



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

5500 CAMPANILE DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92182 | (619) 594-5547

GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | @AZTECSPR | #GOAZTECS

DXL Frisco Bowl Press Conference Quotes

Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2018

Toyota Stadium

Frisco, Texas

SDSU Only

Head Coach Rocky Long

Opening statement:

"We are excited about being here, too. When you go through a rough season that everyone goes through here and there, it's always nice to qualify for a bowl game and really nice to be invited to one. This is early in its stages and I think it's fun to be part of building that tradition here. We too have been treated as nice and as kindly as we can be treated, in fact, I think we are spoiled. Everyone has treated us really, really nice and we've had a really good time. We are really excited about who we are playing against because they have a great respect for the game."

On building and maintaining a successful program that routinely appears in bowl games:

"I think it's obviously the support you have. People don't realize that it's the support from the top to the bottom. I mean, if the president of your university doesn't support athletics, the chances of your success are almost nil. All the way down from administration, the great support you have—the academic services, the doctors, the trainers—everybody has to be on the same page and everybody has to be pushing or pulling in the same direction for you to be successful. Probably the most important part of any kind of success that you have, the extended success you have, is the players in the program. We don't get necessarily the highest-rated players by the star system, which I hate anyway. We don't have any five-star or four-star that kind of stuff, and we could care less if they have stars by their name. All we care about is how they play and how they act. Our players have been those kind of guys. They're good guys; they like to play football, they do what you ask them to do. It seems that people who have that mentality have success."

On the key to success for Wednesday's game:

"I was just telling (Ohio) coach (Frank) Solich that whenever we play the MAC, we know what to expect. They're a physical bunch, they like to play the game how I think it should be played. So obviously, the team that controls the line of scrimmage has the best chance to win. If the line of scrimmage is equal and both teams are playing well up front, then the skill guys get a chance to decide who wins. But usually when you play a MAC team or that style of football, the line of scrimmage determines who wins."

On getting another chance to win a game after the team's struggles at the end of the regular season:

"I think everybody enjoys one last chance. The difficult part of it is there's so much time between your last game and this one. You don't necessarily know how your team is going to react. You anticipate they're going to react a certain way. The ones who are going to enjoy it the most are the seniors because in both of our programs there are a couple of (guys) in the senior class with a chance to play in the NFL, but most of them don't. So this game is the last one where they'll play competitive football. It's

been a long, long time since I've played, but I can remember my last game and it was bittersweet. You're excited about moving on to the next part of your life, but you're worried because you've been a football player all your life that you won't get that exhilaration, all those ups and downs like you did when you played. So any chance you get to play an extra game, if you're a true football player at heart, you get excited about doing it."

On the unique intimacy of Toyota Stadium and playing so far away from home:

"Any stadium is okay with us. That's a beautiful stadium out there. I don't necessary think it's a soccer stadium; when the two teams get out there, it's a football stadium. That doesn't make any difference. Being this far away from your home, your base camp, that's all part of the game. We do that all the time. We fly all over the country to play people at different times, so that's not a big deal, either. We actually recruit Texas and we have 10 players on our team from Texas, so it's nice for them to be close to home where their families get to see them play in live action because a lot of times they don't get to come to San Diego and watch them play. So there's a little benefit to some of our guys that their families get to be here. I think both programs are the same (in that) we don't care where we play. All we do care about is playing and it's a great comfort when the other sideline has similar people to you. They like playing the game; they play it right way, and we like to play against people who do that."

Junior running back Juwan Washington

On returning home to play a bowl game in Texas:

"The people back home don't get to watch us play too much because we're on (TV) so late and we're so far away, so a lot of times they're sleeping when we're playing. It's just good they get a chance to watch us play and see what we're all about."

On hoping to finish the year on a high note:

"We have a lot to prove because we know the last few games didn't go the way we planned. We know we have a lot more left in the tank and we want to go out there and show that we're a good team. We just want to finish the right way and not leave a bad taste in our mouth."

On scoring points in Wednesday' game:

"We just need to take advantage of our opportunities. Every time we get a chance we just need to convert and not put ourselves in bad situations. At the beginning of drives, we just need to be successful in whatever plays are called and try to stay ahead of the chains."

Junior linebacker Kyahva Tezino

On the long layoff between the regular-season finale and the bowl game:

"During the season, your mind is set on football, you have a set schedule every single day. You're just waking up and doing the same things over and over again. So when we had a break, I was just out of my mind, I didn't know what to do. Then we heard we were going to a bowl game and we're just so excited to be able to play football again ... We're just going to come out and do our best and hopefully get a win."

-SDSU-