SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS
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San Diego State Head Coach Brady Hoke

Opening Statement:
"Number one, glad you're here and glad you're here for a lot of reasons, that means Aztec nation is doing pretty good. We're excited to be an Aztec and very excited for what Dutch, his staff and the players and what they've done. It's great and hopefully we can keep it going and that's the goal. When that's over with, hopefully we can have Matt Bradley come out and play tight end. I think he has some potential there. And LeDee, those two guys I'd like to add to the roster, so they don't know that yet. So don't say anything about it. But we'll be excited on Friday like a lot of people watching the game, 3:30 and getting after it. And that'll be a lot of fun. So, we're looking forward to Thursday night. We've had a good spring and I say that we are a young team. We still have a lot of things that we've got to accomplish, what we have to do from the standpoint of getting better. Our two fronts, offensive line, defensive line, both are very young. But at the same time, we're making progress from week one when we started to yesterday where we got out and had a good practice, beat the weather, all those kinds of things. I think you can see improvement every time we take the field. So don't mistake that for being perfect, because we're not perfect. The attitude that these guys have has really been something that I've enjoyed and when I get home and Laurel asks me how's practice it's nice to say it was pretty good and that these guys are coming along. We're seven and six and that's not good enough. That's not why we're here. We were 12 and two, a couple years ago and that's where we want to be and that's where we want to live."

On what he hopes to accomplish with the spring game:
"Yeah, we will draft tomorrow, the upperclassmen will. I think playing in that stadium, I think for obviously a lot of guys, I think we have 10 new guys on defense that just joined us pretty much at the start of winter. So I think those guys getting over there. I think the kicking game is always going to be an important part and we'll always stay as much as we can live with that. But just the atmosphere, and there won't be a whole lot of people there but just being in that facility, and we'll try and make everything as game-like as we can. There's certain things that we're not going to be able to because of just some depth issues that you have to get through. And so from that standpoint have a lot of fun with it."

On what topic from last year that he needed to get a solution to:
"Well, I would say the development from an offensive perspective. I think Ryan's done a really unbelievable, really excited about the job he's done and the coaches. Obviously, we're still one coach less at the running back position. And we're interviewing guys as we go a little bit, and we'll have that completed shortly. But just overall I think from a fundamental wise and execution wise, there have been some bigger plays offensively that we've been able to make in at the line of scrimmage. I thought we were a little better."

On what Ryan Lindley's offense will look like:

"I think it'd be really similar to what Utah has done over the years. He spent a lot of time with Andy. That's one of his mentors. As a head coach, I like what they do offensively. And so, it's in that direction."

On breaking down what he means by similar to Utah:
"Personnel groupings, you look at Utah and personnel groupings and what they do to try and from a defensive perspective, they try and have one more blocker than you got defender a lot, with 13 personnel or 12 personnel. I like what the quarterback run game out of that can be also and I think when you look at us, I think our offensive line and our wide receivers probably are the two groups on offense that gotta continue to grow. And since we have a portal, we'll probably look at some opportunities through that in May."

On how Norv Turner's knowledge can help Ryan Lindley:
"The one thing about Norv is he loves football, he loves being around it and obviously he's got a pretty good pedigree. I think just in their conversations. I think that's part of it and so Norv is a friend and he loves the Aztecs, his wife went here. So it's good to have him out there."

On how he goes about finding out what players are thinking about the portal:
"Well, we start spring break after Friday, and so we'll meet when we get back and have some ideas. That's the best I can tell you."

On if he goes over the depth chart and what he hopes the team can accomplish over summer:
"Yeah. We evaluate a lot, and they'll evaluate their own position themselves, where they're at, and try to match up, hopefully with what we feel."

On how Jalen is taking the jump:
"I think he's had some really good days and he's had some days that haven't been as good. I think the relationship between the quarterbacks and their coach and Ryan, specifically and Jalen, I think is really one that he really is getting better, but he's had to get worse a couple of days before he got better. He had to learn some things. It's more reading the defense or holding on to the ball a little longer than you want."

On two young guys running with the first team:
"Well, you try and as you go through evaluations, you know if you've got a first team defensive line, usually you go one on one, but you also want to see what a younger guy when you insert him in there and see how they play. But both of those, to be honest with you, both of those positions are two of the positions that we got some guys we got to see what they can do. And I think that's part of what we've been able to do these past 14 days. And it's been a very healthy competition that we've had during those 14 days. But we'll play Garret Fountain with the first group defensively. But the next time around, it might be Dom Oliver. So, we're just trying to figure out all the pieces defensively. We've always had an opportunity to rotate more and I like to rotate guys up front. So that's part of it. And offensively, we're just trying to get them to take the good steps positively every day."

On if there are any particular position battles he's most interested in seeing:
"It's the spring game. I don't know about that. I mean, I'll be excited to see them just go out there and play."

On how the linebacker position is playing out:

"I think Zyrus and Cooper, Cody Moon, who was the transfer for us from New Mexico. He adds to that group. I think the linebacker position itself was by those guys probably. The linebackers in our back end are the strength of our defense, they kind of remind me of 2019, my first year back coaching D line because we really defensive line minds, you have one guy who had significant playing time and Cam was coming off the back from snowboarding. When I got here then it reminds me Keshawn was young. So kind of reminds me that with Garret being really a veteran, he's up to 260 something pounds now which is I think going to bode well for him. But that's what defensively they remind me of because we're pretty seasoned in the back end."

On how pro day went:
"It was good. I think guys worked hard. You could tell you know, it's always funny when they come back and they've been working out with some personal trainer and doing all that stuff and how their bodies change a little bit. Sometimes they put a little more, this is my livelihood, hopefully. And so it was good. We had like 30 scouts here."

On what disappointed him most about what happened last year:
"I think the normal things, not getting it done. We wanted to play football and how we wanted those guys for them and for that senior class, the Tavai brothers and Keshawn, that's a good group of guys. And there's a handful of other guys who you want them to be successful."

On where the center position is at:
"Well, I think between Ross and Tommy when I look at those two in there and Dean I think there's a competition there that I think will continue until fall camp."

On if the same guys will battle for right guard if Ross is center:
"Yeah, I mean, you got that and then you got BCD, he could he's athletic enough to possibly do that as long as a party, Drew as he comes along and CJ."

On if he keeps an eye on what's going on with the PAC 12:
"I don't, to be honest with you. I mean, obviously, we're recruiting, they're recruiting. You see, you know, okay, UCLA is on this kid, or Oregon State or whatever. And as their spring games start coming on TV and all that kind of stuff, you'll get them taped and you'll watch through."

On if anything is said to recruits about moving on to Pac 12:
"Yeah, you say that. But, you know, we've been saying that for a while."

On how many scholarships are open with the transfer portal:
"We would probably invest three or four into that."

On what positions he is looking at in the transfer portal:
"Well, I think we need some more depth, some help at wide receiver. I'm always going to look for a really good center guard and we're going to look for a pass rusher."

On what it means to him to have the highest win percentage between basketball and football in division one:

"Well, it speaks volume to what Fish has done ,what Dutch has done, what Rocky has done. I think the guys in this program, I think it's pretty cool when you think of it that way. With two sports like that, it's pretty cool."

On if there is any spillover from basketball:
"Probably. I think it does. I think as people in let's say Dayton, Ohio. I mean I think they're watching, I know my mom is but they're watching San Diego State Basketball just like anybody else. And it's great publicity, believe me, as we talk to recruits on campus, Zoom calls, we're doing all those things. We're talking about Hey, make sure 3:30 pacific time, the Aztecs are going to be on so yeah, I think there's no doubt about it. And hopefully we do say the same thing for them."

On if it is good to have a loaded schedule with straight home games:
"That helps. We don't and I haven't made too much of the schedule. The schedule is a schedule. We're going to play it no matter what and we're going to prepare to play it. Having the schedule that we have is, I think, a real positive, and so we're excited about it."

On what they will do with the two open days in October:
"We've got to take advantage of it. Hopefully. Rest will be part of it. I think you don't know exactly what you're going to do until that time gets there. We may you know; we're playing really well. Let's not screw it up and not get anybody hurt but still be able to play fast because that's critical. But I think you have to kind of wait until you get to that time. Now, we will have already made some decisions before that time gets here, but I do like having two bye weeks."

On if the close bye weeks will negate some of the advantages:
"I think your players, how you handle it, they'll handle it."

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