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San Diego State-New Hampshire Postgame Quotes

September 3, 2016

SDSU football head coach Rocky Long

Opening Statement:

"Obviously in the first game, there are things you did well and some things you didn't do well. Winning is the most important thing, and we won by a substantial margin. I don't know what anybody expected on what the margin of victory is going to be, but when you look at the scores that come by where South Alabama beats Mississippi State, Appalachian State should've beat Tennessee, I mean, you can go down the list and figure out that we're pretty happy that we won the game by a margin of 31-0. That's a pretty good deal. Now, there are some things that we have to improve dramatically. We didn't run the ball as well as I hoped we would. We've got to clean up the holding penalties, because I thought the holding penalties broke a lot of momentum in the second half. If we don't get those holding penalties, we might have scored 50. So, obviously, we've got to get better at all of those kind of things and we're playing a much better opponent next week, so we've got to get better quick."

On why running game was struggling:

"Well, you have to give the opponent some credit. I thought New Hampshire did a nice job. They defeated blocks, got off blocks and made tackles. So, now you can look at it that way and give them credit, or you can say the offensive line didn't do as well as they should have. You can look at it either way. I like to give the other team credit. I'd rather give credit than talk bad about a team that won 31-0."

On junior wide receiver Mikah Holder's performance:

"I thought it was good. I'm not sure we outplayed New Hampshire that bad, we've just got a lot better players. Sometimes you can play well and lose, because the other team has a lot better players. I think that's what happened. Mikah was the one that broke it open. I thought New Hampshire came to play, I thought they were physical, I thought they were ready to try to upset us, and then the big pass to Mikah Holder that went for the touchdown kind of popped it open."

On redshirt sophomore Christian Chapman's performance:

"He's a lot better than he was last year. But what you saw is what he did in the last two games last year. Last two games last year, he threw the ball well, he was accurate with the football and he could get out of trouble and he could make yards himself. He did that again tonight. I think he's a lot more adept at knowing our offense, and he can change some things at the line of scrimmage that he couldn't last year. But I thought he had a really good first game."

On SDSU's game against California next week:

"Cal's going to be a better football team because they've got a lot better athletes. They're more talented. The game plan won't be any better than New Hampshire had. I promise you, it won't be any better. Sometimes we get lost on that kind of stuff. Just because one team has better players, all of a sudden the other team doesn't get coached and the other team's not any good. Well, Cal's got a lot better players. I mean, if you want talent level, they've probably got a lot better talent than we've got. So, we better play pretty good to have a chance to win."

SDSU senior linebacker Calvin Munson

On the Aztecs receiving a preseason ranking:

"I think it's cool that we're ranked. But at the same time, it's just a preseason ranking. We haven't done anything yet this season. We haven't done anything yet as a team. A lot of credit goes back to last year's team, which kind of put us in this spot this year. We had a lot of seniors last year and had great leadership, which has set the bar high for us this year. But we have to keep it going. If we lose this week, we're not ranked anymore. So we just have to work hard, take things one game at a time and try to maintain our ranking."

On building on the success of players in previous seasons:

"We try to learn from them because they all led by example. They were great leaders, they were great players on and off the field. We just try to follow in their footsteps on how they motivated us (as underclassmen) to get better. They set the bar high. Like I said before, we had a rough start last year, but they got us going and we finished the season (strong)."

On the loss to Eastern Illinois as a freshman in the 2013 opener:

"(Three) years ago, we lost to Eastern Illinois in our season opener. We kind of looked past them, getting ready for our games after that thinking we were just going to show up and blow them out. They came in here more prepared than we were and they beat us."

On the team maintaining its focus heading into Saturday's game:

"I think we worked very hard during this offseason and this camp. We just have to keep preparing as best as we can and give it our all. I have 100 percent confidence in our team that if we go out and play our (style of) football, we're going to be happy with the results. Like any other week, you have to go out there and play your best. You can't have a bad quarter or a bad snap. You just have to play the best you can."

On New Hampshire running back Dalton Crossan and facing the rest of the Wildcats offense:

"He's a really good runner. He runs hard, he breaks a lot of tackles, breaks a lot of arm tackles. They pass a lot. They do a lot of read-option with the spread, so we're kind of prepared for both. We have a couple of schemes for the run and a couple of schemes for the pass. We've been working hard. They have a good team. They have an explosive offense, so we're excited for the challenge."

SDSU senior offensive lineman Nico Siragusa**On the team maintaining its focus heading into Saturday's game:**

"This group of guys is really focused on (the concept of) 'one week at a time.' We know we can't look forward to Cal, we can't look forward to Northern Illinois, we can't look forward to anything. But to accomplish our goal, we have to go undefeated every week, which is, win one game at a time. And this group of guys really understands (how) not to look forward to anything."

On the team's experience heading into Saturday's game:

"We have a bunch of seniors who know how to approach a game week and know how to approach a week-one game. The best thing that we can do is mentor the guys who are coming in to start for the first week and let them know that we understand that they're going to have some first-game jitters and not to worry about it. We have faith in them. We know they're good players and can start for us. That's where the (senior) leadership comes in."

On the legacy of recent Aztec offensive linemen:

Learning from (past) seniors like Bryce Quigley, Terry Poole, Pearce Slater and Darrell Greene, for the offensive line group, those are pretty big shoes to fill. But they helped the whole offensive line mature to where we are now. I have to give them credit for the past. They're one of the main reasons why we are here. Six years ago when they went to their first bowl game if those seniors did not start the winning tradition, then we wouldn't be sitting here talking about going undefeated. So it's not just last year's seniors, but also the ones from 2010 and 2011."

SDSU sophomore quarterback Christian Chapman

On how he has taken advantage of getting more time to work with the wide receivers during the offseason and training camp compared to last year:

"Yeah, a lot during the offseason. Always one-on-ones with Mikah (Holder), Eric Judge and guys like that. Even after workouts, we'd go out and throw. In time, I'd get into offensive one-snaps with them, getting the reps and timing down. It's helped a lot. I feel like I know most of the receivers now and what their speeds are. It's helped a lot coming into this season."

On the biggest differences in practices between this season and last:

"Consistency, and I feel like I'm more comfortable with the offense, so I know where to go with the ball when I see a certain coverage instead of thinking for an extra second. I know if it's not there to check down or run."

On adjusting to the college game after practicing against the Aztec defense on a daily basis:

"I had to step back a little bit and take a look at what I was going against. We run some crazy stuff that I had never seen before. I just had to get used to it. But now I feel I have a pretty good idea of what we run and how to go against it. It just makes it a lot easier when you're going against those other teams."

On becoming more composed in the pocket:

"That's something that (quarterbacks) coach (Blane) Morgan kind of preaches. Just be composed in the pocket. We know our line is going to hold up for us. When you do have a chance to make a play on your feet to just go ahead and take it. Just be confident and stay in there. If it's not there, just run. Don't get all antsy or it will lead to negative plays."

New Hampshire head coach Sean McDonnell

Opening statement:

"It's 14-0 and I'm sitting there looking at the scoreboard going 'we're hanging in here, we're hanging in here' and then we couldn't generate a thing offensively. And sooner or later, they're a good football team, you know everybody figured out what we tried to. We're going to try and stop the run. We put about 20 guys in the box and it did okay. I'll give credit to (SDSU) quarterback (Christian Chapman), he put some balls on people, made some plays, and I thought their coaching staff did a good job adjusting and took care of us a little bit."

On his takeaway from the game:

"Disappointed. We had a chance to throw a touchdown pass early in the game; you know, to score a touchdown, I mean, wide open, we overthrow him. That would have been 7-0, but I don't think it would've made much of a difference. I give my kids credit, they fought. You know, it's a fourth-and-one down there, we make a stop; we're offside. A kid who hasn't played a lot of football for us, who had a hell of a game for us tonight, (linebacker) Jared Kuehl, but you know what, we swung the bat a little bit tonight. We have to recuperate, go back, get ready for Holy Cross."

On the New Hampshire run defense compared to last year's season opening game at San Jose State:

"I feel a lot better walking out of this locker room tonight than I did walking out of San Jose. San Jose was a very physical football team, like this San Diego State team. We were better prepared to stop the run. Last year, (San Jose State's Tyler Ervin) was the second-best running back in (the Mountain West), but we were better prepared to stop it and our kids bought in and did it. You feel better, but it ain't good enough."

On San Diego State senior running back Donnel Pumphrey:

"Best football player I've seen coaching in a long, long time here at UNH. He does it all. I watch him run the football, I watch him catch the football; he's a competitor and a half. Great, great player. I haven't slept really well since the beginning of August when I began watching the tapes."