



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State- Fresno State Postgame Quotes Friday, November 15, 2019

Head Coach Rocky Long

Opening Statement:

"I'm happy that we won. It's nice to get the oil can back. I thought our players had played hard, with great intensity and great concentration, and we deserved to win the game. I'm not necessarily sure it should have been that close because we had a couple other chances to score that would have put the game out of touch. But it's a really good win for our team; a really good win for our program, and it puts us one step closer to where we want to be."

On the fact that turnovers played an important role in the game:

"Turnover ratio is always an important statistic in determining who wins. I thought us fumbling on the one- or two-yard line could have cost us the game. Not only did we not score and take a two-score lead, we gave them momentum by giving them the ball and they drove it a little bit that time."

On the passing game emerging tonight:

"I thought our offense finally showed dividends of being in a spread formation. We were having trouble running ball because (Fresno State) had so many guys in (the box) that we couldn't block them all and it was making it tough to run. We had a whole lot of one-on-one situations with receivers that made good catches, got open, made good catches."

"(Quarterback) Ryan (Agnew) threw the ball really, really well. He threw it on target and the receivers went and got it. Now, I was hoping it was going to happen before this game, but now is as good a time as any that we threw it and caught it like they did. We wouldn't have been able to do that if we were in the old formations that we used to run."

On if quarterback Ryan Agnew grew more confident as the game went on:

"I think Ryan is confident all the time. It's just like every other person in the world, you have good days and you have bad days. He had a really good day today. And quarterbacks are judged by win/loss records. I don't know what his is, but it's probably pretty darn good. I bet you it's a very good percentage of when he's been our starting quarterback that we've won games."

"Last week he had a tough game throwing the ball, and he threw it really well tonight. The receivers did a really nice job of getting open and going and getting the ball too. Receivers make quarterbacks look good a lot, too."

On if the game plan was to be more aggressive and throw the ball more:

"I think we threw it more on normal down and distance, rather than waiting for third down. I think that's a little more aggressive."

"In this day and age of football, it's really not because a lot of people do that. But for our state of mind, it's more aggressive than we normally are on offense that we are throwing it on first down. We were throwing it on second and three and those kinds of situations where in the past we

would have run the ball. That's more aggressive play calling, and I think it paid dividends and hopefully it will pay dividends the rest of the way."

On if there were any situations that might have affected the outcome:

"I'm going to have to watch (the Agnew to Parker Houston pass in the endzone that was ruled incomplete) again. I don't know how many replays there are, but the one that kept showing on the scoreboard was a touchdown. I don't know how they keep doing that to us, because last week the targeting penalty was not targeting. In the replays I saw, it was not targeting."

"On the replay you saw on the scoreboard tonight, that was a touchdown. So that hurt us. I mean, we kicked a field goal, but that hurt us. The one we could have put the game away on is the one we fumbled on the two-yard line and they got the ball. We would have put the game away right there."

On the team's resilience despite the turnovers that were committed:

"We've got great young men in our program. Great young men respond that way. Great young men don't take a failure and make another failure. They try to make it better. They work and they try to do it positively. That's what great young men do. That's what great young people do, not just men. That doesn't surprise me at all that they were able to do that."

"I never know if they are going to play good to be honest with you, I never know, but it doesn't surprise me at all that they did tonight. There were some times during the game where we could have easily folded but we didn't and we won. I'm sure to some of the critics out there, (the win) wasn't by enough and we didn't look good enough, but guess what, we're 8-2, and we've still got a chance to be in the Championship Game. There are only about three teams in this league left that can do that."

On if Juwan Washington was healthy enough to play tonight:

"We didn't think he looked good enough in practice. He says he feels good. Says he's 100 percent but he's not running it like Juwan runs it. So, we decided to hold him out."

On if there were halftime adjustments for Fresno State quarterback Jorge Reyna:

"I don't think so because he scrambled and got some first downs. Our guys did a nice job of pressuring him but he's very elusive. There was one play on the last drive where we finally intercepted the pass. We had three guys back there against him and I don't know if we laid a hand on him. Not only did they not sack him, I'm not sure we laid a hand on him. So, in the second half, their best offense was him scrambling."

On the team's ability to take the ball away from its opponent and specifically Luq Barcoo:

"Well, last year we didn't take it away very well. This year we are doing a much better job of taking it away and obviously those are good players making good plays. I thought on the two interference calls (Luq Barcoo) got, one was legit and the other one was bogus. He played a nice game. I think if he had done it a little different, he might have had another interception, but didn't. But he got the interception at the end, mostly because he was in the right place and mostly because the quarterback was being pressured."

"It would have been really sad if he dropped that one because that was a gimme. Here it is, catch, it please. But it's nice that he's got that kind of statistic going. One guy does not make a defense; just like him getting interceptions, how about those guys rushing the passer. I don't know if you realize they averaged 34 points a game and we gave them seven."

Senior quarterback Ryan Agnew

On his passing performance and becoming the first 300-yard passer for San Diego State in 65 games:

"It's awesome. Especially in a rivalry game like this against a great team in Fresno State. We were going to do whatever it takes to win. We're known as a team that runs the rock, but if they are going to stack the box and stop the run, we have to be able to throw the ball. We have guys like Jesse (Matthews), Kobe (Smith), Elijah (Kothe), Ethan (Dedeaux), and Parker (Houston) all making plays and they have been doing it all year. It was great to see it all come together in one game. To throw for that many yards, credit goes to the offensive line protecting me and the running backs and receivers making those catches."

On the uniqueness of acting as a receiver in tonight's game:

"It would be unique if it was more than negative nine yards. I should have batted that pass down and then that would have been not negative yardage. I should have batted it down, it was a bad play by me.

On if he had ever caught a pass during his football career:

"Yeah, I caught one in high school, as I used to play receiver when I was younger. I like catching the football. It's fun.

On the moment the team rushed for the Oil Can:

"It was chaos. Absolutely chaos. We were excited because Jesse (Matthews) has only been here for two years now, and this is happening in his second year. We've lost the past few years to Fresno State, and I remember the last time they won it, they ran on our sideline and grabbed it. So when we won it, we were going to go over and chase that thing. We were excited to get the oil can back. It's not the prettiest trophy, but it means a lot to us and we're excited to have it back in San Diego."

On overcoming the adversity of the team's early touchdown taken away on review:

"Just resiliency. I remember Coach Hall before the game, "Just keep going. Just keep going." There's going to be some trials and tribulations, like you said, the blocked kick, the touchdown being called back, the fumble in the red zone, but you just have to keep playing. You can't get your head down and say, "Woe is me and it's not our night," when stuff like that happens, you have to brush it to the side and move on. That's the only thing you can do."

On difficulties of finding consistency on offense:

"Probably the most difficult part is just seeing how great the defense has played. I mean, last week, we kind of squandered away a great defensive performance. The only frustrating thing is the defense is playing great. We just got to control the football better. Can't have any turnovers. You know, throw the ball when we need to throw it. Run it when we need to run it and playing with that defense, you can get a lot of wins if you take care of the football and make your plays when they are there."

On the offense's game plan:

"I wouldn't say we centered the game plan on throwing the ball or running the ball. Our game plan is to have great drives, make plays when they are there, but tonight, you know, Jesse was having a great game. Kobe (Smith) was making catches. Eli (Kothe) was making great catches. We felt like we had that match-up, and I trust these guys 110-percent. If I just give them a catchable football, you see they are going to make those catches. I think that's what the coaches saw, and when we put it up, we trust those guys fully."

On trust during intense moments of the game, including being backed up in their own endzone:

"I think the only reason I was so confident in that (play) was that I trusted the play call that came in. We knew what they were going to give us defensively and then I trusted Elijah (Kothe). He's been doing it all year for us, even though he had a four-game stretch where he was hurt. He makes those plays even when people aren't watching. When he does it in a stadium on TV, it's like second nature to him honestly and I knew he was going to make that play. I just had to give him a chance.

On SDSU's offense controlling the time of possession game:

"I think the plan is always if you keep their offense off the field, they can't score points. Now, we have to do a better job -- we had 12 more minutes (with the ball tonight), right, and 30 more plays; we've got to score more points than 17. We felt like we were playing really well. We just got to get more points on the board so then the defense isn't stressing as much."

Redshirt freshman wide receiver Jesse Matthews:

On his career- best night:

"It's incredible. I mean, I put so much work in practice every day, just trying to build that chemistry with Ryan and all the quarterbacks and just seeing it come to fruition is pretty awesome. All credit to Ryan and the coaches for getting us ready to play."

Senior cornerback Luq Barcoo

On his second multi-interception game this season:

"I try not to think about it too much. It is a long season, and we have a couple more games left, so I'm just trying to play my best until then but it is great knowing that I'm making plays to help the team win. I look forward to getting more and helping the team win a championship.

On seeing the offense find success tonight:

"It's a great feeling knowing that the offense is going to do the best job they can to help us win. Us being able to put them in situations to succeed is a great feeling, and them going out and capitalizing and making plays is a great feeling for us as a team. It's great with everybody being on the same page and it will be great to have them functioning properly moving forward."

On the secondary's play tonight:

"(Tonight's effort) just says that we are all looking to make plays. We all want an opportunity to pick the ball off, so we make it a competition of us getting plays. It's cool to see those guys make those plays, as well.

On importance of changing the team's narrative from last season:

"It was extremely important. Coach put emphasis on not repeating history and last year we did start off 7-1, I believe and lost -- pretty much lost from there on out. It's good to change that and go in a different direction than we did last year. It shows our team has gotten a lot more smart and mentally compatible. It's good to overcome that and change that."

On if he was surprised by Jesse Matthew's play:

"It's not surprising at all. Jesse has some of the best potential on the team as a receiver. I have a lot of confidence in Jesse, and we were just waiting for him an opportunity to show it and it finally happened. It's good to see him do that."

Junior Aztec Dwayne Johnson Jr.

On his missed interception attempt:

"I've dropped three (interceptions this season). I've got to get one. I've got to get one. I'm in last place right now. Like you said, we are all just trying to make plays to help us win. I'm going to get mine soon."

On Agnew's 300-yard passing performance and the offense's play tonight:

"That was his first (game) one throwing for 300 yards? I feel like he came close a couple times. I mean, but that's big, though. Offense played crazy tonight. That's something we needed and I'm happy they did that tonight. We're looking forward to keeping it rolling and watching them keep doing that. That's huge."

Fresno State Head Coach Jeff Tedford

Opening Statement:

"We got beat by a better team tonight. San Diego State played very, very well and we turned the football over. They executed and you've got to give them a lot of credit. They played really, really well on defense. They're a really good football team and we couldn't get anything established in the run game. They had a lot of pressure on the passer all night long. Our guys played hard but didn't do enough to win."

On injuries to the offensive line:

"It was a struggle . . . but that's football, everybody goes through that. We have young guys and they are learning under fire."

On the defense's struggles against the pass:

"We did a decent job in the run game. On the corners, they made a lot of plays on fade and back shoulder balls. I thought their quarterback played really well and was accurate. They converted on some third downs that were important. Give them credit. They made a lot of plays and we didn't."

On the team's penalties:

"Two of them were on the same series coming off the goal line. We had a big one, hitting the quarterback. It's not something that we normally do and it's not an epidemic by any means. We jumped offsides, when it was really loud, down in their end zone. Obviously, you don't want to be penalized. For the most part they're not lacking discipline, they're guys trying hard. You always have to clean those up."

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