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San Diego State Football Press Conference

November 7, 2017

SDSU head coach Rocky Long

Opening Statement:

"It's an exciting week around here. With basketball starting up we all get into the spirit of watching the basketball teams play and hopefully they have great years. Our women's soccer team, it's unbelievable how well they did in the tournament. They won the tournament and now they are going to NCAAs. That's exciting stuff. It's really exciting they get to play a Pac-12 team (UCLA) because I don't know if you got this from (SDSU women's soccer head) coach (Mike) Friesen or not, I listened to his interview and he said the resource gap is growing, which it is tremendously growing, so they have some advantages we don't have but I didn't hear one word of him being afraid to play a Pac-12 team and I think that's a common thing in this athletic department. We're all pulling for each other, we like each other, we expect each other to win and the best part about it is we have less resources by a bunch but that doesn't mean we don't get excited to play them and we are not scared. And since we don't play this week, I'm going to predict that we win, we always beat bye so it's kind of a day that way too."

On the offensive line getting to recover:

"Well, I think the offensive line other than (senior offensive lineman) Antonio Rosales has been getting healthier over the last couple of weeks. They are not completely healthy but at this time of year nobody is completely healthy that has played in games. This week since we're only practicing three days, it will give the offensive line a chance to get even healthier than they are right now. They won't be completely healthy but we would love to get our senior back. He's the only senior we have in the offensive line and hopefully this week of not doing anything by next Monday and play his last couple games."

On if he uses this bye week as a mini camp for the younger kids:

"I do not other than we're going to practice today and tomorrow just like we normally do expect that we're training for the last two teams on our schedule, not just one. We're going to try to get some things in for both those teams that we're playing, we'll do that for a half of Thursday's practice and then the second half of Thursday's practice we're going to have a game between the scout teams. The scout team offense will play against the scout team defense, the GAs will be their coaches, our coaches will be the officials and usually it's a lot of fun to watch. There are a lot of mistakes being made out there but there are a lot of crashes going on out there. There are a lot of people running into each other which is really fun to be around and watch because that's why all of us like football in the first place."

On his first game as a head coach and what advice he can give SDSU men's basketball head coach Brian Dutcher:

"I don't have any advice. It will be interesting because I talked to a first time head coach before the game last week in San Jose

(Brent Brennan) and it's hard for me to remember that far back but it was interesting to talk to him because his view of things was completely different than my view of things. I think Coach Dutcher is a very experienced coach that has had a lot of the authority that head coaches have so I don't think it's a big deal to him, I think it's just a natural transition. He will have some moments though because a head coach never knows exactly what you're getting into before it happens. Even when you have been around a long time and you think you know what to expect, it is not even close to what I expected. So he will have some of those, he won't have as many as most because he has been around so long. The conversation with the San Jose coach, he said, 'you know, all those times I was complaining about what the head coach did and I'm doing the same thing.' It's funny when you have all these suggestions on how to change things until you get to be the guy and you actually find out there are things you cannot do because of the way the entire organization works. And then in the Cal State system, we're working with a very small budget compared to most people we are playing against and he was complaining about that. I said it's not getting better so you might as well get used to it, it's not getting better."

On Donnel Pumphrey and Rashaad Penny leading the nation in rushing in back-to-back seasons:

"Number one, it means that we have a chance to win. When you have good players it means you have a chance to win. Number two, it means that we are able to recruit good running backs around here and I think that that has to do with the system we run on offense. Our coaches do a great job of evaluating talent because we don't get the five-star recruits and all those things that most people think are guaranteed to be good players so our coaches do a very nice job of evaluating talent and we get guys in here that fit our system that end up being really good players. When you think about Pumphrey and Rashaad splitting time last year, that is probably as good as anybody has ever had. Hopefully next year, (sophomore running back) Juwan Washington and whichever one of those four young running backs becomes the backup will have the same thing again next year."

On if there is a drawback to the five-star recruits who may be entitled in some way:

"I don't know if I have ever thought of it that way. I think whatever situation you are in, you do the very best with whatever situation you are in. I don't know if a five-star guy is actually more entitled than our guys or not. We get a lot of guys here that think they are entitled until they get into our program and they find out they are not. I would guess it would be the same way if you recruited a bunch of five-star guys, they would feel entitled until they found out the way the program is run and they would choose either to stay or not stay. What happens in a program is once you get your program established, your players recruit for you, so you have very little chance of getting players that don't fit in after being in charge for four or five years because they tell the recruits exactly how it's going to be. So if the recruit is not into that, they don't come here and if he kind of likes that idea then he comes here so after three or four or five years you will have an issue or two but you don't have a lot of issues. When you are a brand new head coach you have a lot of issues because you have guys in the program that don't believe in the way you do things. Until you start recruiting and get guys to believe that you have a little trouble."

On if the lack of entitlement in the players is an intangible that has helped this program:

"I think it's totally how your players recruit for you. When I came in with Brady Hoke, Brady and I have a very similar philosophy on how to do things and coach Hoke did some things that the players weren't used to and we had a dramatic number leave. Even in the first two weeks I can remember 10 scholarship kids walking out of here so obviously we were doing it differently than they were recruited to and they didn't like the change so they moved on."

On junior quarterback Christian Chapman not being a five star recruit because five star recruits don't want to throw the ball only five times:

"I think we get team players here and our kids recruit team players because we know we don't want those other kinds around here and I don't think our team wants other guys like that around here so we make sure they know how it's going to be and

that's a prime example. A quarterback that only throws five and [Ryan] Agnew threw two so we threw seven passes in the game. Yeah, I would say that wouldn't attract a five-star quarterback. Plus, we don't run the spread and the quarterbacks nowadays want to throw it 50 times."

On how he feels about the early signing period for football National-Letters-of-Intent being pushed up to December:

"I'm not sure but I think it's great for us because we get to find out that the kids that are committed to us, they're really committed or they're not really committed. The kids that are committed to us, if they don't sign in December, we're dropping them because that means they're not sure so that eliminates a lot of indecision that we have from December until the first Wednesday in February. It also eliminates the amount of time the Power Five guys can find out which guys they get and which guys they lose and it eliminates the time they have to run back and try and steal our recruits. I don't know if it's good for them but it's really good for us. I think we'll sign more than you think. I think we're going to sign almost half our class in December."

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