



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes

Nov. 17, 2020

San Diego State Head Coach Brady Hoke

Opening statement:

"Obviously, it's good to get back to the winning ways. It was a good week last week. We had good practices and I think the guys prepared very well and I'm very proud of them. Going into this week against Nevada, they are a very good football team, so we need to have a great week."

On Nevada's 4-0 start and their offense:

"Number one, Carson Strong has had six consecutive games of over 300 yards. He can make all the throws and has a group of receivers who are all very talented. [Romeo] Doubs is obviously pretty special; he is leading the conference in pretty much every category as a wide receiver. They have a very experienced offensive line and a lot of guys who have played a lot of snaps. I think one of their best players is their left tackle and he is a true freshman and I really think Coach Norvell has done a nice job defensively. They have four senior defensive linemen up front; they are very physical and very active. I think they are sixth nationally on third down defense, so they are going to be a really good challenge for us, and we need to prepare."

On the importance on this game regarding Mountain West championship implications:

"Every game is a championship game. You've got to win out, you've got to play your best football and improve every week. Those are things we talk about as a team."

On Carson Baker:

"It was his fifth game as a starting college quarterback, and we did score 34 points and he was part of that. I think as he grows as a quarterback, and we will always have competition, I think him and Lucas [Johnson] are the two that will continue to compete. I've got a lot of faith in Carson. I had a good conversation with him yesterday. We've got to keep competing and keep progressing forward at every position. He's a great kid, he'll bounce back."

On using two quarterbacks in a game:

"As a defensive coach, I think when people play two different quarterbacks it can get you a little frazzled because of Lucas' ability to run the football. Having both of them available is a real positive."

On Nevada's rush defense:

"When we played San Jose State, they were first or second in the conference and Nevada is second [in rush defense]. They have experience and are very active as a defense and very physical at the point of attack. It will be a test. I don't think there is any doubt about that. We've got to do our job; everybody has a job to do from coaching to playing."

San Diego State left guard Jacob Capra

On the biggest difference from last season to this season:

"Obviously having a new head coach, but I've actually been with Coach Hoke more than any other coach my entire career because I had him my first

year [at Oregon] and the last two years at San Diego State. Other than the coaching change, not much has changed, same traditions and same ideals.”

On the offensive line’s improvement:

“We returned a lot of guys and have a lot of experience and a very-tenured offensive line coach that has kept the same teachings that we can fester on and grow so it’s been pretty easy.”

On if running game’s success stems from offensive line or running back play:

“It’s 50-50. We’ve got a good running back core. We’ve got [Greg] Bell back for the first time in two years and he’s doing great. We’ve got experienced running backs and an experience offensive line core so it’s 50-50.”

On improving the passing game:

“It’s a team thing. The O-line has to protect better and everyone has to do their job. If everyone does their job, then we will have a good passing game.”

San Diego State defensive tackle Jonah Tavai

On challenges Nevada presents:

“One of D-line musts is to always affect the quarterback and that hasn’t changed throughout the season. I believe we put in plays that are going to help us get there, get home and get our rushes going. For us, it’s preparing as a team. Our relationship with the linebackers is definitely growing week in and week out. Playing with each other longer and longer helps us know where we are going.”

On playing against a pocket passer:

“A lot of quarterbacks have their own unique features. In the past couple games, we have struggled against dual threat quarterbacks. Last game, we held our own and put in new plays. We hustled a lot better to the ball and it just worked out for us. This quarterback [Nevada’s Carson Strong] has an arm and he’s got the accuracy. He’s a good pocket passer and we’ve just got to get home and affect him.”

On responsibility of defensive backs to slow Nevada’s pass game:

“The DB’s have been doing their job, not just this year but last year, because we have been returning a lot of them, four out of the five of them. They’ve been giving us time to get there all year, especially last game where the quarterback had to double clutch and we had time to get home.”

On challenges of being a student-athlete during a pandemic:

“Coach Hoke tells us, ‘We are playing for one another,’ especially for the seniors to give them their last shot at college football, but more importantly just for the team.”

On challenges of COVID-19 protocols:

“During the offseason when we were in a hotspot and had to get ready for a season six feet apart, wiping down a bag after every person uses it. It just took time. As the season has been going on, we’ve been getting used to it. The testing takes five minutes.”

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