

# Indiana University Football Media Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

## Coach Tom Allen

### Postgame Press Conference



Purdue 30, Indiana 16

**Q. Obviously a big turn of events when Dexter goes down. How difficult was it, because it looked like you guys really devised the game plan around his ability to run and when that went out the window, how tough was it to try to adjust on the fly after that happened?**

TOM ALLEN: It was a devastating loss, to be honest with you. He did a great job last week, and I felt great about our game plan, and it was working to perfection. We were driving the ball when he went down. Just a freaky non-contact. You all saw it. I just can't put into words how I feel in some ways with regards to the injuries we've had for two straight years with key guys. You try to play to the strengths of your guys. We tried to play to the strengths of that room, and felt really good about what we had laid out as far as our offensive coaches did a great job with that.

So yeah, just definitely, it's just tough. I hate it for him. He's an amazing young man. He's took him to the hospital, so yeah, just -- my reaction, there's just no words to be honest with you. It's part of the game. Learn to adjust.

**Q. Is there a firm sense of what it is with Dexter, whether it's a leg, a knee, an ankle?**

TOM ALLEN: They need further evaluation, so that's the last update I got as I walked out of the training room here. But yeah, he was taken to the hospital. It is not an ACL, I do know that. So it's not that. But it's obviously serious.

**Q. I recognize this is bigger picture, but when you see what the offense can do with Dexter's mobility, does that make you think about as you move into the off-season with your staff, revising some things within the offense to bring more of the mobile quarterback aspect out?**

TOM ALLEN: Yes, absolutely without question. That's what I know we need to do. That allows us the chance to be able to do the things we need to do to be able to blend

and different things, yes, but with the idea of the tempo that we used and the quarterback run game and throw game combination to me is really what I want us to be able to do, and want to build off that, absolutely, without question.

**Q. 1 for 3 in the red zone, only three points. What was the trouble down there?**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah, you know, I think that just the field gets smaller, shrinks down. We've got to win the one-on-ones at receiver. Just a guy like Cam Camper who steps up and makes those plays in that situation, we need that guy to step up. Obviously Cam has been injured; we lost him for the season. So another guy needs to step up and take on that role, and then losing DJ in that role, as well.

I think when you get in that area of the field, you've got to win the one-on-ones. We obviously were not able to do that. It is a little harder to run the football down there, but obviously those happened without Dexter in the game in terms of the way we had planned those out, I thought we would be able to finish those with touchdowns if we had him in those situations, but we didn't. You've got to be able to adapt to those.

Yeah, to me it comes more down to being able to get in those situations, whether it's a tight end, receiver, because it's a very tight window and those guys got to make contested catches, and they've got to be able to do a great job with that.

Definitely disappointed. We got the ball down there and we had -- we ran for over 200 yards, and 26 1st downs, but we've got to get touchdowns. That's why -- we tried to kick a couple field goals, missed two of them, which is frustrating. That's not usually who we are in that area. Then obviously had to go for it there in the end to get a touchdown.

But yeah, to me, a lot of red zone opportunities, not enough touchdowns.

**Q. Connor coming off the bench there, just how ready do you think he was, and how do you evaluate his**



## performance?

TOM ALLEN: Yeah, he came in there and gave us all he had, and obviously we had to have two different type game plans, and obviously some things worked more for him that were different from Dexter, and some of the runs you didn't want to be in and all that. I think there were some good things we were doing there. But he's come in there and battled for us, so it's just obviously we didn't score enough points to win the game.

At the end of the day, it's all about everybody, and Connor stayed with us even though some guys made different decisions, but Connor has got high character and he's an awesome young man, and I'm proud of him.

### **Q. On their 60-yard touchdown pass, what did you see that allowed Jones to get so open?**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah, we had a blown -- we brought pressure and we had a DB that didn't do his job. To me, call it what you want. You've got to be able to do different things. It was a modified version of cover-two that we were running but we had the two VH, three VH players, and one of those guys who was the safety got beat. To me it's a wall technique that really should be something we can execute and we spend a lot of time on. It's kind of part of our base, and just can't let that happen.

When somebody gets injured like what happened in that, we lost Jonathan Haines for the game, and then the guy behind him just struggled to execute the call in that situation.

I called it because I felt like we had the guys back there to do it, and it didn't work, so that's on me.

### **Q. Kaiden Turner, true freshman, leads you in tackles tonight. Just what did you see from him and his game? What do you like about him moving forward? And being a true freshman, what does that say about him?**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah, tough kid. I hated to throw him in that situation. Didn't know until after pregame the situation there that we were going to have to do that. We were trying to get Aaron Casey ready to play. He battled all week, tough as nails. So proud of him. He gave us everything he had. He pretty much probably extended himself last week and it caused him to probably not be able to get back this week. But I appreciate him, and not having Aaron in there the whole game was tough.

But Kaiden got a chance to start as a true freshman and got thrown into the fire there sooner than we'd like for him

to be able to be, but at the same time he stepped up, and even Jared Casey who's been out for a long time with an injury came back and played some Mike backer for the first time today because we didn't have anybody else left. Just our linebacker room has been decimated with injuries.

But I thought Kaiden stepped up. He's got a lot of room to grow, but he's a tough, physical kid that cares and loves this game, and he'll be a good player for us moving forward.

### **Q. You mentioned trying to get Aaron Casey back; how (indiscernible)?**

TOM ALLEN: He practiced twice. When I say "practiced," he did workouts twice this week, and then I watched him closely. It was kind of one of those things where I just didn't feel like -- we had to have a conversation about this. I wasn't going to put him out there if he wasn't 100 percent. He could go one direction pretty good, but he couldn't plant, and I'm just like, nah. He busted his tail to get back. We were trying to get him back for last week, and then we thought maybe this week.

But the good news is for him it's not a long-term injury that he will be able to have a full recovery from, so it won't affect his NFL opportunities.

But I just can't say enough awesome things about that kid. He's a special, special young man, great, great player, but just even better man and a great leader. He's given us his heart and soul and given everything he has. He tried hard to come back, and it would have been a huge lift to get him back, but I wasn't going to put him out there if it wasn't in his best interest, and I didn't feel that it was.

### **Q. I think you were asked the same question last year just about injuries and how many you guys had to deal with. Is there anything you can pinpoint as causing them in terms of just you getting mobility wise, stretching? Is there anything you can do to try to limit them?**

TOM ALLEN: Yeah, I mean, I wish I had an answer for that. We brought in a specialist last year. We'll do it again to evaluate everything we do from that perspective to see if there's anything we're doing or missing. But we had toe ligament injuries this year, which is like hardly ever heard of that in my career, had several of those.

Obviously Dex's situation is -- who knows what that is yet, but it's very unique without question, non-contact, you plant -- I don't even know how you prevent that. We've had obviously Bedford with ACL, Cam Camper is ACL. The NFL hasn't figured out how to stop those, either. Seems

like they happen every week.

But gosh, we've got an amazing strength and conditioning coach that's phenomenal. We didn't have as many this year. It was unfortunately the wrong guys, some pretty key guys that we missed. We're going to evaluate it, but it's hard to prevent some of these. They are part of the game, and it's just tough. No excuses. You've got to have other guys step up. That's the bottom line.

I hate it that those guys weren't able to be part of this game.

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