



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State Press Conference Quotes Tuesday, Nov. 12, 2019

Head Coach Rocky Long

"I appreciate you all being here. In a new setting, hopefully this will change our luck a little bit and we will play better than we have. Obviously we're frustrated and disappointed in the way we've played the last two games, but we're not discouraged. We're going to go out there and do what we always do. We're going to play as hard as we can and see what happens. The team we are playing is very talented. Our league has shown in many games this year that the talent level is equal. So whoever happens to play the best on that day wins the game. I would've bet that Boise State is considered probably the best team in our league. They played Wyoming last week and you thought with Wyoming losing their quarterback, that Boise State would've wiped them out. Boise State won in overtime. That's just the way our league is this year. So, we've got great kids in our program, they try really hard all of the time. They'll play as hard as they can and if they play well we'll win and if they don't play well we won't win. It's a simple fact."

On up and downs of offense:

"I have no idea and obviously we are all disappointed. (The) players are disappointed, (the) coaches are disappointed when we don't score enough points to win. I mean, we might have to score 60 this week to win. So hopefully we can score more than we have in the past."

"I just said it. We're not scoring any points. We're not scoring enough points to win, anyway. And out 65 non-power 5 schools, there's only two non-power 5 schools that have qualified for 10 straight bowl games. Guess what? We are one of the two. So, I get caught up in it too. Around here we act like something's terrible when we lose a game and we're 7-2. There's about 80 percent of schools in the country that would be happy to be 7-2 right now. They'd be beating their chest and telling you how good they are."

On playing football on Friday night:

"Obviously we have no choice. We play when TV tells us to play. You're playing Friday night, which gives our players an extra day off on the weekend, so I'm sure they're happy about playing on Friday night. But the old school in me says Friday night is for high school football. Sunday is for the pros, Saturday is for college. But that went out the window a long time ago."

On what a fan should watch for during the game on Friday:

"I would bet that this game would be just like our last couple games. It will be really, really close and turnover ratio or penalties might determine who's going to win. But to what you'll see with them, they are a very talented football team. They've got really good skill. They're used to winning. They were the champions of our league last year. They still have a chance to win the championship as we do. It ought to be a really good competitive game. I think whoever makes the most mistakes is the one that's going to lose."

On if would like to see the Mountain West be able to control kick times:

"If you had your choice, I could tell them when we wanted to play, but obviously I have no say so. I have no choice. I just play when they tell us to play. No one asks my opinion and my opinion doesn't make any difference anyway. I just don't worry about it and go about my business. My opinion is Saturday afternoon when college football plays."

On the difference between playing on TV and streaming:

"I have no idea. With the access to watching on video. I understand that there is a tradition where you go to a game. A real college football fan is going to sit at home and watch 15 games. I understand the problem. We are in one of those places where it's not traditional to go to the game like it is some places in the South and the Midwest. It's traditional to go to the games, so they don't care who else is on TV. They go to the game. It's never been a tradition here to go to the game. If it fits their schedule they come and if it doesn't fit their schedule then they don't, because they just assume sit and watch 14 of 15 games at the same time."

On if he's had less issues with players here at San Diego State than at other schools:

"I don't really want to talk about it because that might mean something happens. Whenever you're with this number of young people, there's always a chance something is going to happen. Now I said this earlier and I'm trying to take up the cause for the players. We have great young people in our program. And you know what? They've had great success over the last 10 years on the football field. And right now they don't feel like they're appreciated because of social media and all those other things. They think that they are being downgraded for their efforts. Guess what? They go out there and play as hard as they can every weekend. Sometimes they play good and sometimes they don't play as well. I feel for them. We're 7-2. We're one of two teams of the non-power 5 guys that have qualified for 10 straight bowl games and everybody is treating them like their losers. The social media stuff they show me is unbelievable. What they're getting on their phones and stuff. It's unbelievable."

On Coach Tedford's career so far:

"I think we have the same philosophy. They do it a little bit different way, but they want to control the ball and keep it away from the opponent. They want to use field position and time of possession in order to give them a better chance to win. He's a good coach. He was a good coach at Cal and they let him go too. It's funny how in this day and age, if you have enough money some coaches only get to coach in 20 or 21 games. When they got all that money they were the best coach in America and now a year and a half later they can't coach a lick. That's a really interesting issue too."

On if he can steer away the players from social media:

"I'd like to do that. I'd like to take their phone from them, but I'd have a mutiny on my hands if I took their phones away from them. That's their life. That's their culture. I don't understand it. I can turn the turn off. I can lose a phone and it doesn't matter a bit. They lose their phones and they're upset. They spend the whole day looking for it or they buy one quickly. That's their life. That's their culture. They have to learn how to live with it and how to handle it. I think that's good that they learn how to handle it. It doesn't get any easier as they get older."

Senior linebacker Kyahva Tezino**On facing Fresno State after a tough loss to Nevada:**

"It's a quick turnaround. Fresno State is our big rivalry, it's 'The Oil Can' game, so they're going to be good. (It) doesn't matter what their record is, (it) doesn't matter what our record is. It's just going to be a good game overall. We just have to get over that loss we just had quickly. Hopefully we come out with the win Friday night."

On what's it going to take to get over the loss:

"Just worrying about the next opponent. It's basically football, that's sports all around. Just getting over stuff, just don't worry about it, and just take the next step. If we win this Friday, we won't even worry about the loss (to Nevada)."

On criticism via social media:

"I think it's probably fans saying stuff about our offense and maybe the team. We have to go out there each and every day and just play our game, we can't go off of what the fans say. If we go off what the fans say, who knows what our record would be. They have their opinion, but we just go out and do our part and hopefully they (will) still support us."

On if he looks at the social media or just turns his phone off:

"We see it. We don't really respond to it, because that's not the kind of guys I think we have in our locker room. We just brush it off our shoulders and go onto the next game."

On if it is hard to not pay attention to social media after a tough loss:

"It's hard sometimes, because some comments you'll be like, 'Wow!' but it's just somebody else's opinion. It's the way sports goes, everyone is always going to have their opinion. Not everyone is going to be with you on your ups and downs. That shows (the) true colors of your fans. Fans have their opinion and it is what it is. We will just continue to do what we do and hopefully make it to the championship and win 22."

On how this year's defense stacks up to previous defenses:

"This defense is amazing. The crazy thing is, as a captain of defense, as a leader of the defense, I think we still have more in us. We have to be able to hold our opponent to zero points. I feel like we can do that. As captain of the defense, I'm holding those guys accountable to that. This week I really think they're taking to it."

On thoughts about playing on Friday night:

"Playing on Friday night is great. It's obviously a quick turnaround. Obviously you've got that sour taste in your mouth that you want to get out super fast. So it's great. You get that rest time on Saturday and Sunday and get to prepare for the next opponent. It's a great thing, it's basically like having another bye week."

Junior center Keith Ismael**On the biggest challenge facing the offense:**

"Regaining our confidence. I'd say it's the one thing we've been harping on. This week in preparation is just buying in and being confident with the plan, in each other, in our coaches and everything."

On if there was a lack of confidence in the Nevada game:

"I don't believe so, reflecting back on it now. The timing aspect - we're not playing as fast as we can. Whether that's not knowing what to do properly or how to do it, that leads to confidence. I believe in my brothers, I believe in our coaches and we go out every week to try do the best that we can. But we are trying to regain that full confidence. We've talked about teams who have won championships here in the past and just going out there fully confident in everything we can do and we can dominate the opponent. So just getting that back because that was a tough loss and it's a quick turnaround. It's good to put that loss behind us, but that loss definitely hit us hard."

On if he has more confidence in the passing or the running game:

"The passing game and the running game. We have to get better in all aspects. Every player, every coach, every position. We're traditionally a running team. Obviously that's our M.O., so getting that back is very important."

On criticism via social media:

"We have some of the most passionate fans, I feel like, in the country. They want to win just as much as we do. So when we don't win you get criticized - it's coming from everywhere. But for us, that's outside noise, the only thing that matters is us, the team, the people next to us, and the ones that play on Saturday. We see it. (We) take it with a grain of salt and move on. Everyone has their opinions, their input, but they're not the ones strapping up like we are."

On if he feels like throwing his phone sometimes after reading a negative comment:

"Sometimes. Sometimes some comments are a little harsh. But you just have to look at it and take it for what it is. It's a part of sports culture. The world that we live in today, if we go about it in a mature way, just show poise and show maturity then everything will be OK. I saw some people responding to Rashaad Penny on social media and the great leader, the great man that he is, he responded calmly and collectively and carried the Aztec name well. That's what we have to do as well."

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