



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

5500 CAMPANILE DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92182 | (619) 594-5547

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San Diego State Press Conference Quotes Tuesday, Oct. 15, 2019

Head Coach Rocky Long

Opening statement:

"We're on to the next one and it's a complete contrast from the team we just played. We just played a team that wanted to run it and didn't really care to throw it very much and now we're going against a team that wants to throw it and doesn't care to run it very much. They throw it well, too. They've completed a bunch of passes. They've thrown over 240 passes and only thrown two interceptions. (They've thrown) several touchdowns. They move the ball really well on offense. Then probably the most intriguing aspect of the game is turnover ratio. They're the No. 1 turnover ratio team in the country and we are (second). Turnovers usually make the difference between winning and losing, and I would guess that would happen this week."

On San Jose State:

"Their coaching staff has done a great job of taking over a program that was down. They're a whole lot better now than they were a couple years ago. They're really competitive. They can beat anyone in our league. Obviously if you can go to Arkansas and beat Arkansas, you can beat anybody. They're playing with enthusiasm and playing with confidence, and that's all the head coach and coaching staff getting it done."

On San Jose State quarterback Josh Love:

"He's a guy that throws it on time and is very accurate with the football. He very seldom puts the ball in a spot that you can make a play on. You can bring pressure and a guy can be completely free on a blitz, and he will throw the ball on time and put it on the money. He doesn't hold the ball, he doesn't wait for things to open up, he reads coverages really well and throws the ball on time to the right guy most of the time."

On the best way to disrupt a quarterback like Josh Love:

"I don't know, since he's throwing it on time. You always say when the quarterback is hot like that you get pressure on him, but since he is throwing it like that on time, you have to play great coverage. You have to change the coverages up and play really well in the secondary to give yourself a chance."

On if he or the team thinks about being bowl eligible with a win on Saturday:

"I'm aware of that. I assume our team is aware of that when you win six games you are bowl eligible. I would guess that is a very small motivating factor in our case. We are only halfway through the season and that's not our number one goal. Our number one goal is to play for the conference championship. That means this game is really important since it's a conference game."

On how people complain too much about not winning enough games:

"It depends on which seat you're sitting in I guess. I'm as critical of our program as anybody else is. Our goal is to win every game. There's a few teams that get that done, but very, very few. So when you don't win the game, you go about your business and try to make sure you have a chance to win the next game. When you are a competitive person, we are all driven in one form or another to win. And when you don't win it makes you feel bad. When you win it makes you feel good."

On if he hoped the offense would be better than it is now halfway into the season:

"I wish we were a little bit better than we are now, but I didn't know the progress the offense would make going with a new idea, new formations, and inexperience at the receiver spot. And then our starting tailback gets hurt. I wish we were better, but we've won five games so we can't be all that bad."

On if he gets into all the defensive metrics:

"No, I don't get into all of that. Last week you talked about how good we were against the run and I think (Wyoming) had (129) yards at halftime. There's only one stat that matters. There's only one statistic that matters - whether you win or lose."

On comparing the Utah State loss and the Wyoming win, and if it came down to one play in each:

"I thought our offense played much better in this last game than they did against Utah State. Much, much better. And the play that won the game, that's a quarterback doing something that people say the quarterback shouldn't do. You're not supposed to run around back there and throw across your body back to the middle of the field, but it ended up being a touchdown and we won the game. So I guess this time it was OK that he did that, but most of the time it's not OK that he did that. Usually those things end the wrong way instead of the right way. But one play made a difference in both games. You can point to a lot of things, but in those two games one play made a big difference."

On what he was thinking when Ryan Agnew released that pass:

"I was looking to see if there was someone actually back there that could catch it. I didn't know if he just threw it or not. You don't know really know how things work until you watch it on film. We tell our guys all the time when the quarterback starts scrambling around, hook up with a man. Even if you are playing zone coverage, you're supposed to hook up with the man nearest to you and don't leave him. Well their guy hooked up with (tight end Daniel) Bellinger and all of a sudden he saw Ryan scrambling. He kept running and Bellinger stopped. He didn't stay with (Bellinger), so it worked to our advantage that time. That's what makes it fun to watch the game I think. It drives coaches crazy, but for a fan that's an exciting play."

On if Ryan's ability to get out of the pocket and throw across your body is unique:

"I think that's him and I think he's been doing that every since he was in little league football. I'm sure he did it in little league football, I'm sure he did it in high school football and that's just him, that's the way he plays. You can try to stop him from doing that stuff, but then you are preventing him from making plays like he did too. As long as they do their assignments, once a player is out there you need to let them be them. Let them play to their strengths."

On Ryan Agnew's leadership and confidence as the starting quarterback:

"I don't think he has any problem with confidence or leadership. His leadership style is his. He's a laid back, easy going, pat you on the back guy, whether it is good or bad. When I played quarterback, which was a million years ago, I was just the opposite of him. If things weren't going right, someone was hearing about it."

On the health of Juwan Washington:

"I think he's good. He didn't reinjure is ankle in the (Wyoming) game and he looked pretty close to full speed. When you are around him all the time, you see a few things that he can normally do when he is 100 percent that he still can't do, but he's pretty close. And I thought he made a difference in our team and I think our team is a lot better when he is out there. (Juwan) not getting injured is a positive because hopefully he'll be 100 percent by the time of our game on Saturday."

Senior cornerback Luq Barcoo

On trying to force turnovers from a San Jose State that hasn't had many this season:

"They definitely do a good job of limiting turnovers. The quarterback I believe has only thrown two interceptions this season. As a defense, we just need to be technically sound, play everything slow and have very tight coverage on the quarterback. He is very smart, gets the ball out quick and doesn't really get hit very much. We have to challenge every ball that gets thrown and try and make a play when the ball is thrown our way."

On if it's a goal to try to add to San Jose State's turnover count this week:

"Most definitely. Every game that we go into, it's my goal to create turnovers and give our offense a chance to score. That's definitely my goal going into the game, and our goal as a defense."

On if he wants quarterbacks throwing his way:

"Oh yes, definitely. I'm always going to try my best to be in position to make a play. That's what my coaches want me to do, that's what they teach us to do. I'm going to try and limit my mental mistakes. I made a couple of errors in the last couple of games in the beginning, so I feel that's why they tested me more often. This game I hope to limit those mental mistakes and hopefully I can just have a great game."

On reaction to tweet about being the best in San Diego for football with the likes of Kawhi Leonard and Stephen Strasburg:

"I thought it was funny. I retweeted it and requoted it. I thought it was actually hilarious but it's cool knowing I have people out there supporting me, and knowing that I have people beyond me pushing me to move forward. It's a great experience and a great opportunity."

On playing both defense and offense at Grossmont College and if that is where he developed his interception skills:

"I played wide receiver and I played corner. When the ball is in the air I try to turn into the receiver and just go up and get it."

On the team's confidence after rebounding with two wins following the loss to Utah State:

"We feel that we've done a great job recovering from that loss. It was a heartfelt loss, it was a close one. We took that into consideration in the next two games. We were able to build our momentum back up and confidence. We feel good going into the (second half) of the season, we are looking forward to it."

Senior fullback Isaac Lessard

On prediction of how many interceptions Luq Barcoo will have on Saturday:

"If we're going by average, he will at least get one. No, I don't have a prediction though."

On what has it been like six months post knee surgery:

"A lot of help from a lot of different people. Obviously Dr. Behr and his staff. (Head athletic trainer) Patrick (Spieldenner) and our training staff here has helped me get to where I am today. But also just support from the team, support from coaches, (strength and conditioning) coach (Adam) Hall always checking in with me. Family and friends showing support, kind of just keeping my head right, keeping that ultimate goal ahead of me. That's basically it, it's been a lot of hard work but I've had a lot of support. It's been nice."

On if he feels 100 percent recovered:

"It still needs to get stronger. I've heard anything from 11-to-15 months is when you feel fully 100 percent, but it feels 100 percent to play for sure."

On the challenges playing against San Jose State:

"Defensively they like to keep everything underneath them. They don't like giving up any big plays. As an offense we have to do better. When we get into the red zone we need to score points - touchdowns, not just field goals. They try to limit their teams to field goals, so that's what we have to do (better at)."

On if playing in front of friends and family this week will be any different from another road game:

"No, every game is the same. It's still an away game, so I won't be getting too many people there. But I live pretty close to San Jose so I'll have some family and friends coming and some of my coaches from high school will be there. That'll be nice to see them again."

On when he felt like he was back, was it in practice or in a game:

"I think it was when we were backed up on the goal line against CSU. That was the first time I felt like, 'OK, OK. I'm finally back.' Because practice, it's never really 100 percent full speed. It kind of took that first hit where it felt like I was back and able to feel like myself again."

On getting past the mental aspects of injury:

"That just kind of came with treatment, when I was having pain days just with whatever I was doing Pat (Spieldenner) would always just kind of not care and just say to push through it because when it's time to play you're going to have to just push through things. Just the way that I treated and did rehab that kind of helped further down the road where I just wasn't thinking about it anymore."

On the team's confidence after rebounding with two wins following the loss to Utah State:

"Yeah, we feel confident right now, but we also know that there is a long way to go still. Every game now that we lost in the first game of conference you kind of dig yourself a hole a little bit because you have to work from behind now, but we do feel confident. I think last week was a big win for us, just to show that we did have some grit behind us and that we are a mature football team to come back."

On being one win short of qualifying for a bowl and if that's a goal anymore here at SDSU:

"Obviously a bowl game is one of our goals. That is a big achievement for us and this program as a whole. It's been something like nine or so years straight, but ultimately our goal is a championship. That's where our standards are set."

On what quarterback Ryan Agnew brings to the table:

"Yeah, Ryan, I mean we've always kind of known what he brings to the table. It's been fun watching it finally a little bit last year and finally this year. He kind of brings the unknown to the game, to put it simply. He kind of just makes plays. He kind of has that Aaron Rodgers to him when he's rolling out you don't know what he's going to do with it but that's what makes it exciting. That's what makes it hard for defense to be able to stop. That play, it was kind of a broken play, (our) center hiked it before anyone - we were trying to go on two - so he just made a heads up play and just decided to take it and run. Then last second, I turned around. There was no trick play it just happened to work out that way."

On were you expecting that (play talked about above):

"No, I wasn't expecting that at all. He asked me after the game, 'Yo, why did you turn around at that time?' and I have no clue why I turned around at that time. I was probably trying to see if he got tackled by then because it was a broken play so I just turned around. But yeah it was a heads up play by him to do a little shovel pass."

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