

AZTEC FOOTBALL

SDSU Athletic Media Relations Office ♦ 5500 Campanile Drive ♦ San Diego, CA 92182 ♦ (619) 594-5547

San Diego State Signing Day Quotes

Wednesday, Feb. 6, 2008

SDSU Head Coach Chuck Long

Opening Comments:

"It was another great day for Aztec football. We have had a great day getting all of our signees in. The fax machine was rolling and going pretty well this morning. I want to first thank our coaching staff for the tremendous work that they did in recruiting. One of our goals is to be very proactive in recruiting. We identified early on the guys (who) we wanted that would fit our program. About half of our class (orally) committed before the fall. We spent the rest of the time, holding some teams off (for their signatures). They were working to get to our guys and we were working hard to keep them committed. That often happens when you've been proactive and that tells me as a head coach that we were going after the right guys. We spent a great deal of time doing that.

"Again, I am really pleased with our coaching staff. We have identified class and character in young men, as well as a profile that fits our academic (institution). On top of that, their athleticism and the way they play football (stand out). ...We not only identified our players, but we have filled every position. (This is the) first time in a while here that we filled every position across the board (in a recruiting class)."

On signing six offensive linemen:

"As you can see, we signed six offensive linemen again. We were still short in that area and felt that we needed two years to really shore that up. We feel like we have done that now. This is the biggest offensive line we have signed to date, averaging about 300 pounds. I've really marveled at that because here are these high school young men coming in at 300 pounds. Fifteen years ago, they were 250 or 260 and who knows, 15 years from now they may be 400 pounds. They are just getting bigger and bigger all the time. We have some really big offensive linemen coming in and we are very pleased with that."

On long snapper Aaron Brewer:

"A key position for us was at long snapper. We went out and signed the No. 1 long snapper (Aaron Brewer) in the country. He is the No. 1 long snapper according to Chris Sailer and his camps, which he holds all over the country. I can tell you as a (former) assistant coach that you don't realize what you have (at long snapper) until you become a head coach about just how valuable those guys are. The big three for us last year were (place-kicker) Garrett Palmer, (punter) Michael Hughes and (long snapper) Tyler Schmitt. Aaron Brewer is a big get for us from right next door in Orange County."

On if the any of the incoming players will see action this coming season:

"Who knows how this is all going to play out in the fall? Who is going to play and who is going to red-shirt? We do not know (the answers to) that yet. We feel like special teams is an area where they can contribute first, so we will see how they do with that and then we will go from there. There is always those nice surprises that you get during training camp that you didn't expect coming in. Having said that, we are extremely excited and I know the guys are too, because we called them all today."

On signing players from San Diego:

"We ended up signing six young men from San Diego County, which is a good number for us - almost a third of our class. That is probably where it is going to fall most of the time, maybe at some point in time we will get up to more than that, but we are very excited about the six that are coming in from San Diego County."

On the differences between this year's and last year's recruiting classes:

"We're starting to make inroads (in recruiting) and that takes time. It takes time to build the trust up with the high school coaches and their families. We're finding more and more, each and every year, that we're getting more and more parents involved in the recruiting process. I think we had just about, out of all the prospects that came down to visit, 95 percent of them had parents (with them), which is probably about the highest amount that we've had and that I've seen in a long time. And that's good because we want the parents to come and see and make a good educated choice. But compared to last year, we feel like we have a bigger class, size-wise, especially with our (offensive) line. (Another) difference is we addressed every position and got somebody at every position. We addressed through the junior college ranks with an offensive lineman in Taylor Wallace and Davion Mauldin, who is coming to play corner for us and has some experience. (We also added) Drew Westling, who is a quarterback from right here in town at Southwestern (College). With three guys (coming in) that we needed (to have) experience at those positions, we feel like we addressed that issue."

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On signing players from the same school and what that means about their recruiting process:

"It just fell that way. Sometimes you get caught up in a situation where if you want (one player) than you have to (bring in another) with him, but in this case, it wasn't the case. They are equally as good at both schools. (Alec) Johnson and (Jimmy) Miller are from a great program in Colorado, a developed program. Those are two big gets for us - no pun intended - with them both being offensive linemen. And then (you have) Ramon Judkins and Dominique Sandifer. We went up (to Beverly Hills High School) and we fell in love with both of them. They have great families and both have athletic backgrounds in their family. They are class people from another great program up there. We're very pleased with all four of those prospects coming in."

On looking at the recruits' physical toughness:

"We always ask about toughness. If they're not tough, then it's hard to go after those guys. We addressed that and one guy who comes to mind is Colin Shumate, a linebacker out of Vegas. We were watching his tape and he was knocking guys out of games, several games. The helmet would come off and the whole thing. He's just a tough guy who puts his nose to the football, and those are the guys that end up being leaders. Of course, he's on defense, and he will be a leader on our defense in time. That's infectious. Guys see that and they get excited, and that's what we went for this year."

On players who have excelled in multiple sports:

"We also like going after guys who are involved in multiple sports. Jerome Long, our defensive lineman, out of Morro Bay is a wrestler. We like guys like that who are open to playing multiple sports. I think that's sort of a lost art these days. Every one wants to go to one sport and stay with it, and we're finding more and more kids getting back into two or three sports. To me, that's a plus. They're part of a team. They're always on a team during the course of the year - a different team. I think that's healthy and good. They learn how to compete in different arenas and I love that."

On Henry Simon, who only has two years of football experience:

"Henry has a tremendous upside. We like those guys as well. Our coaching staff is very good at developing (players) and, with Henry, he has some Texas in his background. He grew up in Texas and I know that when you grow up there you're around football quite a bit. He came out here and he looked the part. He's a big, strong, physical young man and he plays basketball, so he's very agile. Those are the guys I like. If you have a defensive lineman who plays basketball, that's pretty good. That was a big sell for us and that's why we went after him early."

On a stronger pipeline of players from Hawaii:

"Looking at our breakdown, we signed 21, and 17 are from California. We feel that California is a great state to recruit. We're going to branch out from San Diego County all the way up to the northern border. That's where we start and that's where the majority of our players are from. We would like to keep that Hawaiian pipeline with at least one player per year. JJ (Autele) is a young man who grew on us. We put the film on and he's all over the field, making sacks, chasing the ball down from the backside, and then you meet him and he's going to fit in with us very well. He's a great young man."