

Indiana University Football Media Conference

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Head Coach Tom Allen

Press Conference



Michigan 31, Indiana 10

TOM ALLEN: Just thought the kids fought their tails off, played their hearts out. Obviously, we have some guys out, but other guys stepped up. Just didn't finish.

Had a chance in the fourth quarter against a fourth ranked team in the country. Really good football team. You get a chance to be able to be in the fourth quarter to go find a way to win, and we didn't finish. So, that's highly disappointed.

Obviously, offensively not scoring any points the second half, just two weeks in a row of that, and it's got to change. It's got to change.

Questions.

Q. Tom, I guess in particular fourth quarters I think it's negative-7 total yards in the last two fourth quarters for that offense, and I think 15 sacks in the last three games. What's not working in your view in terms of in particular just being able to block things up that gets you in rhythm and in positive sort of yardage?

TOM ALLEN: You can see the opposite from first half to the second half the ability to move the football today, and then obviously, the second half not to be able to on.

Obviously, it starts up front. Got to protect. Not getting the job done there, and got to look that the really hard.

Q. Obviously, when you have the struggles on offense, it's a collective effort. Not any one guy. Any discussions on the sideline of maybe just trying somebody else at quarterback to see if they might provide a spark at one of the series to see if a change-up might --

TOM ALLEN: We'll look at everything as we go through and evaluate where we're at and what we've got to do to be able to have a strong finish to our season.

We've got six big games left. It's the halfway point right now. And, obviously, right now not playing the kind of football in the second half we have to play. Not protecting the quarterback, not being consistent up front, not getting the job done.

We'll look at everything, every position, evaluate. Everybody has to be held accountable for their play and the way they're performing both as coaches and players.

Q. Obviously, stick on the offensive line. When we asked you in the offseason why you decided not to make a change there, you said that you felt you could do a lot of things without doing a wholesale change. You had a lot of one-on-one conversations that you felt like you had seen a response. Do you still feel like you have seen a response?

TOM ALLEN: Not the last three weeks. Not last week. Not this week. Very disappointed. Very disappointing.

Q. Defensively first half you guys were in a position where you would love to have been. You were a 22-point underdog, but yet, you were right there in the game. The second half was a tale of two cities. You couldn't stop them. They threw 263 to 29, I think, yardage in the second half. What was different? What did they do different that you guys couldn't stop?

TOM ALLEN: Honestly, I think just a couple of adjustments there in regards to -- I thought we had a couple of communication errors on a key third downs. The first long drive that they had where they had the ball inside the 2 that I was very frustrated with. Our kids fought hard.

I think other than that first -- the first drive to me was our guys not executing on some critical second and longs and third and longs where we had a chance to get them on the second and longs to get into the third and longer.

On the third down we have to get off the field. I know we had a couple of communication mistakes as we brought the guys off the field and talked through all that.

But, I felt like our defense fought hard. I really do. I think



they got wore down in the fourth quarter.

Bottom line is that there's just some things that they try to do to you, and they do a good job of being a big personnel and creating some lighter pictures, and they have athletic tight ends to be able to do that, which makes it tough as you're trying to get the matchups you want and maybe have a chance to expose some of our younger guys that had to play due to injuries.

Q. With three losses in a row, and you still have some tough matchups the rest of the season. Is there anything you guys can do, I guess, to kind of reset yourself mentally to keep that morale high? More meetings? Like, what I guess could go into just trying to reset yourself, reset what you're looking for the rest of the season?

TOM ALLEN: Yeah, and that's what we'll do. A variety of ways to do that, and it's not an easy task, without question, but the bottom line is, as I told our players a few minutes ago, there's a lot of football ahead of us.

We've got a lot of great opportunities on our schedule. Every single week is a big opportunity for us, and we take it one at a time. Obviously, yes, our guys' mindset is critical, but it is every time you play in this league.

You're going to have your ups and downs, and you have to find a way to fight through them. I think this team has learned how to do that, but at the same time we have to finish because it's all about finishing.

Q. I wanted to ask about Cam Jones. Just, first off, when did his injury pop up? I guess what's his status? How much did his absence kind of impact the defense today, and how do you feel Bradley stepped up in his place?

TOM ALLEN: He got hurt during the game last week, so we found out probably on Sunday afternoon. It's going to be several weeks at minimum.

Just, yeah, you lose your best player. He is not just our leader of our team, he is the leader of our defense. He is playing at a high level. I would consider him playing at an All-American level. Statistically it backs that up.

It's a big blow any time you lose a guy like that, and he gives us a presence as well.

For us to be able to respond losing a guy like that with a team that runs the football so effectively, especially I would give us three and a half quarters, didn't finish.

I thought Bradley stepped up. Did some good things, but I think it's a great chance for him to grow and learn. He is playing the position. We moved Aaron Casey to the stinger position to replace Cam.

But, yeah, Cam is a special player. To just plug another guy in there and not have a drop-off due to his level of play that he has been playing at. At the same time we have to adjust. We have to figure it out.

Q. I'm curious about just kind of halftime adjustments and what exactly goes down in the locker room at that halftime where it just comes into a second half and there's little to no offensive momentum. So what the dialogue? What's the conversation that you have at halftime to try to build up what they're going to change in the second half to try --

TOM ALLEN: You go through and meet as a staff. You have your notes. You go through every single thing, and you go through the issues and go through the positives and try to be able to address the issues and make adjustments for those issues and be able to still continue to take advantage of the positive.

We do that both defensively and offensively. Obviously, I'm calling defense, so I'm doing that with the defense during halftime and making those adjustments.

Obviously, the last two weeks our offensive staff hasn't done a good job of making those adjustments. Proof is in the pudding. We haven't scored points in the second half.

It is what it is. You can call it what you want. The adjustments have to be made in a way that allows us to be successful in the second half. That hasn't happened the last two weeks.

That's something that we have to address, and that's on our offensive staff. That's their responsibility. At the end of the day I'm the head coach, so I have to make sure it happens.

Q. Kind of offbeat, as much as you're willing to share with what happened with Mike. I know, obviously, you're still close to the guys on staff --

TOM ALLEN: I didn't say that, and I'm sorry. I should have. Just prayers for Mike Hart. I don't know the situation. I did talk to Coach Harbaugh at the end of the game. Very close with Mike. Talked to him even this week via text before we played him. It sounds like he is going to be okay, but obviously, a concern when he went down.

Our hearts for him are heavy and his family. Prayers for

them. Thoughts for them. We're praying that he is going to have a full recovery. Appreciate you asking. Thank you.

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