



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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2013 Famous Idaho Potato Bowl
San Diego State 49, Buffalo 24
December 21, 2013

San Diego State Postgame Quotes

Head Coach Rocky Long

Opening Statement

"First of all, I would like to apologize to Buffalo on the way the game ended. That's not a class act. The young man we put in was a fifth-year senior. We put him in the game so he could take a snap in a bowl game and he made that play. I don't think that's funny because I don't think that's right. And I would like to personally apologize to Buffalo and Coach Quinn because of that play. Now on the bright side, I thought that was the best game we've played all year. I thought that we moved the ball well, caused some turnovers. Going into the game I thought the turnover battle would decide who won and that's exactly what happened. We just happened to be on the right side of that battle. I thought that's the best we've played all year. We played well on offense and we played well on defense. We made big plays."

On playing well in a bowl game

"I said earlier, two weeks ago, that winning or losing a bowl game does not make a program. Getting to a bowl game makes a program and getting to a bowl game for four straight years makes a program. And at the time I was upset because people were acting like that was not a big deal. And I'm sure if we wouldn't have won today they would have made a big deal. But guess what, we won. And we won convincingly and we've won four straight bowl games. One out of 29 teams in the country and one out of six non-BCS teams in the country. That's pretty dang good if you ask me."

On the players

"These guys right up here and their teammates, (the)coaches could give a team a bad game plan and they don't have a chance. But if you give them a good game plan which we try to do each week and we don't always succeed in that. But when we give them a good game plan, there's not one coach that makes a tackle and there is not one coach who carries the ball. There's not one coach who blocks. Players execute and our players played extremely well. I think they were upset because of the way they finished the season at UNLV and I think they're upset about the lack of respect given to them from the home media."

On Buffalo's turnovers

"I thought that shifted the momentum right there. And it's always nice when you're right. At the press conference yesterday I said that the turnovers would make the difference in the game. And they had a great turnover ratio so they had the odds that they were going to do it. But we were lucky and we did it."

On junior running back Adam Muema

"Adam is a great running back and when you give him some room to maneuver, he can break tackles and he can make people miss. But offensive linemen and our tight ends did some great blocking, and we have the best tailback in the country. That gave him a chance to get in the open and he can make people miss and break tackles."

On the touchdown run

"I work mostly with the defense and we still do. In practice we have the one offense with the one defense and the two offense against the two defense. I had no idea he could make someone miss because he couldn't make any of our guys miss. But it was sure nice to see it happen at the time and I think it sparked the sideline, too."

On senior linebacker Scott Graves

"We pride ourselves on not making any notice of injuries that hurt our football team. Scott Graves the year before was our special teams player and he hadn't played all year. He had two blocked punts tonight. You see what we missed all year."

On senior quarterback Jake Bernards

"We talked to him on the sideline and expressed that wasn't the right thing to do. Certainly we did. Just like the guys who got personal fouls, we talked to them on the sideline, too."

On the personal fouls

"I think both teams were very aggressive towards each other and getting after one another verbally and physically. And the officials decided to call that a little closer than they normally do and that happens in every game. The officials decided to call it a little bit closer than normal."

On moving forward in the Mountain West Conference

"I think we have responsibility to the league. Everyone that goes to the bowl game from the league has responsibility because I think we play really good football in our league. And our league doesn't get the kind of attention, maybe because of population, but not the attention that the other teams do. So any chance you get to represent your league always helps if you win the game. I don't think it was our primary motivation. Our primary motivation is we wanted to win and prove that we belong."

On playing Boise State on the road next year

"I don't want to comment on that; that's a year away. It's hard enough to play them when we have to play them. This past year's games are a world away. I think winning a bowl game away from home is an accomplishment. But even the bowl game at home is different than the regular season. Bowl games are completely different atmosphere. You want your players to have a good time and enjoy the experience. It's more of a reward than a must win."

On the program

"We're increasing the schedule by the people we're playing as we did last year with Ohio State and Oregon State. And next year we have North Carolina and Oregon State. So we are making our preseason schedule harder to see where we are at the time. And obviously our number one goal is to win the conference championship which we did last year."

Senior defensive back Nat Berhe

On the defense

"Well we kind of got after them. Coach Long gave us some great blitzes and we got the quarterback on the ground and had a crucial turnover. Like coach said, coaches coach and players play."

On the three and outs

"I think the guys decided that tonight we were going to play up to our abilities and it showed. It's kind of sad that we didn't play like that all year but at the same time I'm glad it happened today."

On the turnovers

"Going against the defense and seeing the numbers on paper, you kind of have to get a little jealous and we wanted to play better than them."

Senior offensive lineman Bryce Quigley

On the game plan against Buffalo linebacker Khalil Mack

"The coaches made a great game plan for the defense. We prepared two weeks for it. We definitely knew who he was and we made the game plan around him. He's a great player though and I think the offense as a unit came together today. Quinn (Kaehler) did a great job. Adam Muema had a heck of a game, and our receivers played great, too."

Senior wide receiver Colin Lockett

On playing in Boise

"It's a great atmosphere. I don't know if it's the turf or the stadium. We're just excited to go out there and play. It was a different opponent this time around but we were excited to get out there. We had a long time off and had a bad taste in our mouth. We wanted to go out there and actually prove to everyone that our last game wasn't the team we are. It was a great opportunity and we took advantage on it."

On the penalty from his kickoff return

"I really don't know. The whole year we're really a block away from breaking the long one. We buckled down and got excited and everyone got their blocks. Unfortunately one guy was a little too aggressive. But everyone was out there trying to make the effort. They wanted to help the momentum of our team. I love our kickoff return team for that; they put their bodies out there for me. And I'm willing to do whatever it takes to get to the end zone behind their blocking. It's been awhile since we've played like that. I'm glad that it came this time around. We ended it off right and we seniors really appreciate all the younger guys for coming through in the end. It just shows the capabilities that we have."

Buffalo Postgame Quotes

Head Coach Jeff Quinn

Opening Statement

"This was a very disappointing loss today. Congratulations to San Diego State, to their staff and their players. They played well and we obviously didn't late in the second quarter. We didn't take care of the ball and that obviously put them in a better position to put points on the board. Right when we came out in the second half that was the turn of the game. You can't turn the ball over and expect to be a good football team. I'm proud of our senior class and what they represented. I think the Famous Idaho Potato Bowl and their staff put on a fine bowl and the whole city of Boise did an excellent job in the way they treated us and I appreciate that very much."

"We need to go back and analyze what transpired on that field today. Every moment is a learning moment and they are going to learn from this experience. It's important that we build on it. Getting to this point, from the invitation to the recognition of the work they have done. But we need to know how to get to this point and then how to finish and we need to learn how to build from this experience. We took our entire football team here so they're going to look back on it and develop more. We don't want to walk off the field again feeling the way we do now. We need to motivate them in the offseason to continue to take full advantage of their opportunities. That's what the bowl game system is all about. Play the regular season games and get to the point for a Mid-American Conference championship for us and then get here and obviously finish. Finish the way the opposing team did today. I think those kids know what it takes to complete the mission."

On whether or not his team came out flat

"I wouldn't say we came out flat. You look at some of the plays that were made early on; they're a good football team. They have talented players and they are well coached. We knew that and we came in with the right mindset. Our players were ready and prepared and were excited to get out on the field. I've always said you have to take care of the ball. And we couldn't in the second half. Right then and there it turned into a three score difference. It got away from us a little bit and we fought back. I love the way this team went back and kept competing. They have a lot of heart and a lot of fight and determination. They are a great bunch and that's what I've seen all year."

On SDSU's offense and Bulls linebacker Khalil Mack

"I wouldn't say they neutralized him. They ran to him and Khalil made some great plays and that's what he does. They certainly have some talented tailbacks and their quarterback managed their offense quite well. They made some key plays in some critical moments. We came up with some big fourth down blocks too. That really kept us hanging in there in the game. You know if Khalil is on the field you have to be aware of him and I think Khalil stepped up his game as he's done his whole career."

On SDSU running back Adam Muema

"He's fast and quick. You guys saw and I did too, he's a good balance. He keeps his feet moving and has a good balance. He has some good players around him and he's well coached. That makes him a good player."

On his senior class

"They meant everything to me and this coaching staff and these players. They were the ones four years ago who stood in the back and said hey we want to get to this point and let's get our program to where we are today. We need that to help us build and not let this be the last time they stay connected. We want them to stay connected and stay involved. That's a big part of what we take out of our senior class. We wouldn't be here today without their passion and leadership and intensity to football and this great university that they represent."

Junior defensive back Adam Redden**On SDSU running back Adam Muema**

"Every play counts from start to finish. Their running backs are good and so are we. It comes down to effort and keys in assignment. We need to go back to the drawing board."

Sophomore quarterback Joe Licata**On the interception**

"I threw the ball a little high and I shouldn't have. It's on me. I missed some folks that I normally hit. That's on me. They had a great game plan coming in and so did we. I missed a lot of opportunities that we usually hit. We made a lot of mistakes and we can't do that and expect to win. We made some adjustments but we couldn't get it done today."