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Jeff Brohm

Press Conference



COACH JEFF BROHM: We're back at work this week and there's a lot of work to do. I think our coaches and players understand that we've got to dig ourselves out and grind this thing out to the end of the season. You know, there's mistakes made in the past game we have to get corrected and all of us have to put in the hard work to get it done. I do think we fought back and gave ourselves a chance and then just had some silly mistakes that didn't go our way which was our fault at the end.

So excited about this opportunity to play the Bucket Game. Indiana is playing at a high level. They are well-coached. They are playing hard. They have got a lot of confidence. They have got a lot of big wins. Any time you hold Wisconsin so no touchdowns, means you're going a lot of good things. Very good on defense. Very aggressive. Give you a lot of different looks. Attack the quarterback from a lot of different areas and challenged on every play.

Then on offense, two solid receivers, a very good tight end, a big, solid running back and they control the football and don't make mistakes. That's how they have won their football games. They have done a very good job of it. We have a challenge to go there and compete and play as hard as we can for 60 minutes.

Q. Was there anything defensively that you can build on from last game or is it kind of similar to what's happened the last few games?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, we've got to just keep pushing forward. I think our guys, you know, when they are lined up and they are playing aggressive and they are in the proper spot before the ball is snapped, we give ourselves a chance. We just have to be more consistent in that manner and attack the football and be aggressive.

I think all three components really need to play better, without question. To win conference games, you've got to be playing at a high level and all three components need to play well, offense, defense and special teams, and unfortunately, we basically spotted them 17 points through miscues on special teams and that was harder to

overcome.

But we did get within seven with getting ready to go up on third and 25 or something like that and probably get the ball back in good field position and we shot ourselves in the foot.

Q. Do you feel like you are getting lined up in time? I know when teams go no huddle and they go fast, that presents problems, but is that an issue that you've seen over the last few games?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, we were misaligned on some snaps without question. A lot of things to get corrected. But like I said, special teams has to play solid football and that put us in a jam offensively.

Yeah, we did have to play catch up, so to waste a whole lot of time running the ball probably wasn't the original plan. Even though we had been running the ball better, it was time to catch up, which we actually gave ourselves a chance doing that. But need to be more physical up front and everybody has got to do their part. This is a team sport, and right now, we are not getting it done.

Q. Do you feel like the team is still connected to one another and to the coaching staff?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, I think our team has practiced well every week. I have no question that that has happened. I think that they wanted to play a great game of football.

I think they are excited about the next opportunity and the next game and they don't want the season to end and they want to continue to compete and find ways to get better. They understand we're going through a little bit of adversity now and things haven't gone our way, which is our fault but you know what, that's part of football and we've got to fight through it. I haven't seen one inch of less fight from our team.

So we just got to do the small things much better, not have costly penalties. You know, execute at a higher level and find a way to be in the game. And this week will be the toughest team we play all year. So we have to play better



and we have to come ready to compete. And we have to bring the same fight in order to give ourselves a chance to win.

Q. Antonio Stevens went down with that injury, what's his update and what did happen to him on that play?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, him and someone from the other team were kind of tussling at the end of the play, being blocked and going back and forth on that and unfortunately he got twisted in a way that was not good and he hurt his knee, and he hurt it -- it's a pretty severe injury.

So we've got to, you know, make sure we get all the test results back and figure out the best timeline for surgery, but he's going to have to have surgery here soon and we're going to have to do an extensive repair.

Q. Just from an outsider's perspective, seems likes Rondale Moore and David Bell, they have caught a lot of passes but not a lot of big plays coming with the passes. Now, David did have the 89-yard touchdown catch on Saturday, but are defenses doing some different things or are they presenting yards after the catch that maybe they were able to get earlier in the year?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, I think defensively, they know who our two best players are, and they have got a lot of guys over top of them; they are going to have help over the top. When you're down 17-0 early on, as well, they are going to play the pass even more, so you've got to continue to have a little bit of balance.

So you have to find ways to get them the ball, and if you just take a bunch of shot down the field and don't hit them, well, then the ball is going back to the other team. We have been able to get him the ball but at the same time, the more balance we have, the more we are able to distribute to other guys, the better we'll be.

But they definitely know where those two guys, and are whether it's a bracket, a safety over the top or walking a nickel linebacker or linebacker right over the top of the slot receiver, that's going to happen a lot to us when you have those type of guys. So other guys got to step up and make plays, or quarterback has to be able to scramble and make play when it's not there and we've got to protect as long as we can in somewhat obvious passing situations throughout the game.

Q. Where is your kickoff return team with T.J. having some success the last couple of weeks?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, that's been a positive. I know we've had a lot of very costly, negative things happen on special teams. Without question, those have to be fixed. There have been some positives and that has definitely been one of them. We found ways to get yards. T.J. is running harder and better. We blocked well on the kickoff return team. So that has been a plus, and I think T.J. has gained some confidence going that, as well.

So you know, there are some positives and some pluses throughout this, but we've just got to get the negative things corrected because those are the ones that are hurting us.

Q. Can you let us know, how come Jalen Graham didn't play Saturday?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, as you know, there's things going on in in the world with sickness things, so I can't reveal what's going on, but he's going to be out with some issues because of that.

Q. Just talk real quick, how frustrating has this season been for you? Got to drive you crazy to try to dig yourself out of a four-game losing streak. Just sort of talk to maybe some of the frustrations you're trying to fight through.

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, any time you don't win, it's going to be frustrating. We've won some games here before and lost some before, and we're on a streak right now we're trying to snap out of.

When you play in the Big Ten, you have to play at a high level each and every week to win, and we have not done some of the small things in these games to give ourselves a chance. And we've dug some holes and we've had some big miscues that have hurt us.

I do like the fact that our guys have been playing hard. They have been practicing well. We have had a chance in every game to win but we didn't done all -- all of us haven't done our part to the level that we need to in order to win close football games. Those are the things you've got to learn from, you've got to identify them. You can't shy away from them. You can't hide from them and we've got to continue to fight through it.

Q. How can you clean up the issue with the penalties, 11 of them on Saturday, again, that had to surprise you, right?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, we had quite a few holding calls or our offensive line and we've been pretty good with that this year, but really two guys that had a lot of holding

calls and when you're in passing situations, you have to be able to set thing up and be physical and firm and not think that you have to hold to make the block, and that's what happened on a few of these plays and it was costly. We had a big 50-yard play negated, and another about 25-yard play negated, and one took us down to the two-yard line on plays like that.

We had a false start on offense one time that we would have had the first down easy that set us back. We had an off-sides on defense, and then really from there, we had the three 15-yard penalties on defense. And those are the ones that can't ever happen and occasionally one may slide through every now and then but we had three very costly ones on that side of the ball, and those are hard to overcome. And of course one of them was a situation where it's going to be a third and 25, and we were going to get the ball in good field position.

Q. If you look at your guys score by quarter, it's pretty even in the second and fourth, but you've been outscored 50-31 in the first quarter. Talk about your struggles to come out of the gate with some energy and some production.

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, I have been disappointed with the way we've started at times and even the second half, allowing them to score has been disappointing. We have to come out and get stops. And when a team gets the ball at the start of the second half and gets a touchdown, they gain some momentum.

You know, one game where we answered it, then return a kickoff for a touchdown. We continue to allow some big plays to happen, and once again, it's win of those details that have to be fixed and corrected. We've got to, you know, toughen it up and find ways to get stops and get off the field and find ways to execute in every segment of the game.

Q. Who is going to punt this week?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, once again we're going to have some competition. Brooks missed some practice time last week. So we went with Cropsey who punted best during the week of practice. Unfortunately we -- it really wasn't his fault on the first one. He got it off, and quicker than we got it off punts; we just didn't block a guy coming right off the middle. So that kind of ruined his one opportunity there. So then we went with Zac.

We've got to get better there. We've got to punt the ball farther. We've got to get more yards on our kicks and then Brooks hopefully we can get him back fully healthy this week and he can go out there and punt the ball the way we

see and punt and practice at times. We're going to work hard at it.

But Brooks, unless something happens injury-wise or COVID-wise, should be up for the challenge with others rotating in if he's not getting the job done.

Q. You said after the game you did give pause to maybe changing quarterbacks during the course of Saturday's game. Given the struggles of the rushing attack, would you consider maybe giving Austin some look on Saturday?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, I wouldn't do it just based on the rushing attack. I think Austin has done a good job. Anything to get us momentum, we want to do, and yeah, it's definitely not out of the realm to play two quarterbacks in the next game.

Q. You talked about you're still seeing fight from the team, but can you talk about the sense of urgency to snap this losing streak, especially in a rivalry week? I know you have this game and another one coming up, but can you talk about the sense of urgency on your team to come out of this?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, every week is urgent and every situation is urgent for us. Playing a rival, and probably one of the hottest teams in the conference, is going to be a challenge.

What I want to say is I want to see guys compete hard during the week of practice. I want to see us as coaches and players, put in the work, identify the problems and find ways to go out there and play better.

And then I want to see us when we go on the field, compete our tails off for 60 minutes as hard as we can and I don't want our players looking at the scoreboard. As soon as you start to do that and you worry about the end result, mostly, you're not going to play as well.

So we're at our best when we just play our tails off as hard as we can regardless of the score, show that we have fight, show that we want to win, show that we want to compete, show that when the game is over, we'd like to play even longer, and that's what we want to see from our team.

You know, obviously wins and losses are very important and we want to try to win every game we can, but I do want to see our guys compete and play hard and show fight and want to compete in a rivalry game where we've got an opportunity to play a great football team that's playing very well right now.

Q. What have you seen out of Tuttle's backup quarterback for them? He's only played in one game but obviously they won on the road against Wisconsin. What have you seen out of him and how he gets their offense moving?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, the score was 14-6, so they had a tremendous game on defense not allowing Wisconsin to score. That's how they build their team, and they have done a great job with it.

On offense, they have been able to distribute to the two main receivers who are outstanding play-makers. They have a solid tight end and a big, solid running back. At the quarterback position, they had to bring in their backup, and he managed the game well. He took care of the football. He didn't hurt their team.

And you know, I think every team has certain identities. You've got to build around it and right now, their quarterback has to take care of the ball and just distribute it out and he's done a good job of that. They are very good at what they do and we are going to have to find ways to beat them because they are not going to beat themselves.

Q. Talk about the rivalry game. It's the Bucket against IU. Obviously it's not going to be the same with the lack of atmosphere down there but it still has to be special and exciting for the players, have that game and compete for a trophy of some kind?

COACH JEFF BROHM: Well, we're excited to get back on the field and play a very good football team that's playing well on their home turf. The Bucket means a lot to us as a team and as a fan base, and we want to work hard to go out there and try to win the game.

And I want to see coaches and players that want to compete and show some fight and that want to do everything in our power to get the Bucket and bring it back to West Lafayette.

So I think it's important to have a great week of practice. Put in the work. Build up the inner anger, so when you take the field, you're ready to compete and fight for the win.

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