



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State-Weber State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State head coach Rocky Long

On winning first game of the season:

It feels good to win. Obviously it was a poor performance on offense, I mean, so much so, I called it ugly in our locker room. That was about as ugly an offensive performance as I've been around for a long time. But the objective is to win the game and we found a way to win the game and hopefully because it was our first live action against somebody else, our offense will improve dramatically this week, so we'll play much better next week. Because we're obviously playing a much more talented team next week.

Thoughts on implementation of new spread offense:

What I thought was, what you saw in the first half. I thought we would struggle in the first quarter and then somewhere in the second quarter we would start getting a little rhythm and start making some plays, which we did in the second quarter. But I actually thought that would carry over to the second half, which it really didn't. So that was disappointing that it didn't carry over to the second half.

On snapping mistakes throughout the game:

Well, the one that the snap that went over the quarterback's head early on, they were calling out our snap count. And they actually called our snap count on the field goal, where the ball was snapped, and nobody was ready for the snap. Now that's coming from our players. I didn't hear it and I talked to the officials. I mean, I'm too far away to hear it but I talked to the officials about it after halftime, after our players said that they were using our snap count. When they would move the defensive line, they were using our snap count. Which is illegal. But if the officials can't hear it they can't call it and the officials said they couldn't hear it. So obviously we have to be much more disciplined on offense than we were and on our kicking team. I mean that might have been the difference in the game. Late in the game I would have much rather been 9-0 instead of 6-0.

On offense's lack of rhythm:

I don't think we blocked very well up front. I don't think the offensive line played very well. And then Juwan hurt his ankle a little bit, so he wasn't a hundred percent. But I didn't see -- except for a little spurt in the second quarter where we actually ran the ball pretty well, we didn't block very well for the run. And our receivers didn't seem to get open or at least Ryan couldn't find them.

On shuffling embers of the secondary throughout the game:

Well, we think we actually have. Let me count them for you, one, two, three, four, we think we have four -- I got to get them right -- four quality safeties. Okay? If Kyree has to play corner, if Kyree is able to play inside, we have five quality safeties. So, in order to make sure we're two deep at every spot they play all three spots. They take turns playing all three spots, of the three safeties in the middle. Darren Hall came up with a hip flexor, hurt his self in practice on Tuesday. And the most experienced corner we have in our program is Kyree Woods because that's where he played the whole time. So, we moved him back out to corner and then we alternated the other four at the three safety spots.

On team's surplus of safeties:

No. We would rather Darren be healthy and be out there. Well, no, it would be nice if all five of them were at safety because we could keep them fresh and they can play all three spots. Yeah.

On defense's ability to shutdown Weber State's offense:

Well, I thought that they're a great big offensive line and they don't seem to handle movement real well. And we're a little tiny defensive line, so we move them every time. And I think our movement really hurt their running game. When you see a defensive end hitting a guy in the back field at three-yard step that means somebody missed him. When he stunted, somebody missed him. I thought they had a great plan coming in, if you notice we didn't blitz very much because they were going to be -- as long as our offense wasn't scoring, they were going to be very satisfied seeing the blitz coming and just throw it out there for a five and six yard gain. So, you never get them off the field, because their quarterback's pretty good. And if he gets it off on time you can blitz and not hit him either. So, they forced us into playing zone the whole time, which means it's a four-man rush and I didn't think our four-man rush got enough heat on the quarterback. Now there was some big-time plays made, we knocked the ball down, we sacked him once, we made enough plays on defense to win the game. Tariq Thompson made two big-time plays towards the end of the game to save the victory.

On Ryan Agnew's scrambling throughout the game:

You've watched Ryan play. Ryan's a scrambler. You can tell him not to scramble and then you take half his game away. So, a scrambler, sometimes you wonder what the heck he's doing. Now he didn't get a sack, he threw it out of bounds, so he didn't get sacked. And I think, if I'm right, maybe someone here watches it closer, he got us a couple critical first downs by scrambling too. So, every time he scrambles I don't know what he's doing, because I can't see it from the sidelines. If you're up in the press box you can probably see it a whole lot better than I can. I just see him running around out there looking for someone to throw it to.

On Ryan Agnew's play:

Well here I'm going to be old school on you. A player is a player. If that's the way he plays, let him play that way. You don't start trying to change their personality and their character. He's a good player. That's the way he plays. I mean I was asked why we let our kicker tackle a guy on a kickoff return. He's a football player, he's out there, if he's in a position to make a tackle he's supposed to make a tackle, okay. Now some people think that, some younger coaches think that's dumb, you're supposed to protect them all the time. You don't play this game to be protected.

On defensive line's performance:

Well they played pretty well tonight. We'll see how they do next week when there's better players blocking them.

On running game and finding Juwan Washington's backup:

I don't know about primary, I thought Jordan Byrd played pretty well the whole night. He had a couple pretty nice punt returns too. And when he got a little seam in there he seemed to be the only one that accelerated through the seam and got into the secondary. Where the other -- Juwan was limping around and no one else seemed to get into the secondary. Now I wish he could make them miss a little bit better because he's fast. If he can make one guy miss, they're not catching him. But he was the one I thought hit the hole the best out of all of them, just watching from the sideline.

On kicking game:

I thought that Heicklen had a great night. Araiza had an okay night. I mean we got really lucky on the kickoff return for a touchdown. He was not supposed to kick it like that. You kick it like that the return man gets the ball way before the coverage is down there. And if you have a good kickoff return man, you see what happens. So that's on him, that's not on the coverage team, that's on him.

San Diego State players

Ryan Agnew

Dwayne Johnson Jr.

Tariq Thompson

On late game pass breakup:

TARIQ THOMPSON: They ran that play in the second quarter, they ran that same play, and it was like an in, I believe. So I knew he was going back to it, so I acted like I was going to the flat again and I just made a play.

On his fourth-quarter interception:

TARIQ THOMPSON: They were in like a fake bubble screen and we got pressure on him so he threw it really high, so it gave me a chance to go get it.

On his defensive improvements:

TARIQ THOMPSON: It felt great getting them, but I got to capitalize on the other opportunities and I know I can, so it's something I got to continue to improve on.

On implementing spread offense against opponent:

RYAN AGNEW: It was different. You don't really know what it's like until you got out there against another opponent. And give credit to Weber State, they came in and threw the kitchen sink at us. They had a great defense, had great game plan, and we were lucky to get out there with a win. If it wasn't for these guys, DJ and Tariq, we wouldn't have got the win, but we got a lot of work to do and we're excited for it .

On his defensive performance:

DWAYNE JOHNSON JR: I mean, coming from, this is my fourth year, you had guys like Na'im McGee in front of me, Parker Baldwin, I've seen Kyahva make tackles, you've seen Calvin Munson. It's just, like, to have a game like that and be, like, recognized like them, I feel like that's everything. Those are big names in the program and I'm just like happy to have one game like that. Hopefully we can keep going and keep that flowing.

On necessary improvements for offense before UCLA:

RYAN AGNEW: We just got to do better recognizing coverage, winning one-on-one matchups, taking advantage when they give us opportunities. Like I said, winning those one-and-one matchups, if they're going to play man-to-man, I got to put the ball on the money and the receiver's got to make the catch. The O line's got to block perfectly because they're doing everything they could to stop us, so give credit to them, but we're going to work our tail off this week and get better.

On off-season scrambling practice:

RYAN AGNEW: You don't work on that. That's kind of, that's on the fly type of move, you just have to do that when the time comes. You can't work scenarios like that.

On risky pass play off a scramble:

RYAN AGNEW: I think I hit Bellinger on that one. I think we we're going to look back on film and it's going to be, like, don't do that again. It's cool when it happens, and it works out for you, but if it doesn't, it's a lot worse.

On what aspects of his game he will bring to UCLA:

DWAYNE JOHNSON JR: You said it, be all over the field. I just want to play fast, play hard, play physical and just make plays.

On Matt Araiza's debut performance:

RYAN AGNEW: Stud. Absolute stud. First time getting a start, kicking, going two for two and then having touchbacks. I mean, you can't ask more out of a kicker. And if we give that guy an opportunity, I am trusting him fully he's going to make the kick for us.

On the special team's performance:

RYAN AGNEW: That's huge. It goes unnoticed, like, the kicking game goes unnoticed. Defensive, obviously, had a great night, but I think the special teams did a great job too. Like you said, Heicklen and Matt Araiza doing his job. If Heicklen doesn't have those great punts, it doesn't make it easier for the defense. So, we're very lucky to have Heicklen and Araiza tonight. If it wasn't for those two guys it could have been a different story.

On missed interception opportunities:

TARIQ THOMPSON: It made me angry. I got to capitalize on opportunities like that. I know I can, so just something I got to keep working on. Just attack the ball better, I guess.

Weber State head coach Jay Hill**Impressions on San Diego State:**

They are good. They are physical. Their defense flies around. They have a bunch of returning starters from a really good defense last year. That's a good football team and they made a few more plays tonight than we did. If we are going to pull these games out, we've got to make a couple more plays and that was the difference.

Thoughts on the secondary:

We had a bunch of true freshmen out there tonight and that whole second half was basically played by true freshmen. They made a lot of plays and they were tested. San Diego State threw the ball up multiple times down the sidelines and I thought

they held their own. I'm going to have to look at the film to see exactly how they did, but it was great to get that kind of war and battle against a team like that.

On how players get over a tough loss against one of the better teams they'll play all season:

I don't know, but it better flip fast because we've got a really good opponent next week. If that want to pat themselves on the back because we played with San Diego State; that isn't why we are here. We are here to win. We are here to play good. We expected to play good tonight. There are no moral victories.