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NEWS RELEASE

San Diego State Football Press Conference
Fowler Athletic Center -- Sept. 6, 2011

SDSU head football coach Rocky Long

Opening statement:

"We're happy we won last week and that game is behind us. We're looking forward to going to West Point. I think it's a special experience for our team to be able to go there. With the significance of the (10-year) anniversary of 9/11, I'm sure it makes it a bit more special to (Army). It also makes it more special to us. It's an honor and a privilege that we are going there at this time. I'm sure they'll be emotionally charged up and play well. They're a triple-option team that runs it better than Cal Poly did and we had a little trouble with Cal Poly. They're unorthodox on defense, which makes it difficult for our offense to figure out where they are lined up and who to block."

On playing so many triple-option teams the past few years:

"They're all different. I think (Army) is more triple-option than Cal Poly, because Cal Poly tried to run some spread stuff. Air Force tries to run some spread stuff. Army and Navy are a lot alike. Army blocks the perimeter a little bit different than Navy does. When they run the triple-option and pitch the ball, they block it four or five different ways on the outside, which is different than most teams. Navy blocked it on the outside for the pitch two different ways, while Army blocks it four different ways out there. Everybody is a little bit different, but Army and Navy are true triple-option teams, where I'd guess Cal Poly and Air Force are triple-option teams who also do other things."

On if playing Cal Poly prepared SDSU for Army:

"They helped us on the triple-option part of it. Some of it is very similar. Army's better at it (than Cal Poly). They execute better, they've been running it longer and they're offensive front is much more adapt at getting downfield and cutting defenders than Cal Poly. It's a challenge because they execute the offense better (than Cal Poly)."

On comparing Army quarterback Trent Steelman and last year's Navy quarterback Ricky Dobbs:

"Dobbs is a little bit quicker and faster. They both execute the offense very efficiently. (Steelman's) a better thrower than Dobbs was. Our problem with the triple-option has been our mistakes in the play-action game. No matter who you play triple-option wise, it takes you at least a quarter, sometimes a half, to get used to the speed they run it at because you don't see any of that in practice. Eventually, which has been our tradition around here, we get used to the speed, but then we give up big plays in the passing game."

On the play of the young wide receivers:

"They had a good game. They played probably better than we expected them to. A lot of that had to do with the success of the running game - there were a lot of 1-on-1 situations out there. They did a nice job of getting open, but the most pleasant surprise was we didn't have any drops. We had some plays where the timing was off between the receivers and the quarterback, but nobody dropped a catchable pass."

On the defense's play in the second half against Cal Poly:

"I thought the defense played much better in the second half. They gave up a total of 50 yards or something like that. They wouldn't have scored their one touchdown (in the second half) if one of our defensive backs didn't blow an assignment."

On if he likes playing triple-option teams given SDSU's defensive success against it the past few years:

"No. I don't know if anyone has heard me say this, so I'll say it again, the triple-option offense is the best offense that has ever been designed. You can go on a chalkboard and you can be on either side of the ball - defense or offense - and you can't win on the chalkboard. In the triple-option, the offense wins every single time on the chalkboard. I don't like playing against it, because if they have an advantage if they execute it well."

On remembering 9/11:

"I think everybody of a certain age remembers that. I'm old enough where I remember when John F. Kennedy died, I can remember where I was then, too. I think it's an honor and a privilege that we are going to be (at West Point) this weekend. I've relayed this to our team, I want them to embrace it, I want them to enjoy it and I want them to experience the whole atmosphere at West Point, especially on this weekend. I also want them to be able to concentrate once the game starts and play well. It will be a great test for our team to see if we are mature enough to embrace the situation and enjoy the situation as is, because it's a great honor to be there this weekend. We need to see how mature we are that we can buckle down on game time and still play well."

SDSU quarterback Ryan Lindley

On the play of the receivers on Saturday against Cal Poly:

"I thought it was great. They played really well. They were on their game. They did the right things blocking, catching the ball and running downfield and running the right routes. They've grown a ton since spring ball and I think they'll continue to get better. That was a great first game for all of them."

On playing Army on such a significant weekend:

"First of all, it's going to be a great trip regardless of the timing. There's so much history there. Whenever you play a service academy, you have so much respect for those guys for what they do on and off the field. In the future they'll be the guys protecting all of us. Right off the bat you have respect for them and are excited about going to West Point. It's icing on the cake how special it's going to be for us and for them this weekend."

SDSU linebacker Miles Burris

On facing another triple-option team:

"Again it's another triple-option team. They're going to be great at running it. It's one of those things where everybody has an assignment and everybody has to do it. If you don't, then they're going to jack a big play on you. It's going to be huge this week. We have to go out there and prepare as best as we possibly can at anything they're going to throw at us. It's going to be a fun week of preparation and I'm looking forward to that game on Saturday."

On playing Army on such a significant weekend:

"I echo everything Ryan said there. It's going to be a lot of fun. It's going to be a special thing, I really believe that. Army is a great team with great tradition, too. It will be fun just to go there. We're looking forward to it."

On if he remembers where he was when 9/11 happened:

"I was in seventh grade. Ryan and I were just talking about it. The morning of I remember I was the only one awake in the house. I had to get up early for school. I remember seeing it all over the TV. I was making breakfast and watching TV. I was so young that I really didn't understand the severity of it. I think I flipped the station to cartoons, I was only 12 years old. Once we got to school, we had a moment of silence. Our principal came in the room and I realized, 'Whoa, this is a really serious thing.' I'll never forget that day, where I was and how I felt about."