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San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes

August 26, 2024

San Diego, Calif.

Head Coach Sean Lewis

Opening Statement:

Happy game week, happy game week. We're excited to get the start of the season rolling here; obviously a lot of anticipation and a lot of work has gone into this. We're excited for Saturday and getting the opportunity to coach our guys, lead our guys, see our community, and see everyone show up so we can pack Snapdragon Stadium and have an unbelievable home atmosphere for a dangerous opponent in Texas A&M-Commerce.

On his message to the team ahead of game one:

Control the controllables. There is a ton of variables to this with all the change that has happened here, all the change that's happened on their roster, and there's always some fun with week one when you have a lot of extra time on your hands to chase ghosts and do different things. So when the moment comes, we have to make sure we are controlling the controllables. What's our mindset? What's our focus? What's our attention to detail? What's the effort we're playing with and doing that consistently for four quarters; taking it one play at a time.

On how he's feeling going into game one:

I'm feeling good. Everything that we have done since getting here — creating buzz, doing the surfing and all the community activities has been a lot fun, and it's been great to get immersed in San Diego. But we are here to pour into the guys and we're here to maximize these 12 opportunities, these 12 games, that count the most. So to be in game week, to be present in this moment, and to go learn about our and see what we got. To step into that competitive arena with them, I'm really excited for that opportunity.

On what the fans can expect from the Aztec FAST offense on Saturday:

It should be a fun brand of football with those guys being accountable to each other, where we're smart in limiting the unforced errors and the foolish penalties, and when push comes to shove, we are a tough unit that finds a way to handle the adversity that we know is going to come because winning is hard but they find a way to overcome that and end up on the right side play after play after play.

On the scouting report of Texas A&M-Commerce:

They are dangerous. They went out and picked up some real weapons at the wide receiver position. They like to spread you out. They lean on the run game. They are not afraid to throw four verticals. Their quarterback is a dual-threat kid who two years ago was productive and dangerous. Defensively, they'll come off the bus and blitz you from anywhere and everywhere. And you have to know how challenging it is to win regardless of who the opponent is. And these guys have enough players that are really well coached. They are dangerous enough and will stress you in a lot of different ways so we have to handle what we can. Control the controllables and make sure we are doing our part to go earn this victory.

On special teams in week one and the factor it plays early on:

It's huge. We saw a lot of things in those week zero games that pop up in special teams and that's really the glue that holds the offense and defense together. You have guys that need to embrace their roles. They have an all-conference punter on their side who is a dynamic playmaker for them in a lot of ways. We have to do a great job of knowing each and every play, and all phases of this game are going to matter. (Special) teams have to do their roles so that's a competitive advantage for us. Coach Barton does a tremendous job with our team, and the whole staff is very involved in that process. Our kids have done a great job embracing what it takes to turn that into a competitive advantage, so we're excited to see the positive momentum and the positive impact that our kids are going to have in that phase of the game.

On what to expect from the Texas A&M defense:

To pressure us up. That's what they have shown. They're not afraid to challenge anyone on the edges, press man-to-man, play cover zero, to get an extra hat in the box. So, I expect them to do the same and bring a little more pressure on a true freshman quarterback starter and test those edges. That's been their MO and even though they have a new defensive play caller, they promoted within, and they've shown their willingness to be aggressive.

On the importance of the offensive and defensive lines:

It's going to be key. They love to run the football. They lean on that first and foremost, and then they work quite a few play action passes off that to stretch the field vertically. So we have to do a great job killing the run up front with the d-line and with the (defensive) backers is critically important so we can take that advantage away from them. And then to be able to establish what we want to do offensively, controlling and winning at the line of scrimmage. I know a lot is made about the skill guys, but the game is won in the trenches and we have to do a great job up front.

On building the brand to pack Snapdragon Stadium:

With all the things we've done since we've been here, and then putting a great product on the field on Saturday so that those that are there have an unbelievable experience through all the hard work that everyone in the athletic department has been doing. And that we do our part in between the white lines so that people who are there want to come back next week, and people who aren't there feel like they missed out on something. And we're looking forward to putting that product on the field so that's the spot to be every single home game in the fall. That you're going to be at Snapdragon Stadium, it's going to be a party that kicks off the whole athletic calendar for SDSU, and then that party rolls into Viejas Arena. But it all starts at Snapdragon Stadium, and we need the support, and we need to turn that beautiful stadium into one of the best home field advantages in all the Mountain West.