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San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes

Sep. 5, 2023

San Diego, Calif.

Head Coach Brady Hoke

Opening statement:

"Thanks for coming. Just a couple things about last week first and then we'll get into UCLA. Number one, really, I thought the students did a hell of a job especially for about three quarters and we appreciate them being there. And it was really something that our kids fed on. As far as the game, we wanted to control the tempo of the game when we look at our different goals that we have and we did that, the offense did that with 34 minutes of time possession. I thought the pace of the game was what we wanted. I think obviously defensively we needed to get off the field a little bit more but there was some improvement there. The run game itself I thought was good. I think we always want to be able to run the football. I thought upfront we were better and I know we thought that as a staff and also thought that the backs did a nice job. I thought Mayden with either the quarterback runs that were designed or the quarterback runs that he didn't see anything he liked and took the ball down and ran with it was really good. Martin Blake is a really good football player and he's a really good football player because he can do so many different things. He's kind of like a Swiss army knife to some degree and what he does for us. Probably the best part of it is his attitude. He's got a great attitude towards the game. I thought in the running back group, I thought Armstead and Kenan both ran well. I think obviously Martin got the hot hand and so we stuck with him a little bit more, but really liked what Keenan brought. And the turnovers, we can't do that. The interception that was a Hail Mary at the end of the half. It is counted as an interception right, but as far as within our ratio, I don't really count that one. But I do count the two fumbles, that's something that we got to fix. We got to get better at it, can't put the ball on the ground, backed up and give them an easy possession to score. Obviously defensively we got to do a better job but we got to take care of the football better. Liked that the defense did come up with a couple of stops, thatt we took advantage of a couple of turnovers and were able to get 10 points off of those turnovers. We got to finish better, just overall. We said that last week, I think we did have some improvement. Is it the improvement that we need to be at? No it's not. And so we got to as coaches and players. The one thing that ticked me off is the fourth quarter. Talked all year about losing games in the fourth quarter, and we didn't play well enough in the fourth quarter. We didn't win the fourth quarter. And so to be a championship team, we got to do a better job and finish better. I think the thing that killed us as much as anything is we had 14 penalties. You can debate whether, and I've done my due diligence, I've turned in the calls that I think needed to be turned in to the conference office. I don't like doing that and I really like our conference, the head of officials and Mike Defee. I think he's really really good in my meetings with him, but penalties killed us. On the first drive we did a false start. We got momentum on that first drive, and all of a sudden it takes you back. We had I think four offsides on defense that's unacceptable. You may have one during the course of a game and then everybody gets in tune with a cadence clap, whatever it might be. But to have four from the defensive line linebackers. That's unacceptable. And that's something that's got to be corrected. They're holding penalties and you could call

holding pretty much on every snap. But again, that gets back to fundamentals and techniques, and that gets back to us, me as a coach and those things are all being addressed. Believe me, we practiced yesterday, and they'll be addressed the rest of the week. But overall, it's great to be 2-0 and is better than 1-1. I do think Idaho State is a better team than maybe we thought they might be coming in. I don't think anybody overlooked them. I know that we're not going to be that kind of team and we're not. The way you could feel the energy before the football game, around the players and on the field and warm ups and all that. I think we gave them an opportunity to stay tight and stay close and they took advantage of it. That's when you get in trouble."

On Martin Blake's success in a short window:

"He did a couple things in spring. And then a year ago, he was on scout team. So he was running against the defense a year ago. And, you see those things. He's running off a card, but you see those things and you get excited about okay now, but he's running off a card. But it's still the athleticism, his quickness, his balance."

On if they will continue to go with who has the hot hand:

"Yeah, the guy who's got the hot hand is going to be the guy who's going to get the most carries. I also think there's some really good plays for certain people. There are Kenan plays to get him on the perimeter a little bit. He's even better between the tackles than he was before. So getting him an open space, getting the football to him. Those are all things that we'll do. We're playing a little more two backs than we have and that's been a difference in some things that we're doing."

On the cause of the offensive line penalties:

"Well, the only thing was holding penalties, we had three of those from the offensive line. There's some I would question and some I would say we got to use better technique in fundamentals. Same thing with pass interference, I think we had three of those and the same thing, you got to have good technique, you got to have good fundamentals. And that's the same thing when offensive linemen get a holding penalty, a true holding penalty, is a lack of fundamentals, running your feet."

On the biggest thing to stopping the UCLA quarterback:

"Well, we got to stop the run first. So I'll go back to that. You gotta be able to affect the running game and then affect the quarterback so from that standpoint, I think we're getting ready for all three of them, but they're in the same context from what we know, offensively."

On what makes Chip Kelly's offense tough to defend:

"Well, I think initially the tempo, he was about the first guy with the tempo type of offense in Oregon, I think some formationally and the use of personnel groups, from tight ends, three to four to a wide receiver playing in a tight end position. Just a lot of different things that I think his mind from an offensive standpoint, is pretty special. I think he's as good as there is when you look at calling plays, and developing an offense that's a little unique."

On the potential turnout of the game with UCLA nearby:

"Well, hopefully there's more of us than them and I know last time we went up there, there were more of us than them. So that'd be great. If we can have that here at home."

Senior Safety Cedarious Barfield

On his memory of the 2019 Rose Bowl game:

"Well first of all, I remember it being very hot, but a lot of people from San Diego popped out to the game, a lot of students and everything like that. They were right behind the endzone, so I just remember everyone being into the game. A lot of

people from the LA area and a lot of family members were there, so I just remember the atmosphere. It was a close, hard fought game so being able to win that game and get that first win between us and UCLA was just a very exciting atmosphere."

On this year's matchup with UCLA:

"Like you said, we're playing at home so it is pretty fun to be here in San Diego with that home field advantage in a way, but you know, LA is pretty close so I'm sure we're going to see a lot of blue and gold in the stands. Me and Garrett played in that last game on special teams, but now I actually get to play defense, so It's going to be fun. We're just very excited to play UCLA, a very great team on all sides of the ball, defense, offense, special teams, so it's going to be a great test for us."

On the challenges to prepare for multiple potential quarterbacks:

"We'll probably go over that today more, but from what I've seen they have a lot of quarterbacks that are capable. Ethan, he started the game, number four, threw a touchdown and he looked good. Then they have a true freshman, I think he was a five star recruit, Dante Moore, he looked very good and comfortable. They have a bunch of receivers that help them out, a couple of transfers, one from USC, and they're helping their quarterbacks out just being able to get them the ball, so I mean, this is going to be a fun game for our D-line. With the great test with their offensive line, our linebackers, they have a good running back from Ball State, and then our DBs going against their receivers, it's going to be fun."

On what they want from the fans:

We want it to be packed, you know, and have more red and black in the crowd. So we're excited. We know that they're going to show up.

Senior Tight End Mark Redmond

On his excitement for the upcoming game:

"Yeah, I mean, it's just another game. As we talked about earlier, we've played two opponents already, and we've gone against a four two, we've gone against a three three, so we've seen about everything that we can get so far. So to us it is just another game, they might be a little bit higher up than the level of competition that we played, but we're just ready for anything. This week of practice is gonna be a great one, and we're just gonna go from there."

On Jalen Mayden's running ability:

Yeah, you guys obviously saw it. I knew he ran for a lot of yards on the day, but I didn't know that he just set a record so that's something that he usually allows us to benefit from a team like last week. Again this week, we're going to see a different defense. But if it comes down to it, and Mayden can't throw the ball, he'll be able to get out of pocket and run and get a first down. He's really extended a bunch of plays for us and we're really thankful for him in that situation

On controlling the clock:

I think exactly what you just said. I mean, the whole D line thing is what we pride ourselves on here. And the time possession that we won last week was huge. And I know Coastal Carolina had about the same amount of time possession as us. So I think if we can win the time possession battle, there'll be a huge uptick for us. And it will just allow us to control the game a little bit more and have our defense be a little bit more fresh when they get on the field for whatever they have to take on.

On what they want from the fans:

We're just looking for a full stadium. We love to see that. We love to see as many people as possible come and support.

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