

Rose Bowl Game presented by Prudential: Alabama vs Indiana

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Pasadena, California, USA

Indiana Hoosiers

Aiden Fisher

Press Conference

Q. Being creatures of habit, this is an unusual trip. You come out early. It's not like you travel and play the next day. You've gotta get that different routine. How do you mesh that trying to stay in routine, but also knowing it's a little different this time around?

AIDEN FISHER: I think it was really good for us to get a practice in this morning, kind of handle the preparation. Do the travel, be ready to go again for practice tomorrow. I think that really helps when you cannot take a whole day just to travel and kind of get situated. Now we'll hit the ground running tomorrow morning.

But easy travel. I remember coming out here for UCLA obviously with not as much time as we do now. But it'll be good to get practices in and walk-through (indiscernible) we're already here.

Q. In year's past, you think, oh, this is the Rose Bowl. It's usually the end of the season. But knowing this is just a step in your journey, how do you embrace this is the "The Granddaddy of Them All," but know that it's just the next step?

AIDEN FISHER: For us it's being in the moment, be where your feet are. For us it's the next game. Obviously you've got to embrace the culture around the Rose Bowl and the significance of it, the history. But you can't really take it too much. You've got to treat it as the next game, kind of prepare like it is any other game for us.

Q. What was the vibe like for the team when you get on a plane, you realize we're going to the Rose Bowl, we're not just going to go play another game? What was the vibe like coming out?

AIDEN FISHER: Honestly, it feels like any other game. Obviously the time's is a little weird, it being earlier. But we know the game means a lot to a lot of people. The history



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and significance is unmatched.

Everyone is excited. We're eager to get out there. But we have a lot more preparation to get done, but just try and take it day by day.

Q. How has the prep ramped up the last nine days after you knew it was going to be Alabama as the opponent?

AIDEN FISHER: It's been great. I think we got ahead of Alabama when we were doing the initial prep, when we had that kind of off week, when we didn't know who we were playing yet.

We prepared for both but we got a lot of good looks from what they do offensively and probably defensively as well.

But, yeah, once we knew, we kind of hit the ground running, kind of had an idea what they like to do and what our plan of attack was going to be. And it was just kind of cleaning things up from there and putting together a really good plan to move forward with.

Q. Walk me through the pride that you take, (indiscernible) trying to stop the run, (indiscernible).

AIDEN FISHER: Yeah, for us as a defense, if you can't stop the run, you can't play good defense. So that's our number one goal week in, week out, regardless of who we play; and obviously seeing the weather, it could be more of a physical, downhill run game.

But for us, we take a lot of pride in that, our preparation, and stopping the run is the ultimate goal, and then if you can stop the run, you can make the team one-dimensional, that's the goal, to kind of put yourself ahead and know what to expect from there.

Q. Yourself and a lot of the guys that transferred from (inaudible) when Coach Cignetti was first hired have gone on to win All-Big Ten, honors and various awards, what does it say about the talent (inaudible) that Coach Cignetti does given that these guys that were playing at a lower level of Division I football end

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up winning honors (indiscernible).

AIDEN FISHER: First of all, he's really good at finding talent. A lot of teams, when they looked at us, they're like, we're kind of good on those guys, but he's good at finding talent but he's even better at developing it.

His whole staff is so great at developing talent because they're teachers. It's not just, you know, you have to do this and this is your job; it's why are you doing it, how you're going to do it, and going to give you a multitude of ways to do it to be successful at the end of the day.

That's why I think the development of our team and our players has been so high. It's being a teacher instead of a coach all the time and giving the guys the tools to do a job, not just saying this is how you do it one way, there's another way to do it.

Q. I know this team doesn't need any extra motivation, but is there a little something there for you knowing that you and so many others weren't recruited by those quintessential programs like the Alabamas of the world?

AIDEN FISHER: Yeah, absolutely. There's always a chip on our shoulder. Not a lot of people recruited us or wanted us, whether that was in high school recruiting or the transfer portal.

I have said it before, nobody we're going to play from here on out ever recruited any of us. We've got to keep that chip on our shoulder and just know that moving forward. But definitely some extra motivation with every game we play.

Q. Did you guys have an idea of how much IU fans would love to see IU win the Rose Bowl?

AIDEN FISHER: Oh, yeah, when I first got to Indiana, they talked about the old Rose Bowl team that got to come out here. It's always been, we have to get back to the Rose Bowl, we have to get back to the Rose Bowl. So I'm glad we were able to do it. But job's not finished for us. Getting here is one thing, but winning is another. That's the goal, and nothing else matters if you don't win that game.

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