



## SAN DIEGO STATE COMMUNICATIONS

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### Postgame Football Quotes – San Diego State vs. Air Force

Nov. 30, 2024

Snapdragon Stadium | San Diego, Calif.

#### San Diego State Head Coach Sean Lewis

**Opening statement:** “I’m disappointed we couldn’t send the seniors out the right way. Proud of their efforts and everything that they’ve given to the program over this year that I’ve been with them. And for the guys who have been here for an extended period of time and all that they’ve given, and they’ll be Aztecs for life and extremely proud of their efforts, and wish that they had a joyous locker room with them to celebrate all their efforts. But we came up short, didn’t do enough in all three phases, and that starts with me as a leader. We’ll get that right, we’ll get that rectified and we’ll consistently be bringing championships here back home. There’s no doubt my mind about that.”

#### **On Senior Night:**

“This one was a little bit more sour than some of the great ones that I’ve had, and obviously because of the outcome. But it doesn’t diminish what those kids have done, their sacrifice and their commitment to the things that we’re asking them to do. And you just know, looking at them, from all the lessons that they’ve learned this year that they’re gonna take those lessons and apply them to who they’re becoming and the growth and the journey that they’re going to be on. And I know those guys are going to have a whole ton of success in all areas of their life, and I can’t wait to see who they become 10 years from now, 20 years from now, 30 years from now. And I told each and every single one of them that I’ll be here for them in any way that I can help so don’t hesitate to call.”

#### **On Danny O’Neil’s performance tonight and the outlook for the future:**

“He’s grown throughout the year. He’s made some really good decisions and made some really good growth. He’s really made some great progress. There’s lots of areas for him to continue to improve and to grow, and that’s every single individual that’s in our program. We pride ourselves on getting better week in and week out. Obviously, we didn’t do that near to the level that we needed to this year, but we’ll take the growth and the foundation that’s been laid in this year and build upon it, and we’ll be better because of it.”

#### **On the depth of playmakers having nine different players with a reception:**

“We want to have as many playmakers within our program at every single position group - whether that’s wide receivers, running backs or tight ends - to be able to utilize them and their skill sets in a lot of different ways. This is going to be a great opportunity for a spot to come play if you’re a playmaker. We’re going to find ways to get the ball in your hands and create a whole lot of space for you. So whether you’re a high school kid, a JUCO kid, or a transfer kid, there’s going to be great

opportunity here. We're going to compete. We're going to have competitive depth not only in that low skill position group, but in every single group."

### **San Diego State Running Back Marquez Cooper and Linebacker Kyle Moretti:**

#### **On Senior Night:**

**Cooper:** "SDSU does a great job hosting the seniors on senior night with the pregame antics and everything that they have done for us. I felt great walking out of the stadium. I felt honored for everything that I've done, and I'm grateful to finish my career here.

**Moretti:** "Most definitely like what Marquez said, SDSU has done a great job, coaches included. It was just special being out there with the guys. These guys took me in; took both of us in and they're just like family and it was just good to get one more game with the boys.

#### **Moretti on what makes Coach Lewis a great man:**

"He's just genuine. He's authentic. He wants the best for us. The whole staff does. So I just can't thank him enough."

#### **Cooper on his one-handed touchdown catch:**

"I can do it all [laughter] - I'm just playing. I've been telling the QBs, though, I'm gonna make a play. But I just try to make plays anytime the ball get around my hands. I try to make things happen. Danny did a great job just trusting me - even though the guy was all over me - to give me an opportunity to make a play. So to finish with a catch like that - and if you ask (Coach Matt Johnson), he would say I have no hands - so to show I got hands like that was awesome for my last game."

#### **Moretti on the difficulty playing against the triple option:**

"I've never played against it before, but Coach Schmidt, Coach Lewis and all the defensive staff put us in a great position. We play our tails off and I'm proud of the guys. It's definitely a hard offense to play against but I'm proud all of us left it all out there. The coaches put us in a great position, we just got to execute better."

### **Air Force Head Coach Troy Calhoun**

#### **On how the Air Force offense picked up first downs:**

"As good as they are on offense, it gives you a chance a little bit for whatever adjustments you need to make, defensively, by being able to have some sustained drives and then to conclude a good number of those drives with touchdowns."

#### **On the team pushing through adversity:**

"You look at our team as a whole. Our coaches did an absolutely amazing job. The growth, the change these guys made throughout the year, and the patience to keep teaching is a real credit to our players."

#### **On the fulfillment from this season:**

"There was a lot of fulfillment in this season to see the incredulous growth these guys made. You came into the season, and there weren't that many guys who even had 50 career snaps. We knew it was going to take a while, maybe years, honestly. And yet, we played pretty good football down the stretch, like tonight."

**Air Force Offensive Lineman Michael McAninch:**

"I could not have imagined the ups and downs for this season at all. It was a crazy turnaround for the season. We obviously had high expectations at the beginning; obviously, starting 1-7 is not where you want to be. I love the way we finished it strong this year with four wins in a row. We really worked hard for each one of them. The whole team worked hard. I love how we didn't give up. We wanted to get better as the season went on."

**Air Force Inside Linebacker Grant Uyl:**

"It's definitely cool to win four straight. It's something we talked about earlier this week. Not many teams will win four in a row in November, and being able to do that was obviously sweet. We just wish we would have taken care of business a little bit earlier in the season."

**-SDSU-**