IRISH INSIDER
FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2014

One more.

THE OBSERVER
Photo Illustration by Wei Lin and Karl O'Mara

ND vs M
Wolverines six times over the national NFL columnist for the time,” said Kryk, who is a power at Notre Dame in South Bend. But just six thousandths separate the programs in all-time winning percentage for the best mark in NCAA history. Both schools feature blue and yellow-based second color in their logos and uniforms, a rivalry typified somewhere between maize and gold, with the color-wheel balance seemingly swinging each year. Two teams so close. But when the Stadium rocks and the whistle blares around 7:42 p.m., Notre Dame and Michigan will collide for the final scheduled time. Until they meet again.

The Beginnings
Notre Dame and Michigan are meeting for the 42nd time, making the series just the eighth-longest in Irish history. But Notre Dame’s history with Michigan dates all the way back to 1887, when the Wolverines toppled the yet-to-be-named Irish, 8-0, in South Bend in something that was more tutorial than full-fledged contest, according to football historian John Kryk.

“Michigan literally taught Notre Dame how to play in 1887,” said Kryk, who wrote “Natural Enemies: The Notre Dame-Michigan Football Feud.” “A couple of former Notre Dame students went off to Michigan, and they were keeping in touch with buddies at Notre Dame, especially with sports-minded Brother Paul, and they arranged that first game.”

From there, Kryk said, Notre Dame ramped up its desire to play this new game, one that would eventually become a key component of the institution. But the teams were at completely different junctures, with Michigan already a football power, Notre Dame not yet even its fledgling punching bag. “They suddenly wanted to be what Michigan was, a power at that time,” said Kryk, who is a national NFL columnist for the Toronto Sun. The eager Irish met with the Wolverines six times over the next five years after their inaugural clash in 1887. Not once did Notre Dame win. Michigan outscored its focal foe by a combined score of 121-16 through the first eight meetings.

But in 1909, Notre Dame claimed an 11-3 victory, earning the first of its 16 wins in the series. The two teams, however, would not meet again until 1942. Kryk said that, for Michigan, it was pandemonium; the fans were going crazy,” he said. “It was just really exciting to be part of that, and it was really exciting for college football to have that rivalry reigned.”

The following September, Notre Dame and Michigan met at Michigan Stadium for the first time since 1943. As in the year before, the Irish entered the game, their season opener, as the underdog.

Male ended up providing all the scoring for an Irish offense that was in the process of replacing Montana. The walk-on booted four field goals to give Notre Dame a 12-10 lead. Still, Male’s efforts would have been for naught if not for a block by Irish linebacker Bob Crable on Michigan kicker Bryan Kryk’s last-second, game-winning field goal attempt.

Crable’s field-goal block didn’t come in the traditional form, however, as he made the block by leaning on the back of Michigan center Mike Trgovac and stopping the ball with his hip.

“Literally when [Trgovac] snapped the ball, his two hands went on the ground, so [he] acted as a stop, and as the guards leaned in to take care of what was coming over the top, they pushed me up as well,” Crable said. “The ball hit me in the hip, and the worst part of it became the landing. When I was up there, the ball hit, and I was projected up. My feet were on the center, but my body was out in front, and I came down right on my head. Luckily, I didn’t break my neck.”

Although Notre Dame and Michigan hadn’t played for a few decades preceding the “Reunion game,” Male said the Irish players of the late 1970s recognized the Wolverines as a top rival.

“When you looked at the schedule, it was one of our target games, the Michigan game,” he said.

The intensity of the Michigan series was further fueled by the geographic closeness of both teams, Male said. “You had a situation where we didn’t even fly, took a bus to the game, it was that close,” he said. “You mixed in a fanbase with lots of fans that were loyal and liked that because of the geographic proximity, and it really made for an interesting rivalry.”

While the atmosphere surrounding the reunion of the Notre Dame-Michigan series was lively on both sides, the scene at Michigan Stadium provided some unique challenges for the Irish, Crable said.

By MIKE MONACO
Senior Sports Writer

With the lights shining down Saturday night inside an overflowing Notre Dame Stadium, the Irish will align on the west sideline, the Wolverines on the east, just 213 feet apart. The hundred and sixty feet will separate Notre Dame and Michigan. But the two schools are inextricably linked — somewhere along the 150-mile stretch of Midwest roads from Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor to Notre Dame Stadium in South Bend.

Just six thousandths separate the programs in all-time winning percentage for the best mark in NCAA history. Both schools feature blue and a yellow-based second color in their logos and uniforms, a rivalry typified somewhere between maize and gold, with the color-wheel balance seemingly swinging each year.

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While the atmosphere surrounding the reunion of the Notre Dame-Michigan series was lively on both sides, the scene at Michigan Stadium provided some unique challenges for the Irish, Crable said.
“Wherever you go, you’ve got those situations where you’ve got the crowds, you’ve got obnoxious people, you’ve got drunk people, you’ve got all different characters that exist in the stadium,” he said. “But at Michigan, it seems like it was exaggerated — everything was exaggerated.”

The Holtz Years

Lou Holtz took over the Notre Dame program in 1986 and steered the Irish for 11 seasons, the first nine of which featured dates with Michigan.

Both teams were ranked in every year I was there. When I said by phone this week.

In order to win, Holtz and the Wolverines won 24-23.

Jim Harbaugh and Notre Dame will face off for the first time this Saturday in South Bend.

Fourth-and-six-inches,” Holtz recalled. “Gee, he kicked a perfect kick. Rocket caught it all on the run and we went on to win that game.”

“I didn’t think twice about it,” Holtz said. “I remember saying to the team, ‘We’ve had this wonderful series since 1978,” Kryk said. “For now, Saturday is the last time it’ll be the first played on FieldTurf at Notre Dame Stadium, heralding the final chapter of the rivalry’s history — for now, at least.

Notre Dame. I accept that. I trust that it just reeked of tradition,” said Davie, slowly enunciating each word. ‘It was great to participate in it,” Davie said.

The stadium was ours. We recruited the same caliber of people, you’ve got drunk people, those situations where you’ve got — for now, at least.

The nature of the Rivalry

Holtz's head coach Bob Davie's first taste of the rivalry.

“Everybody knows how big the Michigan-Notre Dame game, had nothing but praise for the rivalry.

How does Michigan-Notre Dame stack up?” Davie said, pausing to explain himself.

“The stadiums were older, and it just reeked of tradition,” said Davie, slowly enunciating each syllable for effect, as if he smells it again.

“It’s not the intensity,” Holtz said. “It’s not the hatred that some...
You are invited to join in discussion with some of Notre Dame’s most engaging faculty in the Saturday Scholar Series on “home game” Saturdays. Each lecture and Q&A, sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters, is presented in the Snite Museum’s Annenberg Auditorium at 12 noon, unless otherwise noted. No tickets required.

**SATURDAY SCHOLAR SERIES**

**“The Empty Chair by the Hearth: Archaeological Insights into Irish-America”**

Ian Kuijt  
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Anthropology

19th century Irish immigration pulled apart island families and communities, and simultaneously created the foundation for new lives in North America. Drawing upon archaeological and video ethnographic research on Inishark, County Galway, this talk will explore the pathways of trans-Atlantic emigration, the foundation of new American communities, and the means by which memory among islanders is connected to the sea, home and hearth.

4 p.m.  
Saturday, September 6, 2014  
Snite Museum’s Annenberg Auditorium  
Lecture and Q&A free and open to the public. No tickets required.

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**2015 COMMENTS**

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**PAID ADVERTISEMENT**

Class of 2015 offensive lineman Jerry Tillery is scheduled to visit Notre Dame this weekend, according to Blue and Gold Illustrated’s Tom Lop.
Irish host slew of nation’s top prospects

By MIKE MONACO
Senior Sports Writer

As if Notre Dame wasn’t going to be crowded enough this weekend for the primetime matchup between two rivals playing their final scheduled meeting, the Irish are set to host roughly 24 recruits over the weekend.

Notre Dame will welcome mostly a combination of class of 2015 commitments, class of 2015 targets and class of 2016 targets. The expected group could swell to ___ members, replete with “big names,” according to Irish recruiting analyst Tom Loy.

Loy, who covers Notre Dame recruiting for Blue and Gold Illustrated, part of the 247Sports network, said none of the names really get much bigger than Plano, Texas, native Soso Jamabo, a four-star running back and the No. 45 overall player in the nation, per 247Sports’ Composite Rankings.

“He’s been the top guy for a very long time for running backs coach Tony Alford,” Loy said. “For a while he didn’t seem like a realistic shot as the relationship was developing between Jamabo, Alford and [Irish defensive backs coach and Texas specialist] Kerry Cooks. [Then] things started really heating up.”

Loy said there’s a chance Jamabo could make a decision this weekend, but he expects the running back’s recruitment to stretch to October.

As for someone who could pledge to Notre Dame this weekend, Loy said he would not be surprised if linebacker Tevon Coney left this week as commitment No. 18 in Notre Dame’s class of 2015.

Meanwhile, linebacker/defensive end Porter Gustin became one of the most recent additions to the mass of visitors. Loy described the No. 67 overall prospect in the class of 2015 — per 247Sports — as a “freak athlete.”

“Right now he’s definitely favoring USC,” Loy said. “USC is the school he grew up cheer ing for, grew up watching. He’s been to campus, been to the games. This is Notre Dame’s one shot to blow him away.”

With all the hype surrounding the rivalry weekend, Loy agreed there is an opportunity to blow away recruits — to an extent.

“I don’t think it sways kids as much as they like to believe, as fans like to believe,” Loy said. “But you get a victory, a wild locker room, you get a crazy campus, all the fans going crazy, it can definitely do a lot to help their chances. But in the end these kids are smart.”

Loy said many of the prospects will still look beyond one rivalry win or loss, or one night on a ventilated campus.

“They do look at it, but it’s not as important as basically looking at the pros and cons of actually being a student-athlete at Notre Dame,” Loy said. “And that’s where Notre Dame really sells itself.”

But at the same time, Loy argued, the recruits do enjoy being blown away. It’s a challenge for the staff to balance all the various recruits in one weekend, Loy said, and avoid having certain prospects leave feeling discounted. For instance, the top two quarterbacks — Malik Henry and Shea Patterson — on Notre Dame’s class of 2016 board, according to Loy, will both be visiting South Bend this weekend. Loy said it’s important to actively recruit both, even though it could eventually be a “first-come, first-served” scenario.

“If you let a top guy leave without showing him enough love, that’s a problem,” Loy said. “But in the end, this is Notre Dame, and they’re recruiting a certain type of kid. … If you’re looking for a kid that’s looking for the right thing, there’s no way they’re going to leave this weekend without being pretty impressed by Notre Dame.”

For more on Notre Dame recruiting, check out BlueandGold.com. Email Andrew Owens at aowens@blueandgold.com and tell him The Observer sent you.

Contact Mike Monaco at jmonaco@nd.edu
Working together with a *continuing commitment to excellence* in business education

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- 600+ Notre Dame Alumni at Deloitte
- Develop, place, and hire the best and brightest Notre Dame graduates... earning Deloitte recognition as the top employer on campus

**Dedicated to making a difference together**
Rivalry game will test Notre Dame’s mettle

Notre Dame won’t waste much time getting into the big games on its schedule this season.

Have you recovered from tailgating and the win over Rice last weekend yet? You have mere hours to gear up for Michigan and the night game. From there, the schedule will have little mercy on the Irish (1-0).

Make this game day count because there is no set date for the rivalry with Michigan (1-0) to resume. Come Saturday, the players all will try to make this one count, even if the official line is that this game is another one on the schedule, just as important as Rice.

That’s nonsense. Beating a rival does matter. There is a special atmosphere on campus and in Notre Dame Stadium when a rival comes to town. Fans definitely feel it. And players know it’s there, whether they will acknowledge it in an interview or not.

The Michigan game matters more than the matchup against talented, up-and-coming Rice.

Rice is a good team, so this has little to do with whether or not unranked Michigan is better than the Owls, although a win against Michigan likely means more in the polls.

That’s not the most important factor in the Notre Dame-Michigan game. A win against the Wolverines proves the Irish can deal with distractions and win.

The extra energy and pressure that comes with a rivalry game can wither even a talented team. Players sometimes try too hard and play out of control. They may take unnecessary risks trying to make the big play or, on the other hand, shy away from the chance, cracking under the pressure to be heroes and beat the rival.

A good team finds a way to harness rivalry energy, focus and win. If Notre Dame wants to be a contender, it has to show it’s that kind of team.

When the stadium rocks Saturday and the lights come on, the Irish have to show up and play calm, even if they’re amped up. Especially if they’re amped up.

As the Irish move forward, they will have to continue answering questions about off-the-field issues until they are resolved. While they wait, they have to play — against challenging opponents.

They will deal with the hype of rivalry games and a looming matchup with No. 1 Florida State. If they climb in the polls, they will face higher expectations and doubts about whether they deserve their ranking.

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Over the last few seasons, there has been no shortage of distractions, some due to unfortunate circumstances, others due to unfortunate judgment. This season is no different, with five players being held out due to an investigation into suspected academic dishonesty.

But Notre Dame has to rise above that. The Irish got a good start against Rice, with Everett Golson returning from his suspension to throw two touchdowns and rush for three.

He came into the game under a lot of pressure to play like the “Prodigolson” in his return, and he coolly delivered a great performance.

Take that example and run with it, Notre Dame.

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**WOLVERINES PASSING**

Wolverines graduate student quarterback Devin Gardner teams up with junior receiver Devin Funchess to form what Irish head coach Brian Kelly calls a “dynamic” duo. Funchess tallied seven receptions for 95 yards and three touchdowns in Michigan’s season-opening 52-14 dismantling of Appalachian State.

The competition wasn’t impressive, but Funchess’ ability is. The 6-foot-5 former tight end is a matchup problem for the Irish. Cornerbacks Cole Luke (5-foot-11) and Cody Riggs (5-foot-9) don’t stack up size-wise.

Beyond Funchess, the Wolverines don’t have too many proven pass-catchers. But that didn’t matter much for Rice, who exploited breakdowns in Notre Dame’s secondary for passing plays of 53, 30, 26 and 26 yards, respectively.

The Irish safeties will have to shore things up quickly to ensure there isn’t a repeat of the 2013 game, when Gardner shredded Notre Dame for 294 yards and four touchdowns through the air.

**WOLVERINES OFFENSIVE COACHING**

Once again, it’s a matchup of new coordinators on both sides of the ball, with Michigan offensive coordinator Doug Nussmeier opposing Irish defensive coordinator Brian VanGorder.

These two met in 2012, when Nussmeier’s Alabama squad rolled to a 49-0 victory over VanGorder’s Auburn defense. This week, Kelly praised Nussmeier’s offenses, lauding their strong concepts, and this year’s group on the offensive line.

Nussmeier’s track record likely speaks louder than that of VanGorder, but anything can happen Saturday.

**EDGE: MICHIGAN**

**WOLVERINES SPECIAL TEAMS**

Kelly specifically made note of Wolverines punter Will Hagerup this week, praising the redshirt senior, who averaged 45.03 yards per punt in 2012, the best single-season average in Michigan history.

Senior kicker Matt Wilie is relatively inexperienced, having only attempted 10 field goals (with six makes).

Junior return man Dennis Norfleet is already slotted second in Michigan history with 1,801 kick return yards, including the 36 he picked up on one jaunt Saturday against Appalachian State.

Until Notre Dame proves — on a consistent basis — that it has shored up its special-teams play, the Wolverines possess the advantage.

**WOLVERINES SCHEDULE (0-0)**

Aug. 30 Appalachian State (W 52-14)
Sept. 6 @ Notre Dame
Sept. 13 Miami (Ohio)
Sept. 20 Utah
Sept. 27 Minnesota
Oct. 4 @ Rutgers
Oct. 11 Penn State
Oct. 25 @ Michigan State
Nov. 1 Indiana
Nov. 8 @ Northwestern
Nov. 22 Maryland
Nov. 29 Ohio State

**Michigan and Notre Dame both easily dispatched non-power conference opponents last weekend. Now, it’s time for their last meeting in the foreseeable future, a game that will have even more meaning than their usual intense matchups. Like those past games, there’s no reason to think this one won’t be close. Both teams are coming off disappointing seasons and have holes to fill before they can return to college football’s elite. The two Devins, Gardner and Funchess, will give Notre Dame trouble, while Everett Golson and Greg Bryant, among others, will challenge the Wolverines. I think the game will come down to defense, and Notre Dame’s front seven will be able to generate just enough pressure against Michigan’s inexperienced offensive line and vulnerable ground game.**

**FINAL SCORE**: Notre Dame 27, Michigan 24

**Michigan**

**Notre Dame**

Both teams rolled in their season openers. Got it.

But what do we glean from the respective thumpings?

For Michigan, Devin Funchess is a monster match-up nightmare on the perimeter, but the interior of the Wolverines’ defensive front struggled at times. For Notre Dame, Everett Golson looked dominant. The secondary, in particular the safeties, wavered with communication.

So what gives Saturday? Well, if we’ve learned anything from this rivalry, it’s that the rivalry game will be close down to the wire.

But in the end, Notre Dame’s offense looks to have the upper hand — thanks in part to its line — and a raucous home crowd will do enough to aid the youthful Irish defense.

**FINAL SCORE**: Notre Dame 35, Michigan 28
Although Notre Dame defeated Rice, 48-17, there were some major issues of concern in the Irish secondary.

Yes, graduate student safety Austin Collinsworth was injured the Thursday prior to the game, but Michigan is no Rice, and Notre Dame will not be able to get by on athleticism alone.

The Wolverines will not drop passes like Rice did. There is no Rice, and Notre Dame will not be able to get by on athleticism alone.

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Young group responds to calls to communicate

By BRIAN HARTNETT
Managing Editor

For many in Notre Dame’s clubhouse, there was little to worry about following the team’s 48-17 win over Rice on Saturday.

Behind senior quarterback Everett Golson’s five touchdowns, the Irish offense racked up 576 total yards.

Notre Dame’s young front seven held Rice’s offense to an average of 3.5 yards per play on the ground.

Even the Irish special teams recorded 80 yards in punt returns and 49 yards in kickoff returns.

With such successes in multiple facets of the game, most of the worry shifted to the Notre Dame secondary, which allowed 226 yards and four plays of more than 25 yards.

“There’s things we’ve got to get better at, obviously,” Irish head coach Brian Kelly said in his postgame press conference Saturday. “Our communication in the back end of the defense was at times a problem, which resulted in some big plays.”

Kelly reiterated the importance of communication in his Tuesday press conference.

“Without giving too much away, suffice it to say we have to be more demonstrative and take more control (in the secondary),” he said.

Sophomore cornerback Cole Luke said Wednesday that better communication has been emphasized throughout practices since the Rice game.

“Coaches have [talked about it], and that’s also something we have to take accountability for from the back four,” he said. “We’ve been trying to stress it a lot ourselves, hand signals and whatnot, but that’s something we’re working on.”

Notre Dame’s secondary may have an excuse for its communication struggles — lack of familiarity. The eight players listed in Notre Dame’s two-deep at the cornerback and safety positions made a combined 13 starts last season.

The team’s most experienced player in the secondary, senior cornerback Matthias Farley, switched positions after making eight starts at safety last season. Farley notched an interception in the second quarter of Saturday’s win.

“Matthias is a guy that can do a lot of jobs for us,” Kelly said in his Sunday teleconference. “He’s a valuable player for us.”

Farley, however, didn’t receive the start Saturday, as he was slotted behind sophomore safety Max Redfield.

Starting opposite Redfield at the safety spot was junior Elijah Shumate, who was forced into action two days before the Rice game when graduate student safety and captain Austin Collinsworth tore his MCL.

Although Kelly singled out Shumate and Redfield as players who need to improve their communication in his Sunday teleconference, graduate student cornerback Cody Riggs said he was impressed with the performance of the two new starters.

“I think they did a really good job,” Riggs said following Saturday’s game. “Elijah and Max played really well, which is what I expected. They had really great camps. They played exactly to their abilities.”

Riggs has 27 collegiate starts under his belt, albeit just one with the Irish. He appeared in 40 games for Florida over four seasons.

Luke said he has picked up several techniques from the former SEC starter.

“Cody’s been a big help,” he said. “Obviously coming from the SEC, playing against a lot of great receivers, he’s a great guy, but he’s added another dynamic to our defense, plays fast, shifty.”


“(Cole) didn’t seem to be affected by his first start,” he said. “I thought he played with confidence. Really just liked his demeanor.”

Luke said he will try to carry over that cool demeanor to Notre Dame’s matchup against Michigan on Saturday.

“I don’t know about everybody else, but for me, it’s after the first play, everything’s gone, and I’m kind of loose after that.”

“... Someone has to step up, as players who need to improve our communication, in his Sunday teleconference. "Elijah and Max played really well, which is what I expected. They had really great camps. They played exactly to their abilities." Riggs has 27 collegiate starts under his belt, albeit just one with the Irish. He appeared in 40 games for Florida over four seasons. Luke said he has picked up several techniques from the former SEC starter. "Cody’s been a big help," he said. "Obviously coming from the SEC, playing against a lot of great receivers, he’s a great guy, but he’s added another dynamic to our defense, plays fast, shifty." Luke rounds out the secondary starters, as he made his first start against Rice. Kelly singled out Luke’s poise in his Sunday teleconference. "(Cole) didn’t seem to be affected by his first start," he said. "I thought he played with confidence. Really just liked his demeanor." Luke said he will try to carry over that cool demeanor to Notre Dame’s matchup against Michigan on Saturday. "I don’t know about everybody else, but for me, it’s after the first play, everything’s gone, and I’m kind of loose after that," Luke said. "... Someone has to step up, and it’s my time to step up." Contact Brian Hartnett at bhartnet@nd.edu
After the Main Building burned down in 1879, Fr. Sorin said,

LET NO ONE EVER AGAIN SAY WE DREAMED TOO SMALL.

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TO LEARN MORE, VISIT ACE AT THE NOTRE DAME CAREER FAIR ON SEPTEMBER 10.
Notre Dame and Michigan will square off for the 42nd time in series history Saturday at Notre Dame Stadium. In games at the Stadium, each team has tallied nine wins. Notre Dame and Michigan have tied once at Notre Dame Stadium.
WR Funchess presents matchup problem

By MIKE MONACO
Senior Sports Writer

On Saturday at Michigan Stadium, Devin Funchess showed his play matches the No. 1 jersey he now wears. The Wolverines junior receiver tallied seven catches for 95 yards and three touchdowns, earning himself a spot resting on the bench as Michigan finished rolling over Appalachian State 52-14. He amassed these numbers all before halftime and set a Michigan record for most touchdown receptions in a season opener.

Two days later, Michigan graduate student quarterback Devin Gardner said Funchess has the talent to position himself in the upper echelons of historic Michigan wide receivers with the likes of Desmond Howard, Braylon Edwards and Anthony Carter, who all wore No. 1. “He can probably be the best receiver ever to play here,” Gardner said.

Last season’s Big Ten tight end of the year, Funchess had 49 receptions for 748 yards and six touchdowns, playing both tight end and wide out. This season, now solely a wideout, Funchess already is making a splash. Irish coach Brian Kelly said the Irish defense must be wary of Funchess and has spent time this week focusing on how to defend against his connection with Gardner.

“We’re playing an offense with Gardner and Funchess, a 1-2 combination that is very dynamic,” Kelly said. “We will have to find ways obviously to slow [Funchess] down, and he’s going to be difficult, and Gardner has

He can probably be the best receiver ever to play here.

Devin Gardner
Wolverines graduate student quarterback

played great against us.” The 6-foot-5 Funchess proved too difficult to cover for Appalachian State, and Kelly said Funchess has the talent to challenge any team.

“I do see the size matchup,” Funchess said. “But I think they will be a matchup problem for everybody he plays this year,” Kelly said. Despite being double-teamed in the Appalachian State game, Funchess caught a jump ball over two Mountaineer defenders in the back of the endzone for one of his touchdowns. Funchess acknowledged his size advantage but added Notre Dame will aim to minimize it. “I do see the size matchup,” Funchess said. “But I think they will play me differently because they saw what I did in the first game.”

Although Funchess plays offense the majority of the game and is called upon as a downfield threat, he still has the energy to be part of the punt return team. Wolverine coach Brady Hoke said he will not hold Funchess or any starter off of special teams for fear of injury because they could get injured at any time anyway, and Funchess wants to be on the field as much as possible.

“I took [Funchess] off the punt return because I thought, well, he’s doing enough,” Hoke said. “He got mad at me, so I put him back on. We made a decision that if you aren’t good enough to start on offense and defense, you aren’t good enough to start on special teams.”

Funchess will attempt to demonstrate his impact as a starter on special teams and offense this Saturday against Notre Dame, but more importantly, he will try to prove again — this time against a historic rival — that he is worthy to wear the No. 1 Michigan jersey.

Contact Isaac Lorton at
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WR Funchess, pictured here against Notre Dame in Michigan’s 41-30 win in 2013 at Michigan Stadium in Ann Arbor, Mich., notched seven receptions for 95 yards and three touchdowns in Michigan’s season-opening win over Appalachian State.
Kelly: ‘No update’ on five withheld players

By MIKE MONACO
Senior Sports Writer

Irish head coach Brian Kelly said he did not have any updates on the five players being held out of practice and competition during Notre Dame’s investigation into “suspected academic dishonesty” at his weekly press conference Tuesday.

Kelly said the players have not been made a part of meetings and said everything is status quo.

“We haven’t made that change [with their involvement in meetings] because I haven’t got any updates relative to where we are in the process and the timing of that,” Kelly said.

Kelly said Thursday he has been informed that Notre Dame’s investigation has been closed. The University announced Aug. 15 that junior cornerback KeiVarae Russell, senior receiver DaVaris Daniels, senior defensive end Ishaq Williams and graduate student linebacker Jarrett Grace (leg) continue to make significant progress in his movement and other body mechanics, Kelly said, but he’s still “a few weeks away” from being 100 percent.

“Brian is not at 100 percent, but he’s getting better each and every day,” Kelly said.

Sophomore receiver Torii Hunter Jr. (groin) has made good progress, according to Kelly, and was scheduled to partake in individual drills Tuesday as he remains ahead of schedule.

“If things go well, we will continue to progress him through the week, and if he has a great week he could be in a situation where potentially he could play next week,” Kelly said.

Senior linebacker Jarrett Grace (leg) continues to make significant progress in his movement and other body mechanics, Kelly said, but he’s still “a few weeks away” from being 100 percent.

“I think two programs that have such great pride that they’re going to battle and fight to the very end,” Kelly said. “There is an immense amount of pride, both teams want to win this football game and that’s why regardless of what the teams’ records are and what the personnel looks like, there is just great pride in both programs.”

**Personnel Updates**

Sophomore receiver Corey Robinson (thumb) is a little bit sore after playing Saturday against Rice, according to Kelly, but “everything looked great after the game.”

“It’s something, certainly, that we talk about in recruiting, in terms of the elite programs and the tradition of our program,” Kelly said of the elite winning percentage. “It doesn’t help us right now, but certainly it’s something that when you’re talking about the great programs of all programs, it’s something that we’re very proud of.”

Of the last 29 games between the two programs, the contest has been decided by seven points or fewer 18 times. The Wolverines have outscored the Irish, 110-98, combined in Kelly’s four seasons in South Bend.

Why so many close games?

“I think two programs that have such great pride that they’re going to battle and fight to the very end,” Kelly said. “There is an immense amount of pride, both teams want to win this football game and that’s why regardless of what the teams’ records are and what the personnel looks like, there is just great pride in both programs.”

Contact Mike Monaco at jmonaco@nd.edu

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**Meeting with Michigan**

When Notre Dame and Michigan kick off under the lights at Notre Dame Stadium on Saturday night, the two historic programs will be meeting for the 42nd time. Since the teams squared off in 1978, the Irish and the Wolverines have played every year except 1983, 1984, 1995, 1996, 2000 and 2001.

“I think we all know the kind of game we’re gonna play here with this opponent,” Kelly said. “Each team knows each other very well. Certainly they’ve been great games.”

Kelly highlighted Wolverines graduate student quarterback Devin Gardner, who the head coach said “has played great against us,” and junior receiver Devin Funchess.

“[That’s] a one-two combination that is very dynamic,” Kelly said. “Funchess now being on the perimeter is a matchup problem, and he’ll be a matchup problem for everybody that he plays this year.”

As for the rivalry talk surrounding a series that doesn’t have another meeting currently scheduled, Kelly steered clear of anything controversial, even asking, “How did I do?” after one rivalry-themed question.

Notre Dame (.754) leads the all-time winning percentage, as Michigan (.7326) checks in all-time winning percentage, while Michigan (.7326) checks in

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**Write Sports.**

Email Mary at mgreen8@nd.edu

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**Saturdays with the Saints**

Theologian and More: Thomas Aquinas the Saint
Fr. Anthony Giambrone, O.P., Ph.D. Candidate, Department of Theology, Notre Dame

September 6
10:30-11:30 am
Andrews Auditorium
Lower Level, Geddes Hall
Irish senior quarterback Everett Golson drops back to pass in Notre Dame's 13-6 win over Michigan on Sept. 22, 2012. Golson and the Irish will face the Wolverines on Saturday.

Former Irish tight end Tyler Eifert aims to gain yards after a catch in Notre Dame's 13-6 victory over Michigan on Sept. 22, 2012.

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**NOTRE DAME VS. USC**
**SATURDAY, NOV 29, 2014**

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PEP RALLY

LIBRARY QUAD IN FRONT OF HESBURGH LIBRARY
CONCERT FEATURING ND ALUM PAT MCKILLEN 2010
STARTS AT 4:45 PM
RALLY BEGINS AT 5:45 PM

PLAYER WALK

BEGINS AT THE GUG, ENDS AT THE STADIUM TUNNEL
FIND THE ROUTE AT GAMEDAY.ND.EDU
WALK BEGINS AT 5:15 PM

ND vs MICHIGAN

HERE COME THE IRISH
KICKOFF UNDER THE LIGHTS AT 7:30 PM

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Join us for the inaugural Shamrock Series 5k!
You’ll enjoy a scenic DOWNTOWN INDY course, as well as entertainment from the
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giveaways, and a FINISHER’S MEDAL!

NOTRE DAME VS PURDUE
LUCAS OIL STADIUM
SEPT. 13, 2014

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