



SAN DIEGO STATE COMMUNICATIONS

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San Diego State Football Press Conference August 25, 2025

Head Coach Sean Lewis

Opening Statement:

"Happy game week. Happy first day of school. It's been a tremendous camp, and it's awesome to be at this opportunity. For everyone else, it's Monday and the week is starting. For us, we just got off the field for our Wednesday, so obviously tomorrow is Thursday, and we're living in a little bit of a different reality here, but we're excited to get this thing rocking and rolling on Thursday. I'm really pleased with the way that the guys have approached the work, and I'm excited about the opportunity that lies ahead with Stony Brook coming in here from Long Island, a tremendous team and really well coached. Their staff did a heck of a job coming in last year, head man [Billy Cosh] earning the FCS Coach of the Year honors, flipping that thing from 0-10 to 8-4. Finishing top 25, they start the year in the top 25. They have a running back that is a preseason All-American candidate, they have three really good players along their front, their rush and their two backers. One kid from Carlsbad, actually, who's going to have a comb coming here that are all their defensive captains. They're a really dynamic group that know their identity, know it well and are true to who they are. You can tell that they play the game with enthusiasm. They play it the right way. So, I'm excited for our fan base, excited for our community, but most importantly, excited for our team and for our staff to go cut it loose on Thursday and to put forth a tremendous effort, to show all the hard work that we've done and go play and have some fun on Thursday night."

On facing an FCS opponent:

"I feel like the emphasis that we have put on our standards and who we are has kept us really focused on what we need to do. We've been talking about all this training and all this work, and everyone's really excited, and everyone's here today, because finally we get to go play a game. It's unlike any other sport where we get 12 days that count in this thing. Every single day that we've had since we've been back, up until this Thursday, has mattered. But there are only

12 days that count, so if you can't get excited about that, I mean I'm getting goosebumps about it right now and I don't even get to play. Regardless of who happens to be across from you, it happens to be Stony Brook and they're a great program, but it's about the Aztecs, and the Aztecs taking care of the Aztecs and doing things the right way to our standard each and every single play."

On the running back room:

"We're going to use them all. I know a lot has been made about how a majority of the carries were given to [Marquez Cooper] a year ago. There's a lot of trust that I had in that young man. There's a lot of trust that I have in the three young men that are in the building here right now. Lucky [Sutton] will get the start, but Byron Cardwell Jr. and Christian Washington will get touches. They're going to have an impactful role on the return game as well, so all of them will have an opportunity to have the ball in their hands and impact the game in that way. They'll also have a positive impact on the way that the game is played with things that they do without the ball in their hand, because they're unselfish individuals, and they embrace that as well. But Lucky will get the start, and we'll play it out from there as we go. I'm excited about what all three of them bring to the team."

On his expectations for the season:

"I'm confident in this team. I'm confident in the work that we've done. There's something special that's brewing in this building that I'm really excited to unleash on Thursday night. We've got to do that one step at a time, but we all know what the standards and the expectations are around here. It was one of the most exciting reasons why I took this job. So, we have a standard to uphold, and we've been working relentlessly to get the talent in the building to make sure that the talent and the mindset are right for us to be able to go do what we're capable of doing. So, hell yeah, we can make a bowl game."

Junior Defensive End Brady Nassar

On returning several defensive starters:

"I think it helps a lot with the connection. I think everyone knows where everyone is at all times. We trust each other, we rely on each other and we know we have each other's backs. On defense, that's such a key part, having every gap filled and every role handled. So, I think it's huge for us this year."

On the leadership of team captain DJ Herman:

"I mean I love DJ to death. He's one of those guys when you are on the field with DJ you just feel comfortable, you feel like he has your back at all times. He is one of the loudest communicators I have ever been around, just a strong voice

on the field. Every time we need some juice he's always there to provide it for us.

Senior Center Ross Ulugalu-Maseuli

On playing for Sean Lewis in his second season as head coach:

"I think that [last] year was just everybody getting to build a connection with Coach Lewis. Coach Lewis came in strong, and everybody was still trying to get used to building that connection with him and putting all their trust in him. This year, I feel like we have that great connection with Coach Lewis, and a lot of players are on board and willing to put in whatever they can for Coach Lewis, and Coach Lewis is willing to do the same for us."

On the expectations for this team:

"Everybody's more connected, everybody's been working their hearts out and you can feel the energy rising. It's going to be a lot more than three wins."

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