



Postgame Quotes
Cincinnati 24, Notre Dame 13
Oct. 2, 2021 | Attendance: 77,622 | Notre Dame Stadium

Cincinnati Head Coach Luke Fickell

On the fan support in South Bend

"Maybe I'll have a couple of minutes to reflect, but I do know this, at the very end it was one of few moments where I could smile. That crowd, and those fans, they made a difference. I was so happy to have them here. I heard a lot of people were coming and I heard it all week. I didn't want to ask them exactly what colors they'd be wearing, but I know a lot of them who traveled that distance were wearing red today and I was real excited to see that."

On Notre Dame threatening a comeback

"Coming into this place, to battle a top-10 team and top-5 program, don't think they aren't going to come roaring back. I was just proud of the way those guys handled even some tough situations like missing field goals. They didn't bat an eye and made the plays down the stretch when we needed it."

On the flow of the game

"It was much different from Indiana. We learned from that (slow start) and the emotions of how much that can drain you at the start of a game. They were calm and cool the whole day, and I wasn't too worried about that. This was a different vibe from a real mature team. They were focused and locked in, and maybe lost a little bit of that in the third quarter, which I was worried about, but the leadership came out, especially in Desmond Ridder."

On Desmond Ridder's performance

"Obviously they made it difficult on him all day. They did a good job of eliminating Desmond in his run game. He's just so consistent. If there's an inch, he's going to find it. That's the kind of leader we need in this program, and we'll feed off of that."

On their ultimate season goals

"We're in the right direction. For us, it's still about winning championships. Desmond got in front of the team afterwards and said "it's another step in our chances to win a championship," and nothing besides that. They're a mature group. We may have to fend off people talking

about the playoff, and that's a great thing. For us, we have to hone in on this Friday night turnaround. There's a lot more this team can do, and they haven't played their best ball yet."

Cincinnati Senior Quarterback Desmond Ridder

On how big the win over Notre Dame is for the program

"It's a huge win for us. To get through the Indiana week and then to get through this week, it's like a weight has been lifted off everyone's shoulders."

On his voice being gone

"There was a lot screaming. There was a lot of celebrating, of course. That's what you expect after a big win."

On the Cincinnati fans

"Shout out to our UC fanbase. When times were down for (Notre Dame) and you heard UC start chanting. It sounded like a home game."

On where this ranks for him on his list of accomplishments

"It's definitely up there – top five, top three. It's going against a top-ranked, historic opponent. There were multiple stories on each side as far as coaches, as far as players. It's a big win for us. It's a big win for our program, our city and our community of Cincinnati."

On handling emotions

"I think we responded really well. I don't think we let the stage get too big for us. I think we were able to start fast. I think we were able to play complimentary football on both sides of the ball. We have some things we have to work on in special teams and we have to finish in the third quarter and early fourth on the offensive side. Other than that, I thought we played a pretty good game."

On his focused demeanor before the game

"That's every game. Every game I got out there and I got a chip on my shoulder. I really just lock in and focus – especially coming out the tunnel...It makes it a lot more fun going against the home team when you are away. You get to see all those fans cheering and hooting and hollering."

On the statement win

"It's still midseason. We have a lot of games left to play. It honestly is a big win against a Top 10 team. I think this team (Notre Dame) will finish in the Top 10 at the end of the year. At the end of the day, we are going to go out and play our game. Hopefully we keep this going into Friday and the week after, and the week after that. We are going to prepare for each game how we do each week and keep going to the end of the season."