

Indiana University Football Media Conference

Tuesday, December 17, 2024

Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Jailin Walker

Press Conference



Q. You guys have done a good job of forcing turnovers this season. What emphasis is that, especially with Notre Dame running the ball as much as they do and how much can you practice that? How does that work?

JAILIN WALKER: Turnovers is a big thing. When we create turnovers, it gives the offense and special teams energy, and when you create turnovers, their defense are tired and they have got to get right back on the field and play our offense. Turnovers is always a big thing when you want to win the game.

And like we know Notre Dame has a great run offense. Just attention to detail every day in practice, being secure in the offense and run fits and being able to critique and be able to do good in running.

Q. Jailin, wondering for you as an old player, a player who has seen so much, how special is it for you to end your career in a magnitude like this and also trying to eliminate the noise and just lock in?

JAILIN WALKER: It's amazing coming from being a G5 recruit, just seeing how this place can change, being able to see how a program like Indiana can change. Just amazing seeing how Coach Cignetti can build a program like this.

I just trust Cignetti and his word. He's a great Coach. Every day we just know we have to listen to his word and stick to the details and go out there and play the game and have fun as a family.

Q. From the times that you've done it, even back at JMU or here, what's it like going up against Horton in practice and what's it like being on the other end of that intensity we all see?

JAILIN WALKER: Since freshman year me and Zach been bumping heads. He's a true senior, too. So we came in together. That's my brother on and off the field. I know Zach is a great tight end, and he gets me better. So every

day we get to go against each other iron sharpens iron, and it just show that he made me the player that I am today. I appreciate Zach for that one.

Q. When you guys have to be more mindful of Notre Dame's quarterback in terms of his running threat, how does that change things or does that add anything to kind of your responsibilities in terms of things you've got to be reading during or before the play, things like that?

JAILIN WALKER: Yeah, you know, we put in new end stops, like spying the quarterback or just running like past, past so just to navigate him -- have him have trouble escaping the pocket. We just know he a great quarterback so we have a lot of plays built to stop his effectiveness, and it's ready.

Q. How much do you enjoy playing for Coach Haines and his aggressive mindset and system?

JAILIN WALKER: I love playing with Coach Haines. Ever since I came here, at JMU as a freshman, he's a great man, you know what I mean. He just want us to be the best man that we can be on and off the field and it shows, man. He's a great Coach. I just love that man. He's a father figure because my father passed, so he's just another father figure for me and he just wants me to be the best man off and off the field.

He's hard on us and that's what we want, is a coach to be hard on us because he brings out the best version of us.

Q. I've asked basically everybody this question and you all have talked about the expectation that you had at the beginning to play on this level and this kind of stage, but was there a moment for you, whether it was a game or something behind the scenes or in practice or wherever when you kind of looked around and you thought -- it was basically validated; you didn't just believe this was the goal you should all sort of aim for but that that's what this team was capable of, essentially.

JAILIN WALKER: You know, since day one, he brought



the image of like we're a team and we're here to win and be a family. In summer workouts and spring workouts I could tell the competitiveness. Everybody was working hard and trying to get better.

We had one goal, and the goal was to win and to be able to go into the College Football Playoffs. Like I said, summer workouts and spring workouts we knew we had this one goal and with the competitiveness, iron sharpens iron, and it just made us a better team.

Q. You and Aiden are involved with a good chunk of the defensive plays for this team. How important is it in a game like this, a playoff game, to be a goldfish, to flush the bad and build off the good?

JAILIN WALKER: It's amazing. Fish is my brother, too. We know they have a good run offense and just be able to be linebackers. We know the game is going to be put on us. Just being able to go out and lean on your brother and have fun when he's right besides you, it's amazing. When he's down I bring him up and when I'm down he brings me up. Having him beside you, it's great and it's an enjoyment to be able to be out there with your brother.

Q. You just brought it up, but I still want to ask you, you keep calling these guys your brother and you called Coach Haines a father figure. How much does it mean to you to have a team that has become an extension of your family in such a quick amount of time?

JAILIN WALKER: When they are down they able to pick you up because that's what family members do. Family members want you to be the best version of yourself and it's not just about -- it's about being the best version that we can be and like for us being family members, we'll be able to enjoy the game that we're playing.

You know, we're bringing it all. Like we're giving it all and we're leaving everything on the field and it shows, and I love this team as a family.

Q. I wanted to get your thoughts on how Bloomington has changed and how the campus has change, the reaction, what you see from when you guys first got here to what you see around town and campus? How has it changed?

JAILIN WALKER: It feels amazing. I came here in January and it was around basketball season, so football season wasn't up. It just showed we could change this place. There wasn't like a lot of involvement with football.

Since we been winning, you can see the fans and

students, they will come talk to you on campus. It feels great to see that we can change a program like Indiana, and like I said, we're just getting started. We've got a long road for Indiana. Coach Cignetti is in good hands.

Q. You've talked a lot about just enjoying and having fun playing football this year. How important is it not just for you but for the entire team to go out there and have fun on Friday?

JAILIN WALKER: Playing a sport that you love and you know you got your brother beside you and be able to have fun, it feels amazing, you know what I mean. It doesn't feel like a job. Feels like a hobby or like something that you entertain or something that you love to do.

So although we're taking the game seriously we're having fun with it, too. It feels great.

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