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NEWS RELEASE

San Diego State Football Press Conference
Sept. 27, 2011 – Fowler Athletic Center

Head Coach Rocky Long

Opening Statement:

"I'd like to start with saying that we're going to miss a really good coach and a really good guy in Freddy Bleil. A lot of you know him because he coached here for a long time. But he was a great guy and a good coach and we're going to miss him. Other than that, we didn't play very well last week and we're moving on and getting ready for probably a better football team. TCU is probably a better football team than Michigan."

On the play of the defense:

"(Our) defense is not anywhere close to where we want it to be. We're giving up too many big plays. On the flip side of that, we are causing turnovers and the style of defense we play, we do give up some big plays but we have been giving up too many of them. It's supposed to balance out. For every big play you give up, you're supposed to make a big play on defense and I'm not sure it's balancing out yet."

On the difference between practicing in a bye week and getting ready for a game:

"Well, the way we had it planned, it was perfect timing for the bye because we thought we were going to win. But since we did not win, the bye week is okay. We can get some guys healed up and freshened up and all that but most competitors would just assume get out there and play again as soon as possible after you lose a game. But we have no control over that, just like we don't have any control over playing Air Force five days after we play TCU."

On the play of the offense:

"I think on offense, up until the last game, I thought the offense was more consistent than the defense. I thought the defense was really inconsistent, hot and cold as the game went along. I thought the offense was a little more consistent. In the last game the offense really had a poor second half. So, we're not happy with that either, but we'll continue to play and hopefully get better."

On the decision not to allow the players to speak with the media after Saturday's game:

"Well, several things. I thought the locker room was emotional. I don't think they were devastated. I've been hearing that I said they were devastated. I don't think I said that. If I said that, I made a mistake. But there were a lot of emotions running in the locker room from being disappointed to being upset. It's hard enough to me, I was pretty emotional, too. It's hard enough for me and I'm 61 years old. It's hard enough for me to be full of emotion and be able to answer questions professionally and without the emotion creeping in so I didn't want our players to have to go there and try to do that and the chance that they might say something they regretted.

"I was more protecting them from saying something they might regret later on. That could be in the season or it could be a long time after that.

"It has nothing to do with winning and losing. It had to do with the atmosphere in the locker room. There's a chance, and I checked because someone asked me this. I checked with the guys that have played for me and the guys that have coached for me and they said that it's happened before. It wasn't the first time ever. In fact, there was one time they remembered after we won a big game, I didn't let the players talk to the press. We beat BYU at BYU and I didn't let them talk to the press."

On the players getting over the loss at Michigan:

"I don't know. You can ask them. That's the biggest point now is to move on. I think that game took a life of its own. It was pushed way out of proportion and so the best thing to do is move on and get ready for the next one."

On if you do anything different for Ryan Lindley:

"You don't do anything special with him. I mean, he knows it more than we do and he probably feels worse than we do about his performance. So, there's no doubt in my mind that he'll work and work to improve and get better and not let it happen again."

On some things to take from loss at Michigan going forward:

"We didn't perform on that kind of stage very well and hopefully the experience of being there (helped). I don't know if it's going to happen this year but it could. It could happen where we could play a game that has the same meaning to it with almost as big a crowd. There's some people on our schedule that are really good football teams and if we're playing well, there could be a big stage again and hopefully the experience being on that kind of stage will prepare them so next time we don't play poorly. (Hopefully) our preparation is good and the way we perform has nothing to do with the stadium or the team we're playing."

Quarterback Ryan Lindley**On getting over the loss at Michigan:**

"You've got to move on. You're on to the next game and we all took what we could from film on Sunday. I think we all know what we need to improve on from top to bottom and we're going to go out and put it into practice. I think it's a good time for a bye week to let some guys heal up and kind of, like I said, iron out those things we need to work on."

On the difference between practicing in a bye week and getting ready for a game:

"I don't think you ever want to go into a bye week with a loss. But, I think timing wise, it's a good time to regroup, get ready for conference play and really just kind of hone in. I guess to refine our skills and get ready to go."

On the intimidation factor playing at Michigan:

"We believe it's about us. We play. What it comes down to is playing football. For us, we kind of lost sight of that and we didn't play the way we could. I don't think that really had anything to do with it."

On taking some heat for his play at Michigan:

"For me, that was one that was tough because like J.J. said earlier, the opportunity we had to go in there and do something great. Really, just a bad time to have a bad game and it's something but it's the same thing just like they said they have stuff they need to work on. I truly believe that everything happens for a reason. I think it's a game to kind of open our eyes from top to bottom. Especially for me, it's a lot of stuff, just kind of technique and corrections and I think we'll be good to go in two weeks."

On seeing criticism (in the media) and staying away from it:

"No, I think maybe my freshmen year. My freshmen year is probably the last time I looked at the paper. I've learned, since then, to stay away from that. Whatever you guys say, good or bad, everybody but me is looking at it."

On coach Rocky Long not letting the players talk to the media after the game:

"Yeah, we're always going to follow coach, it's his decision. I think for us, kind of like J.J. said, that was a tough loss. Guys were upset, guys were emotional. We completely understand where coach was coming from making his decision. We were all pretty upset about it and we didn't want anyone to slip up and say something stupid. I'm completely behind it. We were asked and he told us we needed to, we would have done it. We're always going to follow coach and do what he says."

On playing on Michigan's national stage:

"Yeah, I think that's something. I mean, everything is a learning experience and I think, next year or two years down the road, the guys that are sophomores and freshmen, are going to remember that and it's going to be something I think that's going to motivate them. They're going to know how to play. They're going to know how to handle it. It's just about building an Aztec legacy, a dynasty. You just want to make people better than they were before you came and I think we're doing that. We're on the right path."

Cornerback Larry Parker

On the team's improving defense:

"We had too many technical errors on the field and a lot of guys not running to the ball as fast as we could have or getting to the ball as fast as we could have, making the right reads. We just messed up coverage every now and then but we can always fix that in practice. We can prepare for another team, be better than we did for Michigan. That game is over so we're not looking at that going on to the next game and hopefully with TCU, we can prepare the right way and come out with a victory that week."

On Ryan Lindley as a leader:

"I feel like he doesn't ever take a step back. He just keeps moving forward and he keeps motivating the team; he makes sure everyone is on the same page. No one ever steps back and looks back at the past. He's been through harder times than I have because he's been here longer than I have. He's seen the team go through a lot of losses but he makes sure everyone stays on their game, gets better every day and makes sure everyone brings energy. He's the greatest leader on the team so it's great to have Ryan on the team."

On if his three interceptions in the past couple games was anticipation or just coincidence:

"It just happens at practice. We practice every day against our receivers and they're pretty good. Our coach tells us to do the same technique every play, make sure you do everything right every time. So, just doing the technique that I've learned and practice and make sure I do everything right every play, I just end up in the right spot at the right time and it just happens. Just keep doing the right things at the right time and you'll make some plays."

Defensive Lineman J.J. Autele

On the mood in the locker room:

"Yeah, everyone was really sad that we lost a game. No matter who was coaching or who was on the side, we had a chance to becoming 4-0 and prove that we could beat a Big Ten team but we didn't come to play."

On seeing former coach Brady Hoke:

"It was good seeing him. That was the first time I've seen him since the bowl game and we just said it was good to see each other and I embraced him and said I love him and miss him and good luck this year."

On the team's improving defense:

"I agree with Larry. A lot of it was technique errors and I think this is a good week. We have to really just get back to basic football and really hone in on the technique that I feel a little bit we've strayed away from in preparing for teams. But now, we have a chance to really get back to the basics."

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