



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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### San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes Thursday, Aug. 16, 2018

#### **Head Coach Rocky Long**

##### **Opening statement:**

"We're a little over a week into practice now. It's funny how we don't practice two times a day anymore - (the NCAA) reduced the number of practice days from 29 to 25 - and tomorrow will be two weeks until our first game. Then they changed the rules where you can play freshmen a few games without losing a redshirt year. So they cut practices back and they added freshmen to the mix, and all of a sudden you have a completely different environment during training camp. (It's) much more difficult. If you have a veteran team, it doesn't make that much of a difference. If you don't have a real veteran team, you start worrying about what's going to happen come gameday. We don't have a veteran team, we have 14 seniors total. We've got some talented younger guys, but they haven't played much football. We're not as sure of what kind of team we are going to put out there like we have in the past, especially early in the season."

##### **On the new NCAA rule regarding freshmen:**

"They can play in four games and still be redshirted. It doesn't matter which games. It could be the first four, it could be the four intermittent throughout the season, it could be the last four. It doesn't matter. I'm for five years of eligibility. If you're going to let them play (at all), then let them play for five years. I think there are a group of us coaches that are for that (five years) and a group of coaches that are for not letting freshmen play at all. I think it was a compromise between the two sides."

"It's fine. I don't really care either way. It makes it difficult with fewer practices. Somehow you have to get them enough experience or know them good enough to determine whether you want to put them in the game or not."

##### **On a strategy of when to play the freshmen their four games:**

"I have a lot of thoughts on it and they kind of change daily. Originally I thought I would just try to save them and play them the last four games because you're always going to lose a guy or two. Even if they're not in the gameplan, they'll be better players at the end of the year than they are in the beginning of the year. But if you get to the end of the year and you need them to play at a high level in order for you to have a chance to win the championship, you better get them some experience throughout the year as you go. So I don't know how were going to handle it yet."

##### **On concern with such a young secondary:**

"I think we have a couple of young safeties who are going to start for the first time who haven't played hardly at all. (The secondary) is the quickest place to lose a game. If they are supposed to cover a guy man-to-man and they don't cover him and that guy catches a touchdown pass, that can lose the game. They should at least be chasing the guy. Last night (at the scrimmage)

we had two guys back there that are supposed to stop all deep passes and if a run breaks they're supposed to make the tackle so we get to play defense again. There was guy that was running right down the middle who caught a pass and there wasn't a safety anywhere close. That was what we call Cover 2, which means there were supposed to be two deep safeties back there. Giving up a big play is the easiest way of losing a game."

#### **On preparing for Bryce Love and Stanford:**

"Stanford is the opposite of us. They have a lot of veteran guys coming back, (Bryce Love) the most notable because he was a great player last year and probably the lead candidate to win the Heisman Trophy this year. He's an unbelievable talent and you're not going to hold a guy like him down. You guys have to control him enough to give you a chance to win the game. But as I say all the time, you know what else they have? A big, strong offensive line. It doesn't matter how good that running back is if those big boys up front don't block very well. They have a big, experienced offensive line. We will have all kinds of issues trying to beat them.

"We never focus on one guy. It's an 11 of 22-man guy in a football game. One guy does not win or lose the game for you. Bryce Love will probably have a good day of rushing the ball. Hopefully he won't score too many times so we have a chance to win, but if he was there with a bad offensive line you wouldn't even know who he was. It's an 11-man game, not a one-man game. We don't ever design a defensive or an offensive gameplan around one guy. Our style is to try and run the ball, and keep them off the field. They have trouble scoring if they're off the field. Our plan is to like we always do and try to control the ball and keep them off the field."

#### **Associate Head Coach Jeff Horton**

#### **On Juwan Washington carrying on the tradition of great Aztec running backs this season:**

"I think that's measured in different ways. Is he going to rush for 2,000 yards? I'm not going to put that pressure on somebody. Obviously, that was the first time in NCAA history where two different guys rushed for 2,000 yards (Donnel Pumphrey and Rashaad Penny), so it's not like it happens all the time. I know Juwan is ready to assume the role. He's proven he can make plays at this level. He's a big-time playmaker. The thing he has to do is just continue what he always does. Nobody is going to gain any yards unless we do a good job of blocking up front and receivers blocking, tight ends and all them. I feel really confident with those guys. That's what we base our program on, being able to run the football. And we're anticipating and hopeful that we can continue to do that."

#### **On comparing Juwan Washington to Donnel Pumphrey and Rashaad Penny:**

"He's probably in between them. He's 5-foot-7 and that may be stretching it, so he's smaller. But he weighs 190 pounds, so he's heavier than Pumphrey. He kind of has deceptive speed, so it looks like he's gliding at times. But when you see him run back the kickoffs for touchdowns or break off long runs, he can certainly go get it. He has a very uncanny way of being able to slide through holes. He's running behind all of those big guys; the other team doesn't see him until it's too late. When he needs to, he can be a physical back. He's not just a small back, he can bring a little wallop with him. He understands the blocking schemes and what we're trying to get to."

#### **On Juwan Washington being distracted with all the talk of carrying on the Aztec legacy at running back:**

"No, I think he's pretty level-headed. I was fortunate enough to recruit Juwan. I know his family. He's a great young man. I don't think he gets caught up in all of that. He's pretty care-free and has a great life to him. He knows the things that are important. He knows what's important to him and what's important to this football team. I don't think he'll get caught up in all of that stuff."

**On the Aztecs' other tradition of developing fullbacks:**

"Issac Lessard and Chad Woolsey are our two guys. Isaac started the UNLV game last year when Nick (Bawden) had thumb surgery. I feel very confident in him. He's a big kid. He's 6-3 245 pounds. He can cover you up. He came in here as a linebacker. We moved him over to the good side on offense and put him at fullback. He's done a good job when he's been able to play in the past. Ninety percent of our offense goes through the fullback. So much like Chad Young, Dakota Gordon and Nick Bawden, now it's Isaac's turn. Chad Woolsey is a guy that walked on to the program from right here in town. He's really stepped his game up. He was a tailback for us before. We were a little thin at fullback, so he put on 20 pounds for us. He's beefed up and he's as tough as they come. Like Nick, he's got a big cast on his arm, but I think that will be off by the time the season starts. But if not, with Nick wearing it all last year, we certainly know how to adjust to that."

**On the development of quarterback Christian Chapman and the passing game:**

"One thing he's done is help us win football games. You can't argue with that. I know I've talked to some people, but we live in a world of numbers. You want to know how many followers you have, how many tweets you put out and all those different things. So with the quarterback, everybody wants to know how many yards have you thrown for. 'Well I threw for 3,500 yards. Now we won four games, but I threw for 3,500.' Who cares? (Christian) does what we want him to do. Very unselfish young man. Each year he's gotten better. I mean, he's a coach on the field. He gets us into the right play in the run game. He changes protections. We work hard on our passing game. You're not going to throw the ball all over the field and run the ball all over the field. It's not just going to happen. Our strength is running the football. I think over the past several years, we've gotten better throwing the football. I feel very confident in Christian if it came down to it that we could execute and if we had it somebody that was stuffing us on a run then we have to be able to throw the football better. I really feel that we could do that. I think our receiver group is really maturing. It's a very young group. You have Fred Trevillion who's a senior and everybody else is really a redshirt freshman or freshman. But there are some big skill kids in there. We're really excited about two tight ends (Parker Houston and Kahale Warring) that can really play very well. So I think we'll be able to hopefully when the time presents itself to be able to get the ball downfield. We have to make bigger chunk plays down the field because it's hard to move the ball 60, 70, 80 yards in four, five and four-yard (increments). We need those big chunks to help us."

**On the role of wide receiver Fred Trevillion:**

"I'd certainly like to see Fred really step up and be the leader of the receiver group, be much more consistent with his play. He's a dynamic receiver. He led the nation in yardage per reception last year. Obviously we'd like to get him quadruple what he got last year because he's a dynamite player like that and he can really stretch the defense and he'd be a big reason for getting those big chunks. I think now that he's back and has been here over a year, he's more comfortable with what we're trying to do and what we're asking of him. I look for him to have really big year. He's really worked hard trying to be a leader of the receiving group."

**On preparing for Stanford in the season opener:**

"I know we'll have our hands full with them. They're the 13<sup>th</sup>-ranked team in the country. They're big and strong. These first two weeks (of camp) have been just basically against our defense and going against them trying to implement our offense. Next week, we'll start going against Stanford looks and scout teams and stuff, then we'll really hone in on the game plan over those last night practices."