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San Diego State Football Press Conference

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SDSU head coach Rocky Long

On this week's game against Boise State:

"Well, we've got an important game this week and they get more important as the season goes along. We're playing a very good football team that has some very talented players that seemed to get everybody healthy and hit their stride last week when they beat BYU. These two teams were the two preseason picks to win their sides of the conference so both of our teams coming into the season were expected to be good and both teams are good so it's probably going to be a great game."

On if Boise State is one of the Aztecs' rivals:

"No, I don't think the two schools have played each other enough to have developed a rivalry to this point. I mean, to develop a rival, you have to play each other a lot of times and I think we've played each other four times total. That's a long way from being a rivalry. I would say our rivals are Fresno State."

On if this week means more because Boise State is denoted as the "face" of the Mountain West:

"I don't think it's any different than any other game. I think both teams will be highly motivated, both teams want to win, both teams want to win the conference championship. It's no different than every league game that we play."

On why SDSU didn't move up the rankings with other teams losing and them winning last week:

"I don't look at those things, I don't worry about those things. Those things only matter at the end of the year anyway so as the season goes along, it doesn't make any difference to me whatsoever."

On facing a potential two-headed attack at quarterback this week against Boise State:

"It makes it more difficult to get ready to play them because both quarterbacks are very good players and both quarterbacks have a little different expertise. So when they alternate them and bring them in, it's not an entirely different offense but what they emphasize on offense is different depending on which quarterback is in there. Basically, you're getting ready for two teams in the same week."

On Boise State senior quarterback Montell Cozart:

"They have some quarterback-designed runs with him, which basically gives them an extra blocker. They will run stretch plays and zone plays and power plays with him as the primary ball carrier so that means the back in the backfield can flare out of there and take a defender out of the box or they can use him as a blocker so they outnumber you. As soon as the quarterback becomes the primary ball carrier, they outnumber you at the line of scrimmage and they have several running plays where he's the quarterback."

On if he would implement the same strategy given the personnel:

"I think that would be a concern if it was the very first game that they've done it. I think it became important because [junior quarterback Brett] Rypien got hurt so they started playing him (Cozart) and realized the other guy had a lot to give and a lot to help their team. I think both quarterbacks are team guys and I think both quarterbacks appreciate the ability of the other guy. So after they have done it for two or three weeks, I don't think it makes a bit of difference – in fact, I think it helps them."

On how impressive Rypien has been the last two years:

"I think he's one of the better dropback thrower quarterbacks in the country. He got hurt in the first game so he missed a little bit of time but he sure looked like he was back last week."

On Boise State's young offensive line:

"I thought they were kind of like our team. Our offensive line is getting better and so is theirs. I thought their offensive line played well against BYU and BYU has some big guys up front – a big, strong front seven – and they did a nice job against them."

On the Broncos putting up 44 points against No. 8 Washington State:

"Well, I think they are probably very disappointed they didn't win that game. I thought after watching the film, they deserved to win that game and if they had won that game, I'm sure they would be ranked in the top 25. They are normally ranked up there and they are working to get back there."

On San Diego State's offensive line:

"I think our progress has been slowed because of injuries. Our most experienced offensive lineman is playing on a bad ankle and last week we had to put a new guy in because of an injury to one of our offensive tackles. At times we're a lot younger than we started out to be, but we're making progress. Even when we substituted the guys in for injuries and stuff, they played okay. They played pretty well."

On how senior offensive lineman Antonio Rosales is playing:

"He's playing alright on a bum ankle. Obviously he's not playing as well as he could when he's healthy, but having his experience in there makes a difference. At least we're targeting the right way in pass protection and he does a pretty good job when he pulls, he's just not as strong at the point of attack as he would be if his ankle were healthy. We give them most of the week off as we go right now. He doesn't practice very much, he just plays in the game. I'm sure if he had a whole week off of not doing anything and not playing in the game, he might be well but we gave him almost a whole week off two weeks ago and he was a little bit better. He's a little bit better than he was at this time last week but it's a slow process when you actually play in the game."

On which part of the defense has made the biggest jump:

"I think we're very inconsistent on defense. I think at times we play well and at times we don't play well. In this day and age when you give up a big play or two, that's kind of normal in this day and age. When you watch games on TV – and I get to watch a lot of games on TV on Saturday since we play so late at night – it's an explosive game now, much more so than a few years back and there are a lot of big plays in every game. But we're still making a lot of mistakes like assignment mistakes that put us in a bad position, but we're getting better on that side of the ball, too."

SDSU junior quarterback Christian Chapman**On his rushing touchdown against UNLV:**

"We've been practicing the draw play a little bit last week. We probably knew we were going to call it with the way they play on second down. I've been practicing a bit and finally got to show a little bit in the open field. Hopefully that's not my last one."

On how the seniors affect him:

"A lot. This is a senior-driven program and it's been that way since I've been here. The guys above kind of lead us and they know what's going on. Coach (Long) is more one-on-one with them so they provide us with that guidance and what is expected and what the vibe is around. They lead us in that way and like I said it's been like that since I've been here. This is their year, it's their time to be seniors and they are taking that as a big responsibility on them and pushing us to be the best that we can."

On what it means to hear something from a peer rather than someone from another generation:

"Probably more relatable. You see that person every day in the locker room and hang out with them every day off the field, not just on the field. You relate to them more and get the message. It's not just in one ear and out the other probably from a coach; You're hearing it from somebody else so it's more relatable and you take it to heart."

On how they all know to not look ahead:

"Definitely, I think it's implanted in all of us now that we can't look past any team we play and we have to treat every team every week like they are the big dog and this is it. One week when you're slouching, you're going to get hit in the mouth and it might cost you. We've got to approach every week like it's the championship week if we want to reach our goals. I think the guys know that now, know what we have to do and know the expectations."

SDSU junior linebacker Ronley Lakalaka

On the team's senior leadership:

"As a junior and watching the seniors lead all the young guys, it helps me learn how to treat all the younger guys and to give them confidence. There are really good players that we have and all they need is guidance so the main thing for me as a junior is to follow how the seniors lead. Hopefully so far it's been working."

On if SDSU can supplant Boise State as the big dog in the Mountain West:

"I think it's your opinion. For us, we're just trying to focus on the game and not about what's going on between us. Boise State is a great team [and] there is a reason why they are at where they are at. They have been running the conference for a couple years now."

On how difficult it is to prepare for a team that uses two quarterbacks instead of one:

"Very difficult. Boise State's offense has a lot of personalities and they run multiple offenses. They can go under center from the gun but you have two quarterbacks. One is more of a pocket passer and one is more of a dual threat so seeing the mix of those two guys makes it very hard for us. At the same time, it's like another game. We've faced quarterbacks like that before, Northern Illinois and UNLV, so it's no different from any other week."

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