

# CFP First Round: Notre Dame vs Indiana

Friday, December 20, 2024

Notre Dame, Indiana, USA

Notre Dame Stadium

## Notre Dame Fighting Irish

### Xavier Watts

Postgame Press Conference

Notre Dame 27, Indiana 17

**Q. The defense made big plays tonight. Can you talk about your perspective of the challenge tonight in Indiana?**

XAVIER WATTS: Yeah, coming into the season they had a good run game, and they were able to throw the ball around, so they had good talented receivers, so just being prepared all week, just practicing the balanced approach that they were going to come out, and I think we did a good job of practicing all week, and it helped us today.

**Q. Being one of the captains, having the first home playoff game at Notre Dame, what was it like to have the fans as a factor tonight for the defense?**

XAVIER WATTS: Yeah, the fans were great tonight. They were really loud. I think the towels was a good addition, pumping up the crowd. Every defensive drive was really fun. The crowd played a good part in tonight's win.

**Q. How important was it to start fast both at the start of the game and the start of the second half and kind of get the crowd into it and set the tone for the rest of the night?**

XAVIER WATTS: Yeah, it's important just to start fast. It just sets the tone for the rest of the game. It gives the defense momentum and the offense momentum, so just starting fast is a big factor.

**Q. Can you take us through the interception? How important was it to come up with that on the heels of an interception of your own?**

XAVIER WATTS: Yeah, just cover one. Just over the top, just reading the quarterback. I just ended up being one. It was cover one, yeah.



## PLAYOFF FIRST ROUND

**Q. Xavier, a lot of guys that have a season like you did last year would kind of put it on cruise control. What's motivated you to get even better in all elements of your game this year?**

XAVIER WATTS: Yeah, I just think with me, everyone knows my story. I've bounced back and forth between receiver and DB, and I just feel like I have so much more room to grow, just continuing to improve. So just coming into the season, I just really wanted to improve in all aspects of my game. I just feel like I have a lot more room to grow, so I was just excited to continue growing.

**Q. What's your comfort level even in a game like this, given your entire journey to be able to play here for a final time?**

XAVIER WATTS: Yeah, I mean, at the end of the day, it's just regular football. Obviously it's got the playoff tag with it, but it's just a regular football game to me. I go out there with the utmost confidence in myself and my teammates that we're going to go out there and do our jobs, and like I said, it's just regular football to me.

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