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# Indiana's Defense Played with a 'Nastiness' in Their First Big Ten Victory

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Indiana had its first Big Ten matchup against UCLA Saturday night and boy did they not disappoint. Throughout the week, Coach Cignetti harped on the fact that their trip to Pasadena would strictly be a business trip, and they treated it just like that. The Hoosiers marched into the Rose Bowl stadium to take care of business and walked out with a 42-13 victory.

From the start of IU's first defensive drive, they showed that this team needs to be taken seriously. On UCLA's first play on offense, the Bruins' quarterback, Ethan Garbers, made a costly mistake that led to a fumble recovery by Mikail Kamara to put IU in the redzone and set them up to start with a 14-0 lead. Mikail Kamara was a problem for UCLA's offensive line wrecking plays and bringing constant pressure to Garbers. Earlier in the week, Kamara emphasized in an interview about how important it is to build and on and off field relationship with his new teammates.

“(It’s) very important, especially me coming in as a transfer, kind of trying to build that chemistry. Especially as a D lineman, once the D line has chemistry, we play so fast... we’re still working the chemistry, and I know eventually it’s really going to click.” Kamara stated in his Tuesday interview.

By the looks of it tonight, the defense's chemistry really clicked. Garber was under constant duress by the defense almost every play he stepped back in the pocket. The whole front seven showed how dominant they could play. Coach Cignetti said in a postgame interview that “we wanted to go out there with a mean, nasty edge” and linebackers Aiden Fisher and Jailin Walker showed how nasty the Hoosiers can be. Fisher and Walker combined for a total of 16 tackles and a pass deflection against the Bruins in their matchup. After the game, Walker responded to a question in a interview about Cignetti's emphasis on playing nasty.

“We need to play like this every game. That’s the standard. Playing nasty, playing fast, playing physical and make plays. So, every game, you just got to bring that nastiness, do your job, and the story continues.”

The Hoosiers defense dominated tonight holding UCLA to only 13 points and while the front seven played a crucial part in disrupting the offense, the defensive backs also brought that pressure. The Hoosiers' coverage on UCLA's skill positions was essential to holding Garbers to 137 yards and 0 touchdowns. One of the standout players in the defensive backfield was sophomore Amare Ferrell who recorded 6 tackles, a sack, and an interception. Ferrell played viciously Saturday night and credits Coach Cignetti for helping the team develop a winning mentality and the ability to dominate on the gridiron.

“Coach Cig is the man that does it, just come out and dominate (and) play our brand of football. I feel like we did that to a pretty good job. We still got a few things to clean up from this game, but we gonna clean it up.” Ferrell said after the game.

The Hoosiers faced some struggles with penalties tonight leading to two defensive players being ejected due to targeting. In addition to penalties, they also allowed a touchdown in the final minutes of the first half which seems to be a common theme for Indiana. Out of the 23 points scored against them this season, 17 points were scored in the final minutes of the first half. Once the Hoosiers return to Bloomington, they'll get right to work fixing

those fatal mistakes. Overall, Indiana's commanding defense played a great game in the Golden State and will prepare to face off against Charlotte this upcoming weekend.

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IU's defense has played well but they need to figure out why they haven't stopped teams at the end of the half. Do that, then the defense becomes very dangerous.



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