

Chick-fil-A Peach Bowl: Oregon vs Indiana

Tuesday, January 6, 2026

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium

Oregon Ducks

Dante Moore

Press Conference

Q. Dante, I'm curious on where the Orange Bowl offensive MVP trophy is and if that was difficult getting that back at all.

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. At first there was a video of me caught in the moment. I didn't know they were announcing MVP and stuff. I was more engaged with the fans. But that trophy was super heavy. A lot of oranges, of course.

But, yeah, it was a great moment. As a kid, you dreamed about those things, and glad we got the win and we're carrying on to this week.

Q. You talked about how you made the regular season match-up more than what it was and didn't have as much joy. What has the last few days been like, and how have you carried yourself differently mentally approaching this one?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. Like I say, in the past I talked about it. It was just -- made the game bigger than what it was. And this week I kind of just attacked it like how I've been doing these past weeks.

So making sure I have the same routine when it comes to watching film, preparing my body, just getting ready for this moment like I've been doing with JMU and Texas Tech.

But this week we're still the same offense. We're just having fun. Of course, practice we've been having a little bit of mistakes, but that's what practice is all about. You gotta learn from it.

But Indiana is a great competitive team, and we're ready to go out there and play football. It's 11-11 at the end of the day, and we're excited for it.

Q. Kenyon was just in here saying that he's been impressed by your growth as a leader for the blocking



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unit when it comes to setting protections and stuff like that after that first game. How have you seen yourself continue to develop in the pre-snap stuff and getting everything set, especially when you're going against a defense that's going to throw as much stuff as they do?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah, gotta give their DC and 11 guys go on defense their credit. They do a great job bringing multiple different pressures, showing different looks pre-snap and post-snap.

So kind of just watching the film. At the end of the day, of course, they might throw something new out there. It's just how game plans work. And they might get us on it, and that's when you go to the sideline and watch the film and see if we can go from there and learn from it.

At the end of the day, I've been taking these protections and these run game things important. At the end of the day, you gotta protect yourself, you gotta protect your body.

If I had to give a quarterback tip for any incoming freshmen, I'd say line protections first, because at the end of the day, everybody can spin the ball, but you can't spin the ball when you're on your back. So you gotta make sure you get the protections right. And I've been kind of taking that more seriously, just understanding body health and making sure that we can move the ball and keep moving chains.

Q. What did you take away, what were you taught from the first game with Indiana, and how valuable could those lessons be in a rematch?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. I was too fast on my progressions. There were some times where there was an open guy, and, I mean, you can say I was kind of seeing ghosts out there. More of just trying to get through my progressions too fast.

And another thing too is when I climbed to the pocket, I was trying to rush and get out. And there were some times



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where I could climb into the pocket, and there was no need for me to move.

So those are probably the two biggest things, just gotta learn from there. But, yeah, I'm feeling real confident and excited.

Q. Just in that first half against Texas Tech, you guys were able to move the chains but just couldn't finish in the end zone. What have you maybe done in preparation for this semifinal match-up to kind of improve that and improve the finishing?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. Gotta love our kicker, Atticus, who does a great job making kicks. As a quarterback, again, you want to get the ball in the end zone. You want to score touchdowns, put points up.

But yeah, Texas Tech defense was amazing. They did a great job, of course, stopping us on short runs. They had a great game plan. And at the end of the day, of course, we beat ourselves sometimes. We shot ourselves in the foot, and we kind of gotta learn from there and go from there. So we'll get a lot of mistakes corrected this week, and we're excited to put points on the board.

Q. Couple of guys have mentioned that Coach Lanning cited March Madness and the way teams peak at that time. What have you taken from that message, and can you share a little more of the detail of what he was saying?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. Coach Lanning does a great job preparing us. I mean, that's somebody that (audio interruption).

Q. (Audio interruption) captive audience of NFL fans paying attention to you too. How do you mentally prepare for and head into when so much is going to be about you and Fernando and how you do against each other and who's ahead of who on whose draft board depending on what you do (audio interruption)?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah, I gotta give Fernando his credit. He's had a hell of a year. He's had some great years. This is our third time playing against each other, played at UCLA, this year, and this is our third time. He's somebody that works his tail off. Very smart quarterback, talented quarterback.

But I think the thing I take away from him is he gives the glory to God, through his success, through his accolades, through his wins. He always gives time to glorify God. And that's something I appreciate and respect towards him.

Yeah, it's things that, of course, we prayed for. At the end of the day, when I started football at four years old, everybody's goal is get into the National Football League.

Yeah, there's going to be all these things going on. I'm human. I see it on social media. But I told myself that I shouldn't be engaged with it, because if I do, I'm thinking about myself and I'm not thinking about the 10 other guys on the field with me. So I gotta make sure I give them my 100 percent love and attention, because without them I wouldn't be in the situation I am now.

So I'm thankful for my teammates, and it's going to be a great game. And when I see Fernando again and we talk after the game, whenever we do, I'm just glad I got to play against him.

Q. Dante, two-part. You just brought up your faith and how important that is to you. What can you say about how your faith guides you and why you keep God first? And secondly, how you've seen your game from Game 1 to where you are right now, just how you've evolved as a quarterback and as a leader and how you've seen that be tangible?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. Gotta give, of course, all glory to God. He's blessed us. I mean, everybody in this room. He's blessed this team. He's blessed just, you know, myself. The talents, my journey. There's been many times where I wanted to quit. But, of course, I gotta respect and appreciate God's team and have my faith in Him.

But, yeah. Playing against Indiana, of course, the first time, of course we didn't get the result we wanted. But with this time, of course, we watched the film. We're going to adjust and make some things, and I'm excited for that game and to get going.

Q. Just mentioned about guys going in the portal at this time, Dante, and coaches have talked a lot about how the calendar is so messed up. It's also awkward at times for you as well because you have a draft decision and the portal is open, what does the future of this program do, all this stuff. From a player's perspective, what could be done better or what adjustments need to be made so that there's less stress on guys like you with those decisions, or when some of your teammates are thinking about the portal, but you have a different academic calendar than some teams that they don't have a decision until next week after a semifinal. So what from a player's perspective, from somebody who's gone through it, that's going through it now, has to change to make this better, to where your OC isn't in Lexington for a couple of days, to where you're going up against it, to where a



program is not up against it, to where a team that's playing for a championship can focus on a championship?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. This whole process is crazy. Of course, when I hit the portal, I knew where I was going right away. And, of course, I was in a different situation. Like, I wasn't in the playoffs. At UCLA, I wasn't getting ready for that moment.

But, yeah, it's a lot that comes with it. I don't have much to say about it because, I mean, I don't want everyone to think about it.

But, yeah, there can be a way we can fix it. I think Coach Lanning has been saying in his press interviews different ways to change it. So whatever Coach Lanning says, I agree. I don't know what else to say.

Q. Guys have found a bit of a different identity on offense since that first game just going from base 11 to base 12 as you had to adapt to the receiver injuries. The plays are a lot of the same stuff because Kenyon and Jamari can do special things at tight end. How do you think that presents a different match-up for Indiana to deal with?

DANTE MOORE: Yeah. Indiana's linebackers, of course, are very talented. Of course, we have different personnel matches. Yeah, I mean, this whole year I've been finding different ways to become a successful offense. And Coach Stein, of course, does a great job making multiple plays with different personnels and things of that nature.

But, yeah, we're excited. Everybody is feeling healthy. Everybody is ready to get going, and we're going to see what happens.

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