

Indiana University Football

Media Conference

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Elijah Sarrat

Press Conference



Q. I think we talked to you during fall camp about your opportunity to go from playing in the FCS when you began your career to now Indiana. Now that you're approaching the College Football Playoff, how much has that made your journey special to the point where you're now competing for a National Championship?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Yeah, honestly, I haven't really -- I haven't thought about it much. But you saying that, it is pretty special to be here right now.

I came from a school with less than 5,000 kids to playing in the College Football Playoff. So can't do nothing but thank God for where I'm at here right now honestly.

Q. Elijah, what do you feel has made this season so successful for you individually and for the offense as a whole?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Just putting in the work every single day, off-season workouts, when we go out by ourselves, me working out, taking care of my body, all of that. Just putting a lot into this stuff every single day, clocking in and out. That's what I can attribute it to.

Q. Notre Dame's secondary is pretty stout. What have been your impressions of them on film and what do you feel like is your own key in terms of what approach you need to take to be successful in the game?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Yeah, they are a great defense from D-Line all the way to the back end. Coached well. They are ranked for a reason. They are in this College Football Playoffs for a reason. They run a lot of man, so keys for us is winning our one-on-ones when we get a chance, and whenever the quarterback throws the ball, just going up and making a play and going from there.

Q. Not sure how much good-on-good you get to do in the fall, but going up against D'Angelo Ponds, what separates him from other corners you've gone against? What are your impressions of his skill set and talent level?

ELIJAH SARRAT: I say to this day, he's the best corner I went against since I stepped foot in college. No disrespect to anyone else, but that's just how good of a player D-Lo is. He's twitchy and he knows the game, and I could see him playing on Sundays in a couple years for sure.

Q. We've seen you thrive in single coverage. It seems like Notre Dame, even with those younger guys, are not afraid to leave them on an island in man coverage. How do you attack that when you're expecting a lot of one-on-one and maybe a game like this for you is a little bit more about not worrying about zone reads but winning that battle across the line of scrimmage?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Yeah, they have younger corners but they play with a lot of confidence. They're coached well. They have great technique and changing up what I'm giving them each play, changing up my releases and just making plays, really.

I'm going to have my chances to make my plays and just got to do it when it happens, you know.

Q. Wanted to get your thoughts on Kurtis. Comes from smaller school, top rated football. What makes him that good?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Puts his time in. He's a vet. Played a lot of football. His brother is a quarterback in the league. From a football family and he really just puts his time in every single day. He has a great coach behind him telling him what to do. Loves the game. Tells me what I'm doing right. Tells me what I'm doing wrong. He's a good leader out there, and I wouldn't want anyone else being my quarterback.

Q. We've heard from Aiden and Kurtis say it was week 2 around fall camp where things felt clicked and the potential started to feel real. What was going on in the second week where you might have felt that way as well and around the team the vibes?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Things, the process of things were starting to get better. Little stuff that we were messing up



in the beginning we were finally getting our timing down on routes, timing down on blocking and run game and everyone just started to gel, and it really took off from there.

Of course, we were kind of slow in our first game but made some adjustments and we were on from there.

Q. The importance of chemistry between receiver and quarterback is huge. Was there a Eureka Moment where you clicked and you were on the same page?

ELIJAH SARRAT: It took a while to connect on some deep routes. Honestly, it was like the first deep route we connected on we were like, okay, this is how it's supposed to be, and it clicked from there.

Took a lot of reps after practice. We got work in after practice and those built in overtime and a lot of stuff starts to seed in, you know.

Q. Chance of snow on Friday. What did you learn from the Purdue game as a receiver, and how can you prepare for that in the practicing leading up to the game?

ELIJAH SARRAT: I mean, practice-wise, you can't really prepare for it. Cold is cold regardless. I have a couple tricks, Vasoline maybe, look a little shiny out there. But the heated benches, they help out a lot. You can't really do much. It's mind over matter at that point. Just got to go out there and play some football.

Q. It has been decades since Indiana and Notre Dame have played one another, whether in the building or out in the campus. In the community, do you sense excitement about renewing the rivalry?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Yeah, I see it every day. I have to get off Twitter. I see it a little too much. I see the importance to everyone who is involved with both programs and I'm as excited to be able to play in this game. Who knows next time we're going to be able to play? I just want to go out there and compete for the fans and do my best, you know.

Q. We spoke to Myles Price last week, and he said he had a vision for Indiana being this far back in January. Did the receiver room share that vision or just the team?

ELIJAH SARRAT: Definitely receiver-wise and team. I personally, I had 2024 goals, football goals, and that was one of my goals. It's like hanging up kind of on my locker so I see it damn near every single day -- sorry, excuse my language. I'm sorry.

That was a goal we set. You don't really think about it throughout the season because you go week-by-week trying to compete and win games, and you know, we're not really treating it any different. You know, treating this game just like any other game. Going to try to go out there and put the work in and do our thing, you know.

Q. This whole team has played with chip on their shoulder all year long proving they are worthy of any opponent, any place. Do you go to Notre Dame with that chip or do you have confidence?

ELIJAH SARRAT: We know we're supposed to be here. We know we belong. But we're always going to have that chip. We remember what everyone was saying during the season and remember what everyone is saying now.

We're all we need. We going to go down there, just focus on us and try to handle business, you know.

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