

November 2, 2013



An Interview With:

COACH ROCKY LONG

COACH LONG: I'm ready if you are.

Q. How do you think they did, you talked last week about how you weren't sure how they were going to come out after that last game. What did you think?

COACH LONG: I thought both offenses, their offense and our offense, played really well and I thought both defenses really struggled.

Q. What specifically, was it just the option not just staying back or sometimes overcommitting?

COACH LONG: Well, I told you at the beginning of the week, it's very, very difficult to get ready for the triple option. They put a new play in, a counter triple option we hadn't seen until today. And we never even slowed that down.

But you can't get ready for a triple option offense in three days especially when you spend two weeks getting ready for a spread team that throws it about 60 or 70 times, then get ready for a triple option team and obviously you see the results.

I did think going into the game we would play a little bit better than we did. But we didn't. And thank goodness the offense was good enough to win the game for us.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about the rapport Kaehler and Ruffin established over the last few weeks?

COACH LONG: I think that Ezell Ruffin's coming into his own. I think he's getting better and better each week. Going into the season we were hoping he'd develop into that kind of receiver. And

I think Quinn does a nice job going through his reads. I don't think he has a favorite receiver.

There are quarterbacks that favor receivers so much they throw it to them when they shouldn't. I think Quinn actually goes through his reads and some of his first reads are Ezell. Just like the first play of the game, that was totally, "Let's fake the run and throw it up to Ezell and see if he can catch it." I think they have a rapport, but I don't think it's the kind of thing that people start talking about where a quarterback starts looking just for that receiver.

Q. Talk about Adam Muema. He had a monster game. When do you feel in the season he really started to show like he was comfortable again?

COACH LONG: I don't know. You know better than I do. About four games ago, maybe five. I don't know when both him and D.J. Pumphrey had good days on the same day. I think our running game has improved dramatically, partly because of them. Adam being healthy and D.J. being able to change the mood, so to speak, because they're different kind of running backs. And then I think the offensive line has started to block better for the run, too. All that goes together.

Q. What do you think about the switch with Dilley and Gordon?

COACH LONG: I have no idea. I'm going to have to watch the tape to find out. I know Dilley jumped off sides once, or something, twice. That's not good. That part's not good. I have no idea.

I would bet that the offensive linemen played well. For Adam to have that many yards, I would bet that the offensive line played well.

Q. Damontae Kazee didn't play at all?

COACH LONG: Last week in practice he came up with concussion symptoms so they held him out of the game.

Q. Does Bob Toledo tell you what he's

going to come up with for the first play of the game?

COACH LONG: I always know what the first play of the game is. After that I don't and I don't ask. He doesn't ask what defense we're calling. (Laughter).

Q. I asked Ezell what was going through his head. What was going through your head when you saw him break wide open?

COACH LONG: Since I always know what the first play is, at first I thought he was going to be covered. Then he made an outside jab and the DB took off and he went back to the middle. I saw him come open. There wasn't anybody close.

And that was whether the ball was on target or not. Ezell improved dramatically from the first game to now catching the ball. Last year you remember he was opened a lot of times where he dropped them. So he's obviously improved his fundamentals at catching the ball, but he's also gained a lot more confidence. You can just tell by the way he's playing that he's a lot more confident.

Q. You went for a it a few times on fourth down. If you were to kick the field goal would Seamus McMorrow be the one to kick it?

COACH LONG: Seamus would be the one kicking. Most of those field goals were long field goals. They would have been 50-yarders, 49 to 53-yarders. And our punter wasn't punting exceptionally well. So if you can't get it inside the 10 and you punt it into the end zone, you only gain 10 or 15 yards anyway so you might as well go for it.

Q. At this point what would you say you're comfortable with your kicker's range?

COACH LONG: Inside of 40. Now, late in the game it was important to score touchdowns, because we weren't, they weren't slowing us down and we weren't slowing them down. So you can't settle for field goals then. You gotta score touchdowns when neither defense is slowing the other team down.

Q. What about the final touchdown, the defense gave up that last one at the end?

COACH LONG: The wide receiver outrun J.J. Whittaker for the ball.

Q. Were you surprised at how much they ended up throwing the ball this game?

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COACH LONG: No, because I thought we had a good plan for their inside running game. Now, we didn't play the option very well. The scheme that we ran should have played the option much better than it did. But we set ourselves up for play action pass, and the long ones that they threw except for the last one were play action pass. The last one we were playing normal defense we played all last week. Of course we played a lot better last week than we did the end of the game this week.

Q. Derek Largent limped off the field in pain?

COACH LONG: I haven't heard yet. I haven't heard.

Q. All is said and done. A win...you bounced back after last week. You gotta feel good about that.

COACH LONG: I feel very good that we won. I was concerned about the intensity and energy of our team and I don't think it was there. It wasn't there. It wasn't there as it should have been. I thought the offense played extremely well so they must have had it, but the defense didn't have the intensity level it had the week before. It didn't have the energy it had the week before.

Now, you can make all kinds of excuses because we lost last week and they put in such a good effort and everybody's telling them how they put in such a good effort and all that, but that's baloney. Good football teams get their butts ready to play every single week. Sometimes they don't play real well, but they at least play with energy and enthusiasm and intensity. And our defense did not.

Q. Was this sort of a must-win game for you in terms of getting over the loss last week and Bowl eligibility?

COACH LONG: There's no such thing as a must-win football game. It's football. In the reality of the world football is not important, it's not as important as that, where it's must win or you die.

Q. In terms of Bowl hopes though is this one you kind of have to win?

COACH LONG: No, I told the team that to make sure we were in a Bowl game we had to win four out of the last five. We would be eligible if we

won three out of the last five. So that meant every one of those games was important. Not just one, not one game was more important than any other game. We had to win three out of the five to make sure we were Bowl eligible and we had to win four out of the five to make sure we got into a Bowl game.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

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An Interview With:

**ADAM MUEMA
QUINN KAEHLER
EZELL RUFFIN**

Q. On the game:

EZELL RUFFIN: Yeah, you know we thought about the momentum and everybody's expecting everybody to make plays and when everybody's making plays, it just motivates people to play better.

Q. Is that a scripted first play, the first play?

EZELL RUFFIN: Yeah, that's the play coach decided to go with.

Q. Seemed like the offense was involved. In the second half you guys ran the ball a lot more. What was it like for you? You started the year a little bit slow, the last game, do you feel comfortable now?

ADAM MUEMA: Yes, I'm really comfortable. It was hard getting through these injuries. But my team worked with me and I got through them.

Q. What did you think about your performance?

QUINN KAEHLER: We did some good things on offense. I missed some throws and reads. I missed the throw to Lockett. I thought the offense was successful in throwing and running, and it really helps when the line blocks the way they do and Adam runs the way he does and a lot more guys are open when that's happening.

Q. How do you think the offense line performed?

QUINN KAEHLER: The offensive line did a great job tonight. Specifically, I don't know, we'll have to watch film to determine that. But the offensive line obviously played great and it was a good game for the offense.

Q. How much did it help you the way you were seeing, when you guys were running play action, how much did it help?

QUINN KAEHLER: It helped a lot. More guys started coming to the box and the corners were kind of on islands one-on-one with our receivers, and we have some really good wide receivers, and they were open for me.

Q. Adam, talk about the bounceback after losing a tough game last week, people were wondering how you guys were going to come out and handle this. Can you talk about that?

ADAM MUEMA: I think losses come all the time; you've got to be able to bounce back. And we're looking for a bowl game, 13th game, hopefully win that. But you just have to get over it and keep playing strong.

Q. Talk about the play you got in the game, looked like you were stopped from behind?

ADAM MUEMA: I guess I didn't trust my speed like that being injured the whole week. But I'll get used to it, get my confidence back up and keep on practicing, hopefully it will work out.

Q. You were hurt the first few games. When did you feel like you were comfortable and like was there a game you kind of put it all back?

ADAM MUEMA: Probably the last game. I was just more excited of playing a big team.

Q. Do you feel like you and Kaehler are clicking?

EZELL RUFFIN: Yeah, we practice. And we do what we have to do. He trusts me to make plays and I trust him. So things really are starting to click between the two of us.

Q. Can you take us through that first play of the game, what you saw?

QUINN KAEHLER: The safeties were really tight. I'm not sure what it is, but we've come out almost every game I've started and run the ball. So it was nice -- we had the play action and the safeties really came up and then Ezell was pretty much one-on-one with the corner and made a really good move and he was open.

Q. Were you excited when that opening play was called?

QUINN KAEHLER: That's exactly how you hope it turns out. And it's really cool and it was fun to start the game that way.

Q. Were you excited with the prospect of throwing deep on the first play?

QUINN KAEHLER: I'm excited whatever helps the team move down the field, whether it's short throws, long throws or running the ball. I don't really mind as long as we're moving the ball and being effective.

Q. Ezell, what was going through your head when you realized it was wide open, the play of the game, what was going through your head?

EZELL RUFFIN: Catch the ball. Make sure you catch the ball. Everyone's counting on you to make the catch. That's about it. It was a great pass. The line did a great job holding up.

Q. Was this game a must-win? Did you think about that?

EZELL RUFFIN: Yeah, we did. To get a bowl, we know we gotta win the rest of our games. And we are just taking it one game at a time, that's how we're going about it.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

New Mexico head coach Bob Davie

Opening statement:

"I'm going to do everything I know to do in the short term to try to get us to play defense and make some stops. The effort, the toughness and the offense is there, the kicking game is there, but what can we do in the short term to give ourselves a chance to make some stops and win a game. It's that simple. I think we all see the challenge with that, but it's all I care about. I don't care about recruiting right now. I'm not worried about building the next step right now. All I'm worried about is how we give our defense every ounce of what we have so we can get some stops and win a game. I don't care about long term, I'm worried about right now."

On his team's defensive execution:

"There was a period of time late in the first quarter and early in the second where we actually played some defense and made some plays, but yet when it's crunch time and the other team's offense picks it up a notch, we can't stop them. And that's what it came down to tonight."

On his team's offensive execution:

"We made some plays throwing the ball and left a couple others out there. A year ago, I'm not sure we were capable of doing that. There's plenty of positives. It's another Mountain West game that we're about a touchdown away from winning. That's been the theme since I've been here. It's just what can we do to play defense? With a team that we can match up with physically, we can do some good things (on offense)."

His thoughts on San Diego State this season:

"They should have beat Oregon State and in my opinion, they should have beat Fresno State too. But then they've had some close (wins) too. Air Force may be saying they should have beat (SDSU) at home. New Mexico State had them on the ropes a little bit and Nevada was a close game. They're a team like a lot of us. They're competitive and they're a little bit ahead of us right now, but hopefully we're closing the gap a little bit."

Senior linebacker Dallas Bollema

On how frustrating it was to come so close to a win again:

"Once again it came down to a big play at the end. We made a few mistakes and allowed a few big plays. It's something we have to work on and get better at."

On how frustrating it was that every time they got close, SDSU answered:

"Our offense kept fighting and kept us in the game. The defense just has to show up a little better and eliminate the big plays. We just have to play four quarters of good football. We got a couple three-and-outs (in the first half) and the defense was feeling more confident. We were playing the way we're capable of playing. We just have to eliminate the errors in the second half."

On stopping San Diego State's balanced offense:

"They're a pro-style (offensive) team and they're a hard-nosed team. We knew what to expect. (Adam) Muema is a quick, shifty running back and they're a good power offense. But with that being said, we have to have all 11 guys in there to stop the ball."