



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS
619-594-5547 | GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | @AZTECSPR

NEWS RELEASE

San Diego State Football Press Conference
Nov. 22, 2011 -- Fowler Athletic Center

Head Coach Rocky Long

Opening statement:

"After watching the film of our last game (vs. Boise State) I was encouraged because I thought that after the first three turnovers and the first three touchdowns they scored from the 24-yard line in, I thought that we played hard. We obviously made some mistakes but played them pretty even after that. We are looking forward to the last two games of the year and hopefully one more after that."

On the health of defensive lineman Dontrell Onuoha:

"Dontrell must have gotten hit in the back. His lower back's sore, but they have done MRI's and X-rays and he is going to be fine. He looked pretty stiff walking around this morning but he is going to try and practice today and hopefully he'll be all right by Saturday."

On the team's focus for UNLV:

"I don't think there is any concern about us being focused for the game, but there is concern about playing UNLV. It's senior night and two years ago we were there on senior night in a similar situation. In fact, their coach had already been fired and they beat us. If you look at the scores and you look at their record, they are 0-6 on the road but they are 2-2 at home. Plus, they were 14-14 with Boise State at halftime. At home, they are a better football team than their record shows. There are all kinds of concerns."

On running back Adam Muema's play against Boise State:

"I knew Adam would do that. I have said from the beginning of the season that we had a couple of running backs that were pretty good, but that no one would know because we had Walter (Kazee) and Ronnie (Hillman). It's not a good thing that we got to see Adam play, but you can tell that Adam's got some talent, and there are some other freshmen backs there that have talent, too. I hope that they just get to watch most of the time, and Walter gets well and Ronnie stays, but that is one of our deepest positions."

On the health of running back Ronnie Hillman:

"He ran around a little bit on Sunday. I didn't see him yesterday. He's been cleared to practice. Obviously we'll be careful and watch how many reps he gets in practice. Once you get a high-ankle sprain, I don't think you're 100 percent the rest of the season. (Linebacker) Miles Burris got one two or three weeks into the season and he's been playing on it ever since. It gets to a point that you can play with it, but it never feels 100 percent. Hopefully we can get Ronnie as close to 100 percent as we can so he can play well."

On some challenges that UNLV brings to Saturday's game:

"The last couple weeks, in my opinion, they've decided to start practicing for next season. They've got three really good running backs. They're starting to pound the ball; they rushed for almost 300 yards against Air Force. They're pounding the ball inside and using play-action passes to get big plays. They're developing their teams, they're developing their toughness. It's a little bit like wishbone teams, that way they keep the ball away from you. If you look at the statistics, they're second in the league in time of possession. The more times you

have the ball, the more chances you have to score. Plus that also keeps the other team off the field. They've done a great job on turnover ratio; they've only turned the ball over 15 times. I look for a tight, close game, which is not what anyone wants to see."

On the team coming out flat, but playing a much better second half:

"It seems like we talk about this every week. We've tried several different things that haven't worked. I honestly believe that we have yet to mature on quote 'big games.' I think we're still treating them like big games. We emotionally go into the game excited (and), instead of going into the game to play ball, we go into the game to run around and go crazy. After a while we settle in a play well. I think maybe we are a little too emotional before the game. We're not treating every game the same, we're not preparing the same way. We are at practice, but in (the player's) minds they haven't clicked over to that mentality yet. Someday we will.

"We say something about that every single day. Not just the day before the Boise State game, not just the day before the Michigan game, we say it every day. If you have children, you know that they believe what they want to believe. Sooner or later, we'll convince them and then we'll be on our way."

SDSU quarterback Ryan Lindley

On his hand:

"It's great, (athletic trainer) Mark (Haines) is doing a good job. It's mainly just swelling and getting it out. Everything's good, I'm just working on getting mobility back and I'll be fine.

"They just rested me on Sunday. We don't do a lot of throwing anyway and (Monday) was an off day. I still gripped the ball; I held it and walked around practice on Sunday. I'll be good to go. I gripped it in the training room, too, so I'll be good."

On wearing anything different on his hand for the game on Saturday:

"I'd rather not and I hope not, but we will see what we have to do. I don't think I'll have to do anything like that."

On UNLV's defense:

"You can see that they have some talent and they go out there and they hit. They're a tough team and they have a tough defense. It's really going to come down to us executing the game plan. That's what it is every week, we can't really change much here or there whether a team's record is good or bad. They're all Division I football players and they all have scholarships for a reason. They're talented individuals and they're going to go out there and give it their all. It's their senior night so we just have to be ready to put our best foot forward, too."

San Diego State linebacker Miles Burris

On taking UNLV lightly after a loss to No. 10 Boise State:

"There's no excuse to not be ready for this game because you watch them on film and they have a whole bunch of athletes; just as many as we do. They're really talented on both sides of the ball and in special teams. When they put it together they're really something special so we have to be very ready for this game."

On UNLV's offense:

"I think from the defensive perspective, offensively they've got a lot of threats, a lot of athletes and a lot of play-makers. Their offensive line does a pretty good job and they're big. When they make a seam they've got athletes that can run and do big things with the ball. So we need to be as prepared as possible and mentally ready as possible for this game."

On the team coming out flat, but playing a much better second half:

"Coach (Rocky) Long is preaching to us every day that we have to treat every game the same and treat every practice the same. Everything we're doing has to be 100 percent and nothing less. It doesn't matter if it's Boise State or if it's a team that doesn't have that great of a record. It doesn't matter who it is because it's all about us. It's all about how we train, how we prepare and being mentally and physically ready for every game.

“Once we get settled down and get a feel for the game, we start playing better. That’s unacceptable, it shouldn’t be that way. Whether it’s in practice or it’s mentally or whatever it is, everybody just has to do whatever they have to do to get themselves mentally ready to start that way from the beginning. Not just play on emotions, but focused and do their jobs from snap to whistle on every play.”

San Diego State cornerback Larry Parker

On what he learned playing against No. 10 Boise State:

“Just staying focused every play. They ran a lot of plays that got open. I feel like everybody should be on the same page at all times and stay focused. I think there were a couple of plays that we let up and didn’t focus all the way through and they capitalized on us.”

On the team coming out flat, but playing a much better second half:

“I feel like we start the game off, not slow, but we just might not be as focused. I think guys are too excited and don’t know how to hold that in, focus that towards the game. I think we get more comfortable in the second half and figure out what the team does well and what they don’t do well. I think we can focus in practice more and figure out how to fix it in the first half.”

-SDSU-