



## 2018 BIG TEN FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Saturday, Dec. 1, 2018  
Lucas Oil Stadium • Indianapolis, Ind.



### POSTGAME QUICK QUOTES

#### NORTHWESTERN HEAD COACH PAT FITZGERALD

##### **On looking at the game...**

"Looking at the game I tip my hat off to Coach Meyer, his staff, and his players. They are Big Ten Champions for a reason. They earned it here tonight and made a whole bunch of explosive plays and we knew we had to limit that. I thought we had a pretty good job at that for the most part, but a couple plays got away from us. When they execute the way they did we have to be flawless and obviously we weren't."

##### **On how important Clayton Thorson has been to the program...**

"I think Clayton Thorson is a warrior. He's a guy who has battled through so much. Outside of our locker room he is probably one of the most underappreciated guys in Big Ten history. Maybe he doesn't put up these gaudy stats, but all he does is win. He's a terrific leader and a better person."

##### **On what it felt like during this week leading up to the game...**

"I look forward to being here every December. For the maturation of our program this was the next step. I got asked during the week 'how are you going to get over with just being happy to be here?' I think we proved that, that we weren't just happy to be here. Our guys understand to get to this game you have to earn it. Our guys did that."

#### NORTHWESTERN PLAYER CLAYTON THORSON

##### **On taking it all in...**

"I just want to take it all in and enjoy the moment. There are only so many times we can be in a trophy game like that and it is something we wanted."

##### **On what you will remember the most about this game...**

"I think it will be that third quarter when we scored a few and got right back in it and just fighting with my brothers. I mean we were down at the end there by 21 and we came back and kept going, there's a special bond between guys who keep fighting and that's what we have done all year and that's what we have done since I have been here. I will remember playing with those guys."

##### **On what you will use as motivation going into the bowl game...**

"Starting better and coming out right from the gate like we did in the second half. I think it will be something we stress and just getting the ball out and just making plays."

**NORTHWESTERN PLAYER JOE GAZIANO**

**On coaches' message after the game...**

"He mainly thanked our seniors. They brought the standard of coming to Indianapolis. It was a powerful message and wherever we end up in a bowl game we know that we are going to attack that. The message was clear that we aren't done yet and we have another game to play, to become bowl champions for the third season in a row."

**On learning from the seniors...**

"Those guys are my best friends on and off the field. I learn a lot from them about how to attack the game and how to prepare mentally."

###