

# PEACH BOWL

Indiana vs. Oregon • Friday, January 9, 2026 • 7:30 p.m. • ESPN • Mercedes-Benz Stadium • Atlanta

## COLLEGE FOOTBALL PLAYOFF SEMIFINAL

The undefeated, top-seeded and top-ranked Indiana Hoosiers will play No. 5-seed Oregon in the second semifinal, at Mercedes-Benz Stadium. The winner will advance to play the winner of Thursday's Fiesta Bowl game between Miami (Florida) and Mississippi for the College Football Playoff championship.



## SECOND TIME AROUND

Indiana defeated Oregon 30-20 on Oct. 11 in Eugene, Oregon, vaulting the Hoosiers into the discussion of the best teams in college football. IU quarterback Fernando Mendoza threw what proved to be the game-winning touchdown pass to Elijah Surratt, and the Hoosier defense sacked Oregon QB Dante Moore six times.



## IU SEASON RESULTS

Aug. 30: W, 27-14 vs. Old Dominion  
Sept. 6: W, 56-9 vs. Kennesaw State  
Sept. 12: W, 73-0 vs. Indiana State  
Sept. 20: W, 63-10 vs. Illinois  
Sept. 27: W, 20-15 @ Iowa  
Oct. 11: W, 30-20 @ Oregon  
Oct. 18: W, 38-13 vs. Michigan State  
Oct. 25: W, 56-6 vs. UCLA  
Nov. 1: W, 55-10 @ Maryland  
Nov. 8: W, 27-24 @ Penn State  
Nov. 15: W, 31-7 vs. Wisconsin  
Nov. 28: W, 56-3 @ Purdue  
Dec. 6: W, 13-10 vs. Ohio State (Big Ten Championship Game)  
Jan. 1: W, 38-3 vs. Alabama (CFB quarterfinals)



## UO SEASON RESULTS

Aug. 30: W, 59-13 vs. Montana State  
Sept. 6: W, 69-3 vs. Oklahoma State  
Sept. 13: W, 34-14 @ Northwestern  
Sept. 20: W, 41-7 vs. Oregon State  
Sept. 27: W, 30-24 (OT) @ Penn State  
Oct. 11: L, 30-20 vs. Indiana  
Oct. 25: W, 21-7 vs. Wisconsin  
Nov. 8: W, 18-16 @ Iowa  
Nov. 14: W, 42-13 vs. Minnesota  
Nov. 22: W, 42-27 vs. USC  
Nov. 29: W, 26-14 @ Washington  
Dec. 20: W, 51-34 vs. James Madison (CFB first round)  
Jan. 1: W, 23-0 vs. Texas Tech (CFB quarterfinals)



## GAME NOTES

- Indiana is 0-2 in Peach Bowls, losing to Auburn (1990) and Tennessee (1988).
- The Hoosiers and Ducks are 2-2 against each other all time.
- Indiana is the first top-four seed in the two years of the 12-team College Football Playoffs to win a game in the tournament.
- Led by new coach Curt Cignetti, Indiana has accumulated 25 victories since the beginning of the 2024 season, the most in any two-year stretch in program history and the most for a coach in his first two seasons in the Big Ten.
- If the Hoosiers can defeat Oregon, then win in the national championship game, they'll become the first high-major college team to finish a 16-game season unbeaten.
- Oregon won the Big Ten championship and was ranked No. 1 in the nation in 2024 before losing its first game in the College Football Playoff.
- In five games away from Autzen Stadium, the Ducks have won by an average margin of just 12.6 points, while they've prevailed by an average of 31.5 points at home.



Associated Press

Indiana players and fans celebrate at Oregon's Autzen Stadium after IU upset the Ducks on Oct. 11. The Hoosiers are undefeated going into the Peach Bowl, while the loss to IU is the only blemish on Oregon's record.

# HOOSIER DADDIES?

Indiana seeks to defeat Oregon again, this time for berth in title game

PARKER RODGERS  
FOR CNHI SPORTS INDIANA

The road to the National Championship in Miami runs through Mercedes-Benz Stadium on Friday night.

For No. 1 Indiana and No. 5 Oregon, the path is crowded with familiar faces. As the last two Big Ten teams remaining in the College Football Playoff, the Hoosiers and Ducks meet in a Peach Bowl semifinal that serves as a high-stakes sequel to their October thriller in Eugene, Oregon.

While the winner will advance to face either No. 6 Ole Miss or No. 10 Miami — who settle the other semifinal Thursday night in the Fiesta Bowl — the focus in Atlanta will be on a rematch between two programs that have morphed since their first encounter.

"It's hard to beat a great team twice — very difficult," Indiana coach Curt Cignetti said. "I think it's more of a psychological edge, maybe."

"The one team that came up a little short has a little added edge, so to speak. But at the end of the day, it's determined by what goes on between the white lines."

In their first meeting, Indiana's defense dismantled an Oregon offensive line that had previously been impenetrable. Ducks quarterback Dante Moore had been sacked only once the entire season leading up to Oct. 11. The Hoosiers got to him six times in four

quarters and brought relentless pressure throughout the game.

"They have a scheme where they keep you off balance with pre-snap reads," Oregon coach Dan Lanning said of the Hoosiers. "Their defensive line plays with relentless effort."

"They're tough to block up front, and the technique continues to show up. We're a different team now, but I remember that game very vividly."

The front seven that terrorized Moore will be missing two key players Friday. Indiana has lost defensive lineman Kellan Wyatt, who recorded 1.5 sacks in the first meeting, to a knee injury and senior Stephen Daley to a leg injury suffered during the Big Ten Championship celebration.

The responsibility now shifts, in part, to sophomore Daniel Ndukwe to maintain the pressure and rattle Moore as much as Wyatt did during the Oct. 11 game.

Offensive lineman Carter Smith noted that Ndukwe is "feisty" in practice, a trait that helped the defense limit Alabama to just three points in the Rose Bowl.

"When you have a player (Daley) of that caliber go down and the production stays the same, it's the next man up," IU cornerback D'Angelo Ponds said. "The standard is the same at each level."

The Indiana offense is also bracing for the rematch. In October, Oregon utilized a

press-man coverage strategy that forced the Hoosiers to win one-on-one battles.

Wide receiver Elijah Sarratt, who caught the go-ahead touchdown from Fernando Mendoza in the fourth quarter against Oregon, expects the same physical challenge.

Sarratt's eight-yard grab in that first meeting came immediately after Mendoza had thrown a pick-six, a high-pressure sequence that many point to as the moment Indiana proved it belonged on the national stage.

While skeptics doubted the Hoosiers all season — with ESPN College GameDay's Pat McAfee standing as the lone voice to pick them to win every time they were featured on the sports network — the team maintained they never needed an upset to validate their status.

"We really believed we belonged there before then," Sarratt added. "Winning that game in October isn't going to do anything for us now. It's a whole new ballgame."

Since that loss, Oregon has gone undefeated, shutting out Texas Tech 23-0 in the Orange Bowl CFP quarterfinal and evolving into a balanced team that prides itself on breaking an opponent's will.

The top-ranked Hoosiers, meanwhile, aren't interested in a "team of destiny" label. Their goal remains unchanged: focus solely on the game in front of them and go 1-0 for the week with the chance to represent the Big Ten on the biggest stage.

## FOUR PLAYERS TO WATCH

Everyone who follows college football closely knows about the quarterbacks of the Peach Bowl teams. It's possible that IU's Fernando Mendoza and Oregon's Dante Moore will be the top two picks in the 2026 NFL draft. But both rosters are stocked with other high-impact players as well. Here are four who could be difference-makers in the Peach Bowl:

### IU's Isaiah Jones and Rolijah Hardy



While senior co-captain Aiden Fisher grabs many of the headlines, fellow linebackers Hardy (right) and Jones (left) are fierce playmakers. While small for linebackers, they play fast and hit hard. Hardy, just a sophomore, leads the Hoosiers in tackles and sacks. Jones, a redshirt junior, is fourth on the team in tackles, second in sacks and tied with Hardy for most tackles for loss.

### Oregon's Kenyon Sadiq and Dillon Thieneman



It's no wonder that NFL scouts are salivating over Sadiq (left), an uber-athletic 6-foot-3 junior tight end who leads the Ducks with eight touchdown receptions. Thieneman (right), meanwhile, should be familiar to IU fans. A Westfield product, he played his first two years of college ball at Purdue before transferring to Oregon. The junior safety is the second-most prolific Ducks tackler this season.

Content: Scott Underwood, CNHI; Parker Rodgers, For CNHI • Photos: The Associated Press file photos • Page design: Mike Rogers, CNHI

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# Go Hoosiers!