

# Indiana University Football Media Conference

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## Head Coach Tom Allen

### Press Conference



Indiana 14, Minnesota 35

TOM ALLEN: Takes a lot of the stress off the run game when you do that. There's no doubt we did some things up front, a good job in that first drive, but you've got to sustain it, got to do it for four quarters. Just not good enough. So not to our standard, not acceptable. And it's not been that way for most of the season. So pretty frustrating.

**Q. Tom, I was curious, like in that first drive, the intent was to run the ball and not throw it. And even on third and 5s and third and 8s and third and 10s after that, running plays where it looked like you didn't want Donaven to be in tough passing situations, but then I didn't understand with 30 seconds to go in the half when you were getting the ball at the start of the third quarter anyway why he threw then?**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah. So, to me, I guess, you know, I -- there was an intent, like a lot of times some of the calls were either run-pass options where he could throw it or run it. So he chose to run several of those in the first half. And I felt like he should have thrown some of them. And talked about that on the side line.

Right before half time, you can set on the ball and -- which we could have, I guess. That's part of it. But to me, I'm like, we're not going to beat these guys scoring 7 points. So I felt like, you know, we hadn't really thrown the football effectively yet. Felt like we could. I've seen him do it during practice. I felt like we needed to be able to -- on that throw, he should have ran it. It was double coverage. We saw it on the sideline to run it. But he obviously didn't do that.

But bottom line is, I want to get in field goal range. We've got a real good kicker. Get to the 40. And so, you know, that's on me. But I'm not going to sit here and be conservative. Just not going to do it. We've got to score points. So, to me, I'm not going to call it that way. Put that one on me. We've got to throw the football. I'm not going to play scared. Not going to play tentative. I want us to let it rip. If it happens and it's not executed right, then so be it.

But I'm not going to play this way. So you don't beat good teams scoring 7 points.

**Q. I guess to kind of expand on just the offensive side of it, is it -- I guess how much of it is trying to take advantage of maybe Donaven having that dual threat ability and how much of it is I don't want to say limiting but sort of not wanting to ask him in the passing game to do stuff that he's just maybe not prepared for yet?**

TOM ALLEN: There's no doubt, third and longs are hard. So that's not ideal. I get that. Those are tough situations. Schematically, you do different things defensively. You usually do a lot of exotic pressures and different things, disguise-wise, coverage-wise. So it's hard -- it puts more pressure on a young quarterback to figure those things out. And so you try to eliminate those.

And that's where I felt that -- but you still got to throw the football. That's -- I get it. You run the ball with him and he can run the ball. That's great. But it says dual threat. Okay? Dual means you do both. Right? So if you're not dual, then you're just one dimensional. All right.

So, to me, that's why that word is what it is. So to me, that is definitely his strength is to be able to run the football, but you've got to be able to throw it as well. So to me, I think you can't shy away from that. You've got to be able to do it and obviously do it in an efficient way and not put him in harm's way. But you can't make it to where you just cautiously play the game and call the game.

At the same time, it puts a ton of pressure on your defense when you can't score points. Eventually, they just kind of wear down. So, to me, it's about trying to win the game, not just keep the score close or not just try to hang around. To me, it's try to win.

**Q. Gremel did give you some passing there at the end. Are you open to maybe looking at him to start next Saturday?**

TOM ALLEN: Absolutely. Yeah. Whatever we've got to do to beat Purdue. That's it. That's the bottom line. So to me, everything's on the table. We've got one game. Very



important game. Very big game. The game of the season. Biggest game of the season because it's the next one, but we know it's Purdue, which makes it extra special.

**Q. Coach, Peyton Hendershot only had -- he had two carries, no targets on offense. Was there an injury there? Or was that just not part of the game plan?**

TOM ALLEN: The game plan was get him the football. But that was part of the issues with passing it as well. But obviously get him in the backfield, getting him touching the ball was by design, for sure. Wanted to continue to do things like that. But, yeah, we've got to throw him the football. I mean, he's one of our top guys. And it's the same with Number 3. So got to throw the football.

**Q. No takeaways on defense and kind of a coverage bust. I mean, you talked about them being worn down, but how would you assess --**

TOM ALLEN: Well, our third downs weren't good enough. Had a couple busts that hurt us. But had some real close pressures where right as we were hitting the guy or getting to them. I thought they won the 50/50 balls at receiver that we were not able to win. I was disappointed in that. Our third down defense wasn't good enough.

I thought we did a lot of good things defensively but not enough. And just disappointed in third downs and not being able to get those contested balls. Something we've got to be able to do. I mean, they've got some -- 7, I think, is a really talented receiver. He's a big guy. He's got good length. And we've got to come down with some of those, at least breakups. But that to me -- and I just felt like we needed to contest things and pressure things. So, but, yeah, just -- yeah. Just overall not good enough. Not good enough.

**Q. I want to get back to Grant actually. Two games now we've seen him throw the ball comfortably. He looks kind of comfortable out there.**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah, he does.

**Q. And today he showed he that he has some wheels getting to the corner on that one play. He seems like a dual threat opportunity there. And the ability to throw the ball.**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah.

**Q. Exactly what --**

TOM ALLEN: I agree because it keeps you from just ganging up on you. And you're right. The thing that stuck

out to me with him is he looks comfortable. That's kind of been -- even against Ohio State when he was thrust in there in a tough situation and had not played a whole lot at that point for sure and has played a little more now. But that's a good sign.

He's improved a lot since he's been here. Really proud of him. He's locked in, ready to go. Just always does everything right. So, yeah, to me, that's encouraging. It's positive without question.

And, you know, we've got a stable full of running backs who walk on, so might as well add him to the crew with the quarterback.

So bottom line is next man up, step up, make plays. And if you're good enough, we're going to put you in there. To me, he's shown he can get the ball down the field, get the ball out quickly, read the coverages, and do a good job of moving the chains. So that was definitely a positive for our program.

**Q. Coach, I know you said a long time ago that you were playing Donaven before you had originally hoped to. How much work are you going to have to do to kind of build him back up?**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah. And that's where, honestly -- I mean, I -- just being real, you know, we've had those conversations. You play somebody too soon, and it makes it hard. But we didn't have a choice.

And you want to be able to build off of each week. And sometimes when the negatives happen, it can go the other direction and you start losing your confidence. And then you start second guessing yourself. And I think you've seen some of that.

So, yeah, I mean, had a lot of conversations with coaches. And it happens in the NFL as well. You play a rookie too soon, he gets a lot of this, a lot of negatives, it just kind of sets him back. So that's the concern, without question, just being transparent with you all. I think that's a fair question, that's a fair concern because I know he has a lot of talent but I know that when you get thrust in these moments and you're not quite ready, sometimes it can hurt you more than it can help you.

But at the same time, it's kind of come down to the point where it's last man standing, you know, so -- but he's been awesome. He works hard. He cares. And hasn't played -- hasn't thrown the ball especially on game day like he does in practice. So we've got to get him to that point. So it does show up there, so it's not like he can't. But to be able to do it under pressure, under duress, reading coverages,

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figuring that stuff out is definitely what you want. So there's no doubt I think that these have helped him. But there's definitely a fine line with that where it can go too far the negative way.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thanks, Tom.

TOM ALLEN: Awesome. Have a great night. LEO.

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