



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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

GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | @AZTECSPR | #GOAZTECS

San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes Tuesday, October 29, 2019

Head Coach Rocky Long

Opening statement:

"Well, thanks for coming. Since we're in a bye week, I don't know what to talk about because I'm not going to talk about the next team on our schedule yet other than I think it's a good time for us to be in a bye week. I think that we're tired, sore, beat up - all those things that everybody is at this time of year and hopefully (the bye) will give us a little spark we'll get refreshed and finish out the season the way it should be finished up."

On the position of the team, being 7-1 at the bye week with three of the final four games at home:

"I don't know. It seems like we play better on the road. So we'll see if being at home is a good thing or not. I hope that we have a home field advantage which means there's a lot of people there. They get us over some critical humps. That'd be really nice if our home field was an advantage to us."

On if being in the Top 25 means anything to the program:

"To be honest, I think it means something to the program as far as public perception. It probably means as much to our conference as it does to our program as a whole. I mean the Mountain West conference should have somebody, as well as we played outside of our conference against Power 5 schools. Someone in our conference should be in the Top 25. I'm not sure it's us. I don't necessarily believe we belong there right now because I don't think we've played as good as we can be. If we want to finish this thing out the right way, we've got to get better. We've got to play better than we have."

On if Saturday night's win over UNLV is evidence of not playing well despite winning:

"I don't think we played as well as we can play. And for us to get into the conference championship game we've got to be better than that."

On who's going to start at left tackle:

"That's an ongoing competition. We play the best 11 on both sides of the ball and a bye week is a great, great time to have competition too, because you don't spend as much time getting ready for who you're playing. You do a lot more offense versus defense, so they get equal reps and they get to go against basically the same guys. You get to see who's performing at a better rate."

On if this bye week will be different than the first bye week four weeks ago:

"Yeah, we're going we're going to give them more time off. The first bye we practiced four days. We didn't practice yesterday. I'm not sure we're going to practice three days. We're practicing today and depending on how practice goes today it will determine whether we practice the next two days or just one of the next two days. So we're giving them more time off hopefully to get healed up and fresh."

On the point of emphasis heading into this bye week:

"To get back to doing things fundamentally correct."

On what it will take to make the offense more productive:

"They have to execute better. Hopefully that's the reason you practice. You practice to try to obviously put a game plan and against the opponent you're playing, and you practice to improve your fundamentals and techniques so that you perform better. Our offense needs to do all of that so that we can be more effective and score more points."

On the offense being inconsistent:

"I don't know what the reason is behind it or we have would have fixed it already. But the only way you overcome those things is to continue to practice and try to get better. You don't ignore it. We change a few things in practice to see if that'll work. But mostly it's just the effort in the want to by the players to continue to work on their techniques and fundamentals so that they execute better. I mean, I didn't see us I didn't see us getting any illegal procedures last week. So that was an improvement from the week before where we jumped offsides or moved four times. We didn't do it last week. So there was some improvement made that way."

On this being 6-1 and playing at a Nevada school for the second year in a row, but winning this year:

"I think that our seniors have done a good job of leading this year. And I think that we demanded more of them this year starting with the offseason program. I think that they continue to listen and I think they continue to try. I think even though when we don't play well, it's interesting how we never panic. We just keep playing and keep playing and trying to plug along. That's inner leadership. That's maturity and the maturity usually comes from your older guys. I think we can be a really good football team. We are not one now, but what we are is a team that keeps trying to play really, really hard and finds a way to win. That's a whole lot better than the other way as you can try really, really hard and still not win."

On the play of brothers Zachary and Cameron Thomas:

"Zach, after he got hurt, has overcome his injuries and he's playing at a high level right now. He had a really good game (at UNLV). Cam is probably one of the bigger surprises to us this season because he went into the season with very little experience and has become a starter and has played probably better than we thought it was going to play. Now he didn't have a very good game against UNLV but up until that game he played better than we thought he was going to. In the last game he took a step backwards, so he needs to step it back up."

On the breaking news of the NCAA voting to start the process of modifying its rule to allow college athletes to profit from their names, images and likenesses:

"I've heard about it, but I have no reaction because I don't know the particulars. I mean there's a lot of things they've got to figure out before we know even how it's going to be affect our program or how it's going to be done by anybody. So I can't I can't make a comment until I understand what the situation is."

On trying to make this rule in play by the 2021 season:

"They've got a lot of work to do, don't they?"

On if being ranked has any kind of effect on a recruit coming to San Diego Stat:

"I don't think it matters. I think what they want to come to us this successful program that fits their personality. We're a successful program so we got that part. Whether we fit their personalities, that's why we recruit them and that's why we bring them on a trip to see if their personality fits our personality. If the personalities fit he'll be successful and have a great chance of success. If the personalities don't fit, he should find someplace else to go. It seems to work out especially if your program has been established. The success part has been established. I think we're guaranteed 10 straight years of winning records, right? We're going to have a winning record no matter what happens from here on out. So 10 straight years of having winning record and 10 straight years of going to a bowl game. That's pretty good success. That's pretty impressive. There's a lot of teams in this country that would like to have the same thing. At the end of this year, we might be the only school in California that has done that. And there's still one that's fighting to be with us, but there's only one other school in a college in California that has done what we've done and the other one right now are fighting to be bowl eligible."

On what has changed the program, being successful now as opposed to past years:

"I don't know I think we've gotten great kids in our program that have worked really, really hard to be successful. But as far as recruiting goes the recruits don't care. All they care about is what you are now, they don't care what happened decades ago. All they care about is what you are now."

On the opponents the rest of the season:

"The goal is to get in the championship game and we're playing three conference teams that beat us last year. And some of (the teams) are fighting for survival to be bowl eligible. I mean a couple of them are still fighting to be in the conference championship game on the West Division too, and guess what? Those two we play. There's one of them fighting just to get bowl eligible. So we're going to play three highly motivated teams that are equal talent as we are, which has been (like) our whole season. We've got to play better. We've got to get better and we've got to play better, and make sure that we're the ones in the conference championship game. And they're talented and if they beat us, there's a chance that all three of those teams that we're playing can beat us which would I guess knock us out of the deal. Someone with one or two losses is going to is going to win the West Division."

-SDSU-