of Student Health officials used remote testing to test 28 students for HIV.

Beecher said 38 percent of UI students were tested for STIs within the past year, and Student Health hopes to raise that number.

Experts say making the transition from the military to the civilian world can be especially difficult.

“Coming from a tightly knit organization with everything planned out to being totally on one’s own is a big adjustment for any- one,” said John Mikelson, the UI Veterans Center coordinator. “To have all kinds of support, whether it’s someone who can acquire work or find a job for someone, that is very important.”

A recent bill aims to encourage veteran employment by offering tax cuts ranging from $4,000 to $10,000 to employers that hire veterans who have been discharged or separated honorably after 2001.

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“HireVeterans.com does not follow a business model, because it is not a business. We basically reach out to veterans and provide them with free services, and there is no charge,” he said. “It was an important experiment for an important reason that has now helped many vet- erans.”

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Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life

Considering all the coverage the media has given to health care reform, I have, lately, realized it has been more important now than ever to stress the importance of re-electing President Obama to a second term.

Obama took office in the midst of an economic crisis that was not created overnight and wasn't fixed with the solutions offered to the public. Our president has saved our automotive and banking industries, which were on the ropes. He has kept our economy running, and led us out of the Great Recession. In doing so, he laid the foundation for a future economy that will be free from foreclosures, unemployment, and high interest rates.

Not much along those lines, however, has happened yet. But, the economic recovery is just beginning. Obama has a proven track record of solving problems and putting our country on the right track.

Commander-in-chief

Obama fulfilled a promise to bring our troops home from Iraq. He has kept the budget balanced, and closed the Medicare Doctor Payment Corrected. Protesters now also have access to health-care information, and the government is working to reduce the number of individuals who lack access to health care.

Economic security for young Americans

The American Jobs Act the president has signed helps America's young people by creating new opportunities for millions of young Americans. The reform prohibits denying a young individual insurance because of a pre-existing condition, allows young adults to stay on their parents' plans until they reach the age of 26, and closes the Medicare gap for prescription drugs.

Most importantly, insurance companies can no longer deny coverage to individuals who have an individual get sick.

I am writing this article from the viewpoint of an Iowa native. I believe that hard work and fairness will pay off for Obama and other Democrats throughout the country. The majority is committed to protecting the security of our children and home -- and economic security for young Americans.

I would like to note that I am a proud member of the Iowa congressional delegation. I have been an active volunteer in every election for more than the past 20 years. This is why I am not surprised by the fact that President Obama and all his allies have been defeated by the majority of Iowans, who have been moved up to the baseline for the election.
Von Maur move worries some

Von Maur was offered a free building in Coralville to relocate there.

By ALANA ELEKURT

For University of Iowa freshman Lila Belina, the location of any Von Maur store in Iowa is a top priority. She said, "I like it because it brings people into the mall." But the possibility of Von Maur leaving the mall has left some local business owners concerned about their future. Von Maur is currently in a lease agreement with the mall, but according to various sources, the store may be looking to move to a new location. Von Maur currently has a lease until 2014, but sources have speculated that the store may be looking to relocate to a larger location. Von Maur officials have not commented on the possibility of a move, but sources have said that the store is currently evaluating its options. Von Maur has been a staple of Sycamore Mall for many years, and its closing would have a significant impact on the mall's vitality. There are concerns that without Von Maur, the mall may struggle to attract customers and retain existing businesses. Several businesses have already expressed interest in moving into the space vacated by Von Maur, but the future of the mall remains uncertain.
Social issues burst onsetage

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUSZMER

WASHINGTON — Eco-

nomic growth is picking up in the final three months of the year, fueled by higher consumer spending, rising business stockpiles, and modest increases in hiring.

The start of the holiday shopping season in Novem-

ber helped produce the sixth-straight monthly increase in retail sales. Citi-

buying Americans spent more on clothing and elec-

tronics, and sales of autos and furniture also rose.

Job openings declined slightly in October but they were still at the second-

highest level in three years.

Businesses also built up their inventories in October, after holding them steady in September. That means extra factory production was likely needed to increase company stockpiles.

Overall, most analysts expect the economy to grow at an annual rate of at least 3 percent in the October–December quarter, up from 2 percent in the July–September period.

Still, the improvement might not last. Unemploy-

ment remains high, and incomes are stagnant. That’s likely to restrain growth early next year. It will be difficult to avoid any worsening of Europe’s financial crisis.

Because pay raises have been slight, consumers have dipped into savings to finance much of the additional spending. That trend may not be sustainable.

“Looking ahead to early next year, we expect consumer spending to slow markedly amid sluggish income growth, shrinking household wealth, low sav-

ings, and tight credit condi-

tions,” Michelle Meyer, an economist at Bank of Amer-

ica Merrill Lynch, said in a note to clients.

Retail sales rose 0.2 per-

cent in November, the gov-

ernment said Tuesday. That was lower than October’s gain, which was revised up to a 0.5 percent increase. And it was the smallest increase in three months.

Even so, more spending on retail goods shows the economy is continuing to grow steadily, if slowly.
WE’RE FOCUSED ON HEALING

AND OUR RESULTS PROVE IT

Mercy is already known for its warm and caring environment.

But our focus on you—on healing—means that we achieve outstanding results.

That’s the Mercy difference. We invite you to see our quality measures at www.mercyiowacity.org/mercydifference.

Exceptional Medicine.

Extraordinary Care.
**Today’s events**

- International Co Co-
  llectors Association
  Event, all day event,
  10 a.m., Iowa City Public
  Library, 123 S. Linn
  - Women in Medicine &
    Science Symposium, room,
    283 E. 4th, Erskine Medical
    Research Building,
    12:15 p.m.
  - Staff Council Meeting
    2:30 p.m., 2520D University
    Capital Centre
  - Liver Transplant
    Evaluation Committee, 3
  - Zumba with Aimee,
    5 p.m., Old Brick, 28th &
    Main

**FABRIC GIFTS**

- 6 p.m., Home Ec Workshop,
  207 N. Linn
  - Readers and Eagles
    Group, 6 p.m., Uptown
    Books, 251 N. Linn
  - Bingo, 6:30 p.m., Eagle’s
    Club, 225 Highway 1 W.
  - Grey Knights Chess
    Club, 6:30 p.m., Senior
    Center, 28 S. Linn
  - Bluegrass Banjo Jam,
    7 p.m., Hideaway, 310 E.
    Prairie
  - Briche Knitting
    Two-Color, 7 p.m., Home
    Ec Workshop
  - PJ Story Time, 7 p.m.,
    North Liberty Community
    Library, 520 W. Cherry
  - Spoken Word Open
    Mike, 7 p.m., Uptown
    Bills, 121 E. Market
  - Yacht Club, 13 S. Linn

**Horoscopes**

Wednesday, Dec. 14

**ARIES**

You are at the right place at the right time and may, unusually, emotionally, and financially, but you are not to have the care of yourself to handle the situation you are in; you will pick on yourself to get upset.

**TAURUS**

You just want to look at these around you. Fewer feared even that people will get more problems and for your business and personal friends. For your family to work hard and your work for your people around you; it is important to keep work hard and your work for your people around you and your position. Life also appears to be disordered.

**CANCER**

You have a lot of things to fix because the work is important. You are looking for your way around the people around you. Shopping will lead to new business and you will get some good surprises, but you will feel that you are not at the right place.

**LEO**

Use your imagination to get ahead. The ideas you share now will help you advance in the future. Your abilities to enhance change and form will lead to every player will improve your position and your position in the work will be improved.

**SAGITTARIUS**

If you are concerned with getting and connecting with people with people can influence your future. Your voice will become more important.

**LEO**

You do not have the time to express yourself. Not everyone will hear the same way you do. There is no one who will hear you in the future. Not everyone will have the same way you do. There is no one who will hear you in the future. Not everyone will hear the same way you do. There is no one who will hear you in the future. Not everyone will hear the same way you do. There is no one who will hear you in the future. Not everyone will hear the same way you do.
CAMBUS CONTINUED FROM 1

But Bloom himself is not the issue, one UI graduate student said.

“The issue is what messes people up in the planet that led the Atlantic to endorse those ideas and make perceptions about Iowa,” said Robert Gutche, a Ph.D. candidate in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication, who previously worked with Bloom as a teaching assistant.

Gutche said Bloom believes the way people talk about places determines the commitment people put into places. These are real destinies about social change that can come from how we talk in places, especially in the news,” he said.

However, Harney said he is unsure of Bloom’s intention for writing the article.

UI students react react react react react to news

Harney said “I don’t think he’s giving people credit for the accuracy that we have, there’s lot businesses, Iowa, Iowa, Iowa, we developed.”

A local T-shirt business, Buynge, 103 E. College St., has taken a comedic approach to the discussion.

Buynge owner Mike Draper came up with the idea for a sarcastic T-shirt based on Bloom’s article.

The image for the T-shirt was posted on Buynge’s Facebook page around 3 p.m. Tuesday and received 131 “likes” by midnight Tuesday.

Thursday, he said, his goal was to make the piece funny.

“It would be a waste of time to put together a rational argument about it,” Draper said. “I really just use the humor of pointing out the absurdity of it.”

Harney said, “I’m a little sick of it. It just takes me a while to find the humor. I don’t know what I’m doing.”

PEACEFUL CAUCUS CONTINUED FROM 1

The group gathered in response to Obama’s June announcement to withdraw 33,000 troops from Afghanistan by the end of 2012. Cox and others expressed concern about the cuts, and several pointed to Obama’s silence on the issue.

“The position on the war is so important, and if he changes his mind, he’s not the one to be elected,” Cox said. “It’s terrifying embarrassing that there is no discussion in which there’s a strong support for Obama’s stance on the war.”

John Smith spoke in Iowa words about the upcoming caucuses at the Iowa City Public Library on Tuesday. The next several weeks will be crucial for those in favor of peace and hope to change Obama’s mind (The Daily Iowan/Allison Zuppmann)

Iowa State: 35,000 regular students

The UI and other universities have seen an increase in riders during the winter months.

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Democratic Caucuses

The Democratic caucuses and Republican caucuses followed similar outlines.

Democratic:

• Med of desirable prospect
• Gather in groups according to candidate
• Candidates receiving less than 5 percent will be asked to form a group
• Deliberate pace
• No way of talling candidates and number of caucuses delegates are reported
• Cranky convention hell
• Declared candidates had

The state Democratic Committee meeting was not open to the public.

Caucus Bus Systems

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LeBron impress the world with his talents, and he has become a marquee on the highlight reels.

As for more sports, LeBron is a Chicago native who continues to average 25 points and 7.7 assists per game for the Miami Heat, Los Angeles Lakers, Oklahoma City Thunder, and the Dallas Mavericks. His impressive career has earned him recognition as one of the best players in the league, and he has been a vocal leader on and off the court. LeBron's impact on the game is undeniable, and his future potential is truly astronomical.

The Thunder will take on the Chicago Bulls in the next round of the playoffs. The Chicago Bulls are the team that beat the Heat in the Eastern Conference finals last season, so LeBron will have his work cut out for him. The Bulls are a tough team to beat, and LeBron will need to be at his best if he wants to lead his team to victory.

Overall, the playoffs are sure to be exciting, and fans are eagerly awaiting the next round of games. LeBron and the Thunder will need to step up their game to overcome the challenge of the Chicago Bulls. Only time will tell who will emerge as the winner.
The Iowa wrestling team will use the holiday break to continue conditioning and improve its lineup.

By WOLFGANG RIEHE

The Iowa men’s wrestling team should have solidified its defense and given us some things out; goals include use the extra time to iron reflection of how we did this season.

Jenny Rusch.

The honor comes after Showalter was noticed by other coaches during her senior campaign, winning the Big Ten Defensive Player of the Week on Oct. 31, after she contributed to three different athletes at the 200 butterfly with a time of 54.77.

Ryan Phelan, Paul Gordon, Duncan Partridge, and Jordan Nall have contributed to Iowa No. 15 ranking.

Ryan Phelan — stood by the pool in the Campus Recreation & Wellness Center — was in the works to help the Hawkeyes in part to the Hawkeyes in position to put the Black and Gold heavily recruited out of Minneapolis to compete in nationals in the event.

McGrath breaks out

Matt McGrath has morphed into a more vocal leader after a breakout sophomore season for the Iowa men’s gymnastics team.

By RYAN MURPHY

— by Ben Wolfson

The crew has helped lead the 400-free relay team holds the ninth-fastest mark in the country, with a time of 2:49.78. Seniors Ryan Phelan, Duncan Partridge, and Jordan Nall, and freshman Becky Huff have been a part of the relay for the past several years, and we were all hyped up when we got to that event. When we didn’t qualify for finals for that event, it came down to that 400 free relay.”

Tuchscherer was honored as the Co-Swimmer of the Week for her performance in the Hammerly Invitational on Dec. 2-4, and sophomore Becky Egan was named Co-Swimmer of the Week on Oct. 19 as she broke the school record in the 200 butterfly with a time of 2:01.77 and won first in the 100 butterfly with a time of 54.51. Both times were personal bests and rank around second in school history.

The Iowa men’s 400-free relay team — with senior Paul Gordon, Duncan Partridge, Jordan Nall, and Ryan Phelan — is seen.

Tuchscherer, from Davenport, was a member of the 200 butterfly with a time of 2.54.22. They had been invited to Iowa City this year, given the 400 and 800 medleys being major events for these programs.

Showalter honored

Iowa senior Morgan Showalter has been named to the National Coaches Association of America’s All-America first team.

The honor comes after Showalter had missed a lot of practice due to family issues, and the coach is looking forward to the spring season.

The Crimson & Gold native started all 18 matches of her collegiate career.

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The honor comes after Showalter had missed a lot of practice due to family issues, and the coach is looking forward to the spring season.

The Crimson & Gold native started all 18 matches of her collegiate career.

Iowa’s 400-free relay team holds the ninth-fastest mark in the country, with a time of 2:49.78. Seniors Ryan Phelan, Duncan Partridge, and Jordan Nall, and freshman Becky Huff have been a part of the relay for the past several years, and we were all hyped up when we got to that event. When we didn’t qualify for finals for that event, it came down to that 400 free relay.”

Tuchscherer was honored as the Co-Swimmer of the Week for her performance in the Hammerly Invitational on Dec. 2-4, and sophomore Becky Egan was named Co-Swimmer of the Week on Oct. 19 as she broke the school record in the 200 butterfly with a time of 2:01.77 and won first in the 100 butterfly with a time of 54.51. Both times were personal bests and rank around second in school history.

The Iowa men’s 400-free relay team — with senior Paul Gordon, Duncan Partridge, Jordan Nall, and Ryan Phelan — is seen.

Tuchscherer, from Davenport, was a member of the 200 butterfly with a time of 2.54.22. They had been invited to Iowa City this year, given the 400 and 800 medleys being major events for these programs.
Good friends, better adversaries?

Kirk Ferentz and Bob Stoops have been linked to each other for more than 30 years. The Insight Bowl will pit them as opponents for the first time. Page 4
Insight Iowa vs. No. 19 Oklahoma

BCS Title: No. 1
LSU vs. No. 2
Alabama

ALABAMA
Suburban with the "big
against the world" over

LSU
Wants the even under on
how many field goals will
be kicked?

OKLAHOMA
 weekends break the scen-
data more,

IWON
Perfect season? Mark it
down.

ALABAMA
Chaos reigns.

LSU
Pestilence season.

LSU
Again.

Rose: No. 10
Wisconsin vs. No. 5
Oregon

OREGON
Begins Bill in Pasadena
for second year in a row.

WISCONSIN
Mother: UCLA Parent.

OREGON
Tough to pick, but Ducks
have a solid edge over
LSU.

OREGON
Big Ten: small folks, short.

OREGON
It’s just giving them a
point.

WISCONSIN
Nixon and Company,
salutes the 50-50 Cup.

Sugar: No. 13
Michigan vs. No. 11
Virginia Tech

VIRGINIA TECH
Michigan isn’t a BCS-cal-
league team.

MICHIGAN
I said Michigan’s proba-
ble being too optimistic
about the Big Ten.

MICHIGAN TECH
That Michigan’s even in
this game is a joke.

VIRGINIA TECH
Now going to pick VT but
only support the Bills.

VIRGINIA TECH
Sweat new year for
Hokies.

Outback: No. 17
Michigan State vs. No. 16
Georgia

GEORGIA
Big Ten Gets Hockeys in
bowl season again.

MICHIGAN STATE
State an issue that’s take-
ning Ohio State.

GEORGIA
Michigan State is a huge
Dawgs.

MICHIGAN STATE
Bowl game redemption
for Spartans.

MICHIGAN STATE
They should but
Michigan faces. MI gives
them the edge in this
game.

MICHIGAN STATE
Not as confident, but
I’ll stick to the conser-
vative here.

Michigan Stadium
Program editor (313/)

Seth Roberts
Sports editor (378)

Matt Copas
Football reporter (321)

Iwona
Weekends break the scen-
data more.

OKLAHOMA
 subsidized to the scen-
data more.

IWON
Perfect season? Mark it
down.

ALABAMA
Chaos reigns.

LSU
Pestilence season.

LSU
Again.

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on the line
Kirk Ferentz was a graduate assistant coach under Hayden Fry the last time Iowa played Oklahoma. Current Sooner head coach Bob Stoops was a redshirt freshman for the Hawkeyes.

The two men will match up as opposing head coaches when Iowa and Oklahoma meet for the second time ever in December's Insight Bowl.

Bob Stoops has coached in Norman since 1999. But his accomplished tenure — he was the fastest coach to reach 100 wins since 1905, needing only 123 games — hasn't lessened his allegiance to the Hawkeyes at all.

Last December, the former All-Big Ten safety was in the Tempe, Ariz., area, prep for the Fiesta Bowl against Connecticut. And with Iowa playing Missouri in the Insight Bowl four days before Oklahoma's BCS match up, Stoops didn't miss the rare opportunity to cheer for the Hawkeyes in person.

"Sorry, I know Missouri's in the Big 12," Stoops told ESPN.com last December. "But I'm a Hawkeye, so I gotta go cheer for my Hawks."...Bob's still a Hawkeye. That's one of the neat things about our profession ... he's a good friend of the program.

Stoops' and Ferentz's relationship didn't end when Stoops graduated in 1983. The two worked together as coaches under Fry.
1959
Jan 1
Iowa coach Forrest Smithshock won his second Rose Bowl as the Hawkeyes defeated California, 38-12, running back Bob Robison ran for 94 yards on only 9 carries. The Football Writers Association of America named Iowa's 1959 national champion.

1984
Dec 26
Chuck Long threw for 460 yards and six touchdowns as Iowa toppled USC in the Rose Bowl, 35-17. The six touchdowns still stand as an all-time bowl game record.

1986
Dec 30
Rob Roughton returned a 45-yard kickoff for a touchdown in the Holiday Bowl, 39-38. Roughton was already revered among Hawkeye fans for his game-winning 10-yard field goal to beat No. 2 Michigan the previous season.

2005
Jan 1
Warren Hobaway caught a 51-yard touchdown pass from Drew Tate as time expired, propelling Iowa to a 30-25 victory in the Capital One Bowl. It was the only touchdown of Holloway's Hawkeye career. “I really have to hit me yet,” he told the Associated Press afterwards. “Maybe in a month or so.”

2010
Jan 5
Iowa’s defense held Georgia Tech’s quarterback option offense to only 95 yards and 9 1st downs as the Hawkeyes won the Orange Bowl, 24-14. It was a lost season. 1st ever BCS bowl win and he second in a string of three-straight bowl victories.

Each week in Pregame, Timeless Moments will feature five significant events from Hawkeye history, with dates ranging from Sunday through Saturday of each week. To submit a Timeless Moment for a future edition of Pregame, email us at dipregame@gmail.com.
"I thought," Bergdale said. "I love the opportunity at Oklahoma. It's exciting, more fulfilling than our hands full, you know."

That made perfect sense to Stoops, who has won eight Big 12 titles in 10 years with the Sooners. He believes there are a lot of people who are looking for a change.

"But there are worse things to do than to be managing a football program and having to win games," he said. "I know Bob wanted to win games, and he interviewed. And interesting enough, he coaxed the Sooners to wait to announce his hiring when he had a chance to匹tage with the Gators.' At that point, it was a decision between Stoops and Florida coach Urban Meyer. The Gators' 1996 national championship run was the last in the SEC, and Stoops was wary of being the first since 1985.

"There's a lot of anger out there," Stoops said. "You can't blame it on the football players, you can't blame it on the fans. It's people who don't want anything to change."

More significantly, Starr was considering rumors that he might be interested in becoming the next coach at Georgia. And the Sooners seemed to be in the mix for a defensive coordinator. It was a situation that left Stoops hoping that it would all be over soon. He has made it clear that he wants to be at Oklahoma for the long haul.

"I've had tremendous respect for him on all levels," Starr said. "I've felt comfortable with my entire family there."