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San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes

November 7, 2023

San Diego, Calif.

Head Coach Brady Hoke

Opening Statements:

"Thanks for coming and following us. The talking point about the Utah State game is obviously that it was a tough one, because I thought our players played extremely hard. I thought the physicality that on the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball was good. Offensively, I thought our offensive line did a nice job and only gave up one sack. So I am excited about the progress I think we're making there and then, defensively it was a pretty good defensive showing, but we had some big plays that we can't give up. When you have two teams playing each other that are very similar, there's about six, eight plays that make a difference in the ballgame, and I think that was true the other night. Getting back to the defense. We had five sacks with 12 tackles for loss. We hadn't done that in a while so that was awesome. And offensively, we put together some really good drives there, especially at the end and it was encouraging but at the same time putting good drives together, you want to win the football game. So, we have to make sure we're getting points for all that hard work that they're doing out there. Dropped too many passes, that was a little bit of a negative. We had three false starts. I don't know if any of them killed us, but again, you have to make up more yardage, you have got to be more successful, you have got to be more on point. The kicking game, I think there were some really good things but then we had a fake field goal that we tried, and you could see the corner coming from the wide field and the guy who doesn't see it is the holder when you have a right handed kicker and the wing didn't notice that either. So the fake was there, but we weren't expecting them to run the corner from the other hash so that was a little different. Then on the fake punt, just a little bit of a communication problem that we need to make sure that we're all on board with next time we have something like that. That's our fault as coaches it's always our fault. Colorado State... We're similar in a lot of ways, football team wise again. Offensively I think their quarterback is a really good football player, really good at the skill positions. Tight end is probably the best tight end in the league. Overall, I would say he and Mark are somewhere in there. Defensively, very active upfront, and when you look at their special teams, they're a good team, and it'll be exciting to go up there. It's a great stadium, a really nice place to go play. I think the other thing is, we play for our seniors and our seniors have worked their butts off. They're not satisfied with where we're at, nobody is. They came out Monday and had a hell of a practice. We're going to get after it today and be physical with what we're trying to get ready for, They're fighting their asses off. Now we have to execute and do both."

On falling short in critical situations:

"There's no doubt there are those situations, and that's where you can't afford to make those mistakes. False starts, putting yourself behind the sticks, jumping offsides. Defensively, not tackling. We've had too many of those errors and haven't been able to get more positive."

On the decisive plays necessary for winning seasons:

"Well, I think whenever you win championships, there's always those 6 to 8 plays that make the difference. Well of the 6 to 8 when you win a championship, you're making seven of them, right? At the same time we got to keep getting better. We're a young team, but we're not that young anymore. You know, some guys have played some football. So we just got to keep ourselves going out every day practicing and trying to be better at what we're doing.

On the message to the team despite the losing season:

"I would say that the message is always about the seniors. It's always about those guys playing their last football. So you start with that, and then obviously we want to win championships as part of it, there's no doubt. For those guys, we're going to coach our tails off, we're going to coach for those guys who are underclassmen, because someday they're going to be a senior."

On the play of Kenan Christon:

"I thought Kenan really did a lot of nice things and I was really excited for him. He's a guy who we can utilize out of the backfield and in the backfield. He had a good game. Lucky, it's nice to see him break one loose in there, and he got criticized because he didn't run away from the guy well enough, but that's the way it goes. But I'm really happy for him and what he's done and I think the other guys see it, and they all want to compete, and do a better job."

On issues on the defensive end:

"I think that we haven't created enough negative plays, you know, sacks, TFLs. They're really all young. We may have a guy who's a senior but he's a transfer portal guy, right, so he hasn't been in this system, and there is a difference in the system."

On progress from the offensive line:

"When you're looking at statistical data, which I'm not much into analytics and all that kind of stuff, but just watching them and hearing them on the field. You've got to hear football. You've got to hear it in practice, we've got to hear it on the sidelines during the games, and I see that improving. They've had minimal negative plays, minimal sacks, and so there's obviously some improvement."

Senior tight end Mark Redman

On if a breakthrough game is coming:

"Yeah you talk about the last couple weeks and there's a couple games that you could pull off from the season this year. It all comes down to like everyone says, Brady says six to eight plays. Sometimes it's one to three plays a game so it's really just being able to make the plays in the critical time of the game that I think really separates you from everyone else."

On what it's like to go through the season with a losing record:

"Just being able to make those 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 plays in the game when it comes down to critical situations. Whether it's third and short, fourth and short, defense getting the stop, blocked punts, special teams, any of that stuff. So showing up really in the critical points of the game is what we need to continue to do and continue to strive on. But down the locker room, I've been on a team where it hasn't been that great, had a losing record. That's not something that you see from the guys on this team. They're still eager to go out there and eager to fight. That's the thing that I'm most proud of with our team."

On how the offense will attack Colorado State's defense:

"First off, you have to give them props because when you just look at their front four, they have probably one of the best D linemen in the Mountain West, number eight, they have a good secondary as well. So just being able to hit spots in between

that and looking at film, just kind of taking what people have done before and kind of queuing up the same stuff and just seeing where they're vulnerable and being able to run in between that."

Sophomore linebacker Zyrus Fiaseu

On eliminating mistakes in the defense:

"We just have to keep our keys. We have to win one on one. We have to start applying more pressure to the quarterback, which we have. We have to win one on ones at corners and DBs coverage wise. We have to make sure we're in the right spots. We have gotten better as a defense. These offenses that we've been facing lately, they've been top offenses in the nation. So for us to come out there and play like we have some swagger to us. That's just what we have to do. Just keep going."

On his leadership as a teammate:

"At the end of the day, I'm really just doing my job and trying to push everybody. We got leaders, we got captains, but at the end of the day, I'm a linebacker in the defense. I have to make sure everyone's doing the right job; got to make sure everyone's still running to the ball, doing what we got to do. We have a defensive philosophy. I'm not going to just let one or two people talk about it. I'm going to try to make sure that I'm out there trying to push what our culture is and keep the culture up."

On what they will do to slow down Colorado State's quarterback:

"We just have to put pressure on him. Like I said earlier, we have to win our one on ones, make sure that he feels us. If he doesn't feel us and he sits back there all day, they have some good receivers and a really good tight end. If we don't apply pressure to him, he's just going to sit back there and have a field day. But with us, everyone knows we like to lay it to everyone. Everyone knows that we go hard and we're going to bring something. For us, we just have to make sure that he feels our presence."

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