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SDSU Football Press Conference Quotes Monday, Dec. 18, 2017

SDSU head coach Rocky Long

Opening statement:

"It's game week so we can actually think about and talk about playing a football game. It seems like it's been a long time since we've played. We've practiced quite a bit and developed some of the younger guys to this point. Now it's all game planning so hopefully we can match up against their offense, which does a great job of running the ball."

On the benefits to playing in a bowl game:

"I think there are three great things about bowl games. Number one is that it's a reward for a good season. We're going to go to Fort Worth and have a good time. The bowl people will do a great job of hosting us. We get to play one more game and that's more important to the seniors than anyone else. It's a little less stressful than the regular season is because it's a bowl game. The most important thing for the future of the program is the extra practice that you get for the young guys. I don't know how you would put that in order of importance, but for the future of the program the most important is developing the young guys."

On Antonio Rosales:

"We think he's going to start. He's looked OK in practice the last few days. He won't last long, though, since it's been so long since he's played. He fatigues very quickly. I don't know how many plays he can go, but we planning on starting him and seeing how long he can last."

On stopping an option team:

"Whenever you play an option team - and they don't run much triple-option where they're actually reading and pitching - they run a lot of speed option, which means the quarterback runs down the line of scrimmage and tries to carry the ball whenever there is an opening. If there isn't an opening, then he will pitch it. Then they do a lot of things to make him the tailback with an extra blocker. They'll run zone plays with the lead blocker, they'll run power plays with two extra blockers. He's the ball carrier. It's not a typical triple-option team and they're getting an extra blocker by making him the ball carrier. It's a very difficult scheme to stop with any consistency. All you have to do is look at how many punts they've had for the entire season. Most people have had that many punts for the first third of the season. They haven't punted the ball very much because they keep it away from you forever. If it's fourth-and-2 or less, they are going for it. If you hear their coaches talk, they start a series first-and-8. Everyone else starts their series first-and-10. They start first-and-8."

On Army West Point's defense:

"They do a lot of things that try and make it difficult on you, like we try to do too. They give you a lot of different looks. The offensive line has to be very educated and make sure they block the right guys. They're very aggressive on defense. The real trick on their offense is we are only going to get the ball five or six times for the entire football game. It's very unusual, but for a true football fan it's going to be very interesting to watch. If it wasn't for the TV package and the commercials and all that, I'd say you'd be out of there in an hour and 15 minutes."

On how good Rashaad Penny has become:

"We thought he was going to be a very good running back. I don't think we anticipated he was going to be as good as he turned out to be. For a guy to lead the nation in rushing and all-purpose yards, and still tie the national record for kickoff returns for a touchdown, and return a punt for a touchdown his first time back there and those sort of things, it's a very unique situation. It's as good of a season as any running back has ever had. He's got a lot of notoriety lately, but it's shocking that he didn't get a lot of other (awards)."

SDSU senior Warrior Trey Lomax**On if Whataburger is better than In-N-Out Burger:**

"I've had it before, but it's been awhile. I'm curious to what Coach Long is going to have us get from there. I might be a more biased toward In-N-Out because it's in California."

On playing in his last collegiate game:

"It will be fun to get out there. It's always a privilege to play an academy school. We're excited for that. We have a lot of Texas guys on our team, so we know we'll have a good turnout of fans. Obviously the academy schools always travel with fans, so hopefully it will be a good turnout. We're excited to try and finish the season on a good note."

On the matchup with Army West Point:

"With no commercial breaks it would be the quickest game in the world. There's no out scheming people. They know what we are going to do and we know what they are going to do. We are going to run the ball and they are going to run their option stuff. It will be fun."

On defending Army West Point:

"Playing an offense like this, which is similar to Air Force or New Mexico, they kind of do a combination of both things with someone under center and some triple-option stuff. It's all just knowing your exact responsibility and not trying to make every play. Know what your keys are and know what you're responsible for and do that. Just help limit the big plays and any pass play they might attempt."

On if it's hard playing a game after not playing for four weeks:

"We had a little bit of time off after our last game until we figured out when our bowl game was going to be. The hardest part of that was just our first practice back, you get a little sore. We've been practicing hard on a regular basis. I think when you get back into the game you will be fine."

On the local guys making an impact at San Diego State:

"I think the local guys like Mikah (Holder) and I have made a pretty good impact here. I think it's been a big part of our success lately. A lot of guys staying home, a lot of local talent staying here. Being as successful as we've been, I think it's drawing a lot more interest from local recruits. You see a lot of guys turning down offers from Pac-12 and other schools to stay here and stay home. I think it's appealing because we've been so successful. I'm glad that we have been able to help lay that blueprint for the local guys and future recruits of San Diego to want to stay home and play for the Aztecs."

SDSU senior wide receiver Mikah Holder

On if Whataburger is better than In-N-Out Burger:

"I've never had it, but I hear a lot of hype. I'm excited for it. I don't think it will beat In-N-Out though."

On playing in his last collegiate game:

"Being in our last game means a lot. Playing a good team like Army, I know some players on that team. It's going to be a fun game. Being out in Texas and having some players from there I think we'll have a good crowd. The atmosphere is going to be electric. Trying to get Rashaad (Penny) that (SDSU single-season rushing) record would be good too. We're excited, all the way from the seniors down to the freshmen. We'll be ready to play."

On if it's hard playing a game after not playing for four weeks:

"It's not difficult for the game. Probably the first practice your get sore nicks, just getting back into it, but we've been practicing the last week and a half. We're going to be ready to go and it's exciting because we haven't played in full pads in a while. We'll be ready to go."

On playing in another bowl game:

"Besides the game, the whole experience of the bowl game is the best part. Just being up there for a few days with your guys. You don't have to worry too much about school or worry about getting home, you just stay in a hotel with your guys. It's going to be a lot of fun and we have a lot of fun bowl activities set up."

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