



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State-UC Davis Postgame Quotes September 2, 2017

SDSU head coach Rocky Long

On the weather:

"It was hot on the field. I want you to know that it was hot. We're a little soft; we're not used to that around here. It was like that all week though, but maybe it did us some good for next week's game. We got used to playing in the heat so maybe it did us some good for next week's game."

On the team's defense:

"I thought the defense played really good for three quarters until we put the third string in. But we're so young. This is the youngest defense we've had since I've been here, by far. Because if you take the starters out of there, you see what you get. Now, we have a couple veterans at back up that we would move around if we had to. If we lost one to an injury or something we would move them around positions to try to keep veterans in there. But if we lose a couple of those veteran guys, the guys you saw playing in the fourth quarter? Those are the guys playing. That's hard on my mentality to keep them in there, but when you know the game is won, you got to keep them in there. You have to develop them. For the future, for the future of the program, you have to develop them. And maybe for the future down the road here as the season goes along if one or two of the starters get hurt. I had no idea they'd play that bad. They were horrible."

On the play of running backs Rashad Penny and Juwan Washington:

"I was happy for the offensive line. We know those two guys can run with the ball. But they don't get to run with the ball unless the big boys upfront do a pretty good job and I thought the offensive line got better as the game went along. And I'm sure when they saw us substituting all the other positions they thought we should substitute for them, too, because they'd done such a good job. We don't run the program like that. The offensive linemen needed as many reps as they can get. Because guess what? They're going to have to block people better than they blocked tonight, so we kept them in there. Plus, it's good for those big guys to maybe sweat a little bit and maybe lose a couple extra pounds."

On the team's passing game this year:

"It was pretty good tonight. Passing game is going to be better because we have a veteran quarterback and we have more skill at wide receiver, if the running game goes. We're not a drop back team, we're not a shot gun team, so to speak. We're a 3-to-4 wide receiver team, so to speak. But as long as we can efficiently run the ball, we're going to have some receivers that are open and I thought that (Christian) Chapman did a nice job throwing the ball to him. They made a couple of really nice catches, and then they can do something with it after they catch it, too. But our passing game is still going to depend on us being able to run the football. If you run the football, we got good enough skill out there now that most teams are going to be hurting."

On how he feels about his players advancing to the next level:

"I think (Donnel) Pumphrey making the team is great. Everybody questioned his size so him to go prove them wrong, that's fun for us and we're proud of him and we're glad that he did it. I heard that Alex Barrett made it, Daniel Brunskill made it, I heard that (Calvin) Munson made it, those are three non-drafted guys, so that means they have something special in them. I don't think they got it from us. I think they had it when they got here and from their parents and however they grew up but we take pride as a program that we had something to do with developing them to the level that they could make an NFL football team. For a coach, that's a proud moment. Daniel Brunskill was a walk-on, too, by the way. He was a walk-on. Munson had one scholarship offer, I think Alex Barrett had one scholarship offer. Coaching staff did a nice job of evaluating players. Those kids had a burning desire inside of them."

SDSU junior quarterback Christian Chapman**On his performance today:**

"For the first game, I thought I did alright. There were a few throws, I wish I had back, but as a whole offense I think we did okay. We had some assignment errors, but I think that's not unusual for a first game. (It's) Never going to be perfect, but yeah we looked good. (We're) Going in the right direction."

On his first-quarter struggles:

"Early on I was getting completions, but it was a lot of zip on the ball. Just kind of putting it there, aiming. Then as I got comfortable, I just kind of put it on there, had the arm strength, was throwing it, and we were throwing the ball nice tonight. I think we threw over 200 yards, which was good with our running game. So it was good."

On Kahale Warring:

"He has all the qualities to be a great tight end. I think he kind of resembles Gavin Escobar when he was here. He has the athletic ability. He can run down field just as fast as any DB as we saw in camp. That's why we gave him the opportunity to make some plays and you saw what he can do."

SDSU sophomore tight end Kahale Warring**On his performance:**

"I thought it was awesome. I'm just happy to be out there. I haven't traveled since South Alabama unfortunately due to the injury. But I was just out there having fun and playing ball. It doesn't get much better than that."

On the comparison to Gavin Escobar:

"Ever since I've come into this program that's who I've looked up to, Gavin Escobar. I've watched all of his YouTube (clips), everything I can look up on Gavin. He went in the second round of the NFL Draft and he's a great figure to look up to."

SDSU sophomore cornerback Ron Smith**On the game:**

"(I'm) Happy that we got the win tonight. I'm happy to see all of our young guys getting a chance to step on the field and make the plays necessary for us to get that win. So being the young guy last year and still being the young guy really, I know the pressure that is really on you, to make plays and make sure the team isn't going in a negative direction. So I'm happy everybody stepped up and we still have a long way to go, but everyone's really hyped up about it and ready to get better so we have a big

task ahead of us.”

On the team’s interceptions:

“I think a lot of coaching is put into that and in practice we harp on ways to win the turnover margin. So I think for us as a defense, if we’re hungry enough to see the ball in the air to tell each other to go get it, to make sure we put the offense in a better position and help our offense get the ball back run out some clock, and for us we get excited to make plays like that, and last year leading the nation in interceptions, it kind of just held on to us. I know people talked about how we are going to do this year when it comes to interceptions, so we just wanted to maintain that and keep on with the momentum.”

SDSU senior running back Rashaad Penny

On the offensive line’s performance:

“I think they did awesome. They’re blocking their tails off for us and they made big holes for us to run through. They’re going to get better each week; they’re young and they’ve never seen 46,000 [fans] before and I’m sure it’s going to be a hard task for them next week. But we always try to keep telling ourselves is: how are we going to fight through adversity? And that’s something that’s big on us and we’re going to continue rolling.”

On if he wanted to rush for 200 yards:

“I’m fine with whatever, I’m a team guy and I’m happy to see all my other guys get in and just get the yards that they need and just having fun; that’s what it’s all about. I know this is my last year so the main focus is having fun and taking advantage of all the little chances I get.”

On that 61-yard run:

“It was a toss five. All the guys in the huddle called it out and were like, ‘let’s have a race to the endzone’ and I was like, ‘alright, I’m going to beat you guys’ and we ran that toss five and I saw the first vertical seam. That’s something that the running backs coach, Coach Horton, preaches is when you see the first vertical seam, you hit it and I honestly thought I was out of stride because I haven’t gotten tackled since last December so it was kind of something new and once I started feeling, I started rolling and once the offensive line started rolling the offense just kept going.”

On the first touchdown that he scored:

“It was amazing. The offensive line and offensive play caller they did all that for me.”

On the new guys contributing and recruiting classes continuing to get better:

“As they should. When you got great guys in front of you, as a running back I had DJ (Donnel Pumphrey) in front of me, I had Chase (Jasmin), a lot of good running backs. Chapman had two good quarterbacks in front of him and then Kahale (Warring), he’s still learning from David Wells. That’s just how it is in the program that has that much success and the guys are great in the program and I know this culture of Aztec football is going to keep growing because of the great coaching that we have, they just preach something different and we obviously like that and I hope high school players like it so I mean it’s fun to be around.”

UC Davis head coach Dan Hawkins

On what he took away from the game:

“When you play a team like this, your margin of error is very small. I was really proud of our guys’ effort. I thought they battled and never quit. That was redeemable. We knew they were a good running team. I don’t think we were able to tip the scales

enough to kind of get them out of there. They just pounded us. We did a great job and stayed very patient until they wore us down. We had a few opportunities, but didn't capitalize. We have things we have to learn from. When you play a team of this caliber, your margin of error is just going to be small. Attitude was great. Sparkle in the eye was great. Their togetherness was great. Their work ethic was great. All of that was awesome and we can build on that. We have the chance to be a good football team. We just have to hang together."

Thoughts on QB Jake Dunniway's performance:

"He was alright. He's going to be the first one to tell you, we give a high standard at UC Davis for quarterbacks as you know. His first time under center he made some nice plays. Made some nice reads. Sometimes again not every kid wants to play Pop Warner quarterback, but sometimes it's a protection issue or route issue that's not necessarily him, but falls on him. I thought he did alright. He showed some good things. He's going to be a good player for us. We just have to keep getting reps for him."

On last couple drives in final quarter:

"It seems sometimes overly philosophical to people, but one of our goals is to start fast and finish strong. That's life, you want to finish strong. Forget about the score. You always play hard when you're hit and you never give up when your behind. That's what we want. That's when I pulled them together and said let's forget about what the score is. Let's finish. We got 15 minutes of football, let's play. They did a nice job."

On what he talked to Rocky Long about after the game:

"I've known Rocky for a long time. He's a good guy. One of the fun things when you've been in this profession for a long time is you just kind of get down to the basics of football and life and what it's all about. I told him I really appreciate him and have a lot of respect for him on how he runs his football team. He's a really good guy. He does a very nice job. They're a fundamentally sound football team. They run the ball. They're sound on special teams. They don't make big errors that cost you problems on defense. I say it's fun to go against him, but sometimes it's excruciating because he does a good job."