

Indiana University Football Media Conference

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Head Coach Tom Allen

Press Conference



Indiana 7, Ohio State 54

Q. What do you know about Jack at this point? And obviously how much did his injury just throw off the entire game plan tonight?

TOM ALLEN: Yeah. You know, obviously, it hurt us without question. He did a great job while he was in there. Don't know yet. Did do an x-ray right afterward, and that came back negative. But need to do an MRI to find out more ligament-wise what the injury is. Obviously, he's in a lot of pain right now. But don't know. Don't know yet on that. But, yeah, definitely without him in there, it just wasn't quite the same.

Q. Tom, I'm sure in all the thousands of hours you spent thinking about what this season was going to play out like, there was never a time where you thought you would need Grant Gremel to play important minutes against Ohio State. What was going on there with Donaven too? Was there a reason injury-wise? Or did you just decide to use both of those guys?

TOM ALLEN: Well, so, basically, you know, Grant has taken some reps in practice. But there was sometimes it felt like Donaven was a little bit rattled, you know, and just kind of get him calmed down. And just wanted to see him progress through that. Obviously, he did some positive things. So Grant, obviously, is a guy that can throw the ball. But, yeah, that was never a thought going into the season.

But you got starters down. And your number two goes down. And now you got one scholarship quarterback left healthy, and that's Donaven. So you've just got to battle. Next man up. So not necessarily at all what any of us expected for sure.

Q. I guess in some ways -- and I know guys will want to sort of say they're keeping focus forward, putting things behind them. But I guess is there any sort of added challenge in the expectations these guys had

for themselves this year and maybe picking them up from games like this when maybe -- I don't know if the right word is the fall is a little bit further than they -- because they expected so much more of themselves, I guess?

TOM ALLEN: I think that's fair. I think that's a realistic challenge without question. But I also feel like that, you know, just by the way the guys -- just listen to them talk to each other on the sideline and halftime. You know, that's just -- we don't have a choice. You know, it's not anywhere close where any of us thought it was going to be.

But, at the same time, you know, I'm proud of our guys for staying together. And I think that's what they're going to continue to do. But, yeah, I think the challenges are there for sure. But you know what, I mean, that's -- LEO is our foundation. And it's about accountability, toughness, and love when things are going your way and when things are not.

And right now, the injuries continue to mount. And the disappointments have continued. And so you've got to be able to fall back on who you are and what you are made of internally. And so that accountability and that toughness is paramount at this point.

So that isn't going to change. As tough as tonight was, it's one that we just have to put in the trash and press on. Pretty special football team that we just played tonight. I've been here for several years and with that quarterback playing the way he is right now, it's impressive. So they've got a lot of talent without question. And you saw a lot of it tonight.

Q. Tom, I was going to ask about just not having Tiawan and Reese for the second straight game. How much did that compromise the pass defense a little bit? And, also, did you expect a little more defensively given how the defense played and kept you guys in the game?

TOM ALLEN: Yeah. I expected us to play better. I did. I was concerned. You know, to say that -- not having Reese and Tiawan, I would say it makes a major difference in our



defense, especially against those receivers and really modified the way we felt like we had to play.

We knew we weren't going to have Reese at all after late in the week. And then we were hoping to have Tiawan more. But that did not end up being the case. So they are progressing. Hopefully next week they'll both be able to go.

But without a doubt, that has a major impact on what you do schematically against these guys. And so, yeah, it just really compounded the problem in my opinion.

But you try to adjust and adapt to your guys and give them a chance to be successful. But it really came down to not getting pressure on him. That's really what kind of caused the biggest issues. And you try to do different types of ways of creating that and try to do some just other things we felt like would give us a chance.

But they picked a lot of those things up. And they did a good job of that. So, yeah, it was -- those guys are a big part of our defense. There's no question about it.

Q. Tom, I know not having an offense that's in flow affects this as well. But you ended up rushing just for 1.3 yards tonight versus their 5.8. And then on a per play basis, it was almost 8 yards per play that they were giving up. Did you see anything that was -- obviously, they were a better team, as you said, they were very good. But anything they were doing special to really gash like that?

TOM ALLEN: Yeah. I mean, I just -- to me, the biggest problem I think was -- I was most disappointed in our tackling in the first half. To me, that was really what I didn't expect at all and our run defense. I do get it when you do some things with vision you're trying to create and not give up the explosive plays in the pass game.

And I think that's -- if I could go back and you look at it, I think maybe too much emphasis on that, you know, and sometimes you've got to live with it.

But I was definitely very concerned about that with our injuries that we had, with our corners and the lack -- even some depth at our safeties because of some previous injuries as well. I just felt that maybe hold up and not be able to give up those explosive plays and still stop the run. I think that's maybe where the problem was created.

And then you just pretty much -- we weren't good enough against the run because if you can't stop the run, it really makes it hard because they're still getting those pass plays as well. Yeah. It was ugly. That's really the only way --

that's the best way to describe it. It was painful. Especially that second quarter window was just -- it was just not good.

But, yeah, I think, like you said, when you start to play a more keep things in front of you approach, to me, we've just got to be more aggressive. If they throw it over your head, they throw it over your head, so be it.

Q. Donaven only had six pass attempts. Is he just not quite ready?

TOM ALLEN: Yeah. I think there's definitely some concern of him just being ready for that. He's got to grow for. It's got to expand without a doubt. But I think it's not one to put him in a bad spot to get back there and have to make some complex reads. I think that was kind of the thought process.

So you kind of have a plan going in, you know, to be able to allow him to really focus on those small things throughout the week. And then when Jack goes out so early, it was really kind of -- it really kind of put us in a position that we really didn't want to be in.

And that, once again, kind of goes back to why we played Grant more. Just because you have a guy like Donaven who has not been here, here last spring, not here -- just over the things we did during fall camp and working -- you know, just doesn't have enough reps to be honest with you. I think that's a part of it that we've obviously got to address.

We tried to get that. We tried to focus in on some certain things he can do from a run pass read perspective and RPO options. That was kind of a little way to protect him in some ways with those complex drop back reads.

So obviously Grant's been here quite a big longer and knows them way better. So that was the reason why we used him in those situation. But based on what happens with Jack, we'll have to come up with an expanded plan for him without question.

Q. Coach, I noticed a lot of the starters on defense were still out there well into the fourth quarter. Was that a decision by you or the players?

TOM ALLEN: They didn't want to come out. Yeah. That was -- and still, you know what, at the same time, we've got a lot of positions. We don't have a lot more guys left in some of those spots. But they didn't want to come out.

Even -- I was having a little bit of a discussion with one of them about I wanted to take him out. He didn't want to come out. And I respect that. I appreciate that. But that

was probably the biggest reason.

Have a great night. LEO.

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