



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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### **SDSU Football vs. Arizona State – Postgame Quotes** **September 15, 2018**

#### **San Diego State Head Coach Rocky Long**

##### **What's going through your mind when they're driving and they get that big play?**

"I'm contemplating how we maybe could have played that better than we did. Because I thought the biggest play or the biggest moment of the game is when the defense stopped them, and Ryan talked about it, defense stopped them on fourth and one. They decided to go for it instead of kicking a field goal. We stopped them and then the offense took it down and tied it up. And in the second half I thought that we were the much better football team in the second half. And to come up two touchdowns ahead at the end and let them, I think our players thought the game was over too, let them drive down the field that easily and score, and then fumble the ball to give them a chance to get back in the game, that makes you start to think that there's something out there against you. Because we deserved to win the game. We outplayed them. We deserved to win. And them even making it that closes seems kind of ridiculous."

##### **Were you surprised that the catch was overturned or did you guys see that?**

"No. The guys upstairs in the box saw it on TV. They said that the ball hit the ground. So I'm glad they saw that."

##### **Do you think that still gets reviewed if that targeting doesn't happen there?**

"No, they would review, they reviewed both of them. Yeah. At the same time. In fact, I went and asked the official and he said they were reviewing both."

##### **But if there hadn't been a targeting there, would they still have reviewed the play?**

"Yes."

##### **What impressed you most about Ryan today?**

"Oh, I think he didn't -- I mean he was probably nervous before the game. Every good player is nervous before the game, but he didn't act like he was nervous. And I thought he did a really nice job of getting out of trouble several times and making positive yards."

##### **The fourth down stop that you spoke of, that -- the fourth down play itself, what happened there and was it good defense on your guys' part, did they not protect well, on the play that Myles made to sack the quarterback, what did you see?**

"Oh, I think we did a nice job of coverage and it allowed enough time for him to get back there. Late in the game and you can, we can discuss this, this is a coaching deal, do you rush three and play coverage and hope the clock keeps running or do you keep playing the

same defense you played the whole second half and they couldn't hardly get a first down. Well, football 101 tells you you play soft coverage and let the clock run and that's what we did. That's not my personality so I won't do it again."

### **Why did you do it this time?**

"Because I was, I thought we were ahead enough that somebody back there would make a play and we have some DB's that should be deeper and coming forward after the ball instead of chasing receivers. I mean we -- we'll get back to this, we're still a very inexperienced team. I mean we had them a couple times on defense and third down and a couple freshmen make mistakes that give them an automatic first down. We had eight true freshmen that we took to the hotel with us, so that means eight true freshmen are on the travel squad. So we made a lot of improvement this week, and I thought that our players went out there and played as hard and as physical as they could play. And I thought the secondary got a little bit better, but we got to get a whole lot better in the secondary if we want to continue to win. But they got a little bit better tonight. I mean the ones they caught the DB's were in good position, they just didn't make a play on the ball."

### **Did you change stuff up much in the beginning of the second half?**

"We played a little bit different on defense in the second half, yeah."

### **And did they execute better too?**

"Well, I think that we took some things away from them by the coverage of what they wanted to do. And then when they started moving the ball and then we started blitzing and they got in some couple one-on-one situations, and if you don't get to the quarterback, that's a possibility they're going to catch it. I watched it on TV all day today. I didn't see a DB stop a pass play at all."

### **On the rushing attack – Chase got 116. Juwan got 123 --**

"I mean that's a credit to the two running backs, but it's also a credit to the offensive staff by their design and it's a credit to the offensive line. I mean I told you last week the offensive line didn't play very well. Well, guess what, they played pretty darn good today. Because if you look at the Arizona State defensive line, they're the real deal now. They're all six-foot-four, taller, they're all 300 pounds or bigger, and they can bench press the world and all those sort of things and they got blocked tonight. So that means our big boys did a pretty good job."

### **Does it feel a little extra special to put up this performance against Arizona State who came in as the best rush defense in the country?**

"They came in as the best rush defense in the country?"

### **They want to average it out --**

"Do you want my true -- I'm going to give you the truth. The only one stat that matters is who won. That's the only stat that matters. You can talk about all the statistics all you want at the end of the season to try to evaluate teams, but the only thing that matters is if you win or lose."

### **Down 7-0 in the first half, what was your thought process in going for it on fourth down?**

"We were out there to win the game, not stay in the game and try to keep it close, we were out there to win. So were they. They went for fourth down, they were out to win the game too. We stopped them, they didn't stop us."

### **Do you feel like if you would have just kicked the field goal there, it would have set the wrong tone?**

"I'm not worried about setting a tone."

### **Or just been the wrong decision?**

"You kick a field goal you're still behind, right? I mean it might have been different if we were playing a conference game. I might have done it differently. But this is a non-conference game and the most important thing to us is to try to win the conference championship. So you get a ranked team and you've got a chance to beat them, don't be soft. Don't be scared. And I don't want to be either. And I was scared at the end of the game."

### **Could you talk about how important the execution was at the end of the first half, because you guys played soft on defense and executed on the defensive end.**

"I thought that was the biggest moment in the game. I think we went in at halftime with all the momentum, and we came out of the locker room with the momentum too. I don't think if we -- I think it would have been a completely different game if that hadn't happened."

### **How valuable is Agnew's dual threat ability?**

"It was big tonight because they got some pressure on them and most of the time he made them positive plays."

### **Coming into this you talked about having Danny on the other side and kind of the cat-and-mouse thing that was going on. How did you feel lake that played out?**

"You're too observant. About a quarter and a half of the first half, I was calling the defense and using signal guys. And because they're smart coaches on the other side they started going hurry up. They started going pace or whatever they call it, tempo. They started tempoing on offense. And we had some miscommunications between the signalers and the guys on the field that led to them driving the ball down and scoring. So I said the heck with it, I didn't care if they saw it or not and I started calling the signals."

### **How do you think the coaching battle played out with Herm Edwards on the other side? Do you think you out-coached him?**

"Coaches can lose a game. Coaches can never win a game by decisions. I didn't think any decisions he made loss them the game. Our players played better than their players. That's why we won."

### **On the very last play did you say anything to the guys in particular, knock the ball down? Anything?**

"Yeah, we say that every day in practice. And we work that Hail Mary drill, the one that was at the very end, we work that Hail Mary drill every single week. Now see that was a mistake, when we had them fourth and 10, I probably should have put the Hail Mary group in there. And if I would have put the Hail Mary group we probably would have played it better because we have three guys that stand on the goal line. They don't have to back pedal out of there, they stand on the goal line. So that was probably a coaching error when it was fourth and 10."

### **What was going through your head when Wilkins got up and started running?**

"I thought that was going to be a momentum, big time momentum swing. Because I thought he was down. I think I even heard a whistle. Now, the officials say they didn't blow a whistle. And that's probably true because they hardly ever blow the whistle. But I thought he was down for sure. And I started turning around, I mean, I started to go do something else and all of a sudden I hear the crowd go crazy and I turn up and I see him running down the sidelines and I didn't know how he got there. I'm glad he was down."

## **SDSU Junior Quarterback Ryan Agnew & Junior Running Back Juwan Washington**

**Ryan, how did you feel from the start there and did you feel like it's going to talk a little bit to get going during the game?**

RYAN AGNEW: "Yeah, we came into it knowing Arizona State is a great football team, knowing they run a great defense, they fly around and we knew there was going to be a lot of ups and downs but we knew if we stayed to the game plan got a physical running game going that eventually it was going to prevail."

**What changed in that last drive in the second quarter that all of a sudden things started coming together?**

RYAN AGNEW: "I wouldn't say anything really changed I just think that would he started making plays. We started finding some openings, got passes off, Juwan was able to get free on a little check down which was great for us to get that first down so I don't think anything really changed I think just players remained in that moment because it was a big moment we really needed it."

**Ryan, can you talk about your willingness to scramble the ball. You got nine carries for about 45 yards, so talk about your willingness to be able to scramble and just move around in the pocket.**

RYAN AGNEW: "I mean, I think people know that in our offense you can't really take negative yardage plays. We like to run the rock and when you get behind the chains you can't really establish the run as well. So taking sacks, we take pride in doing our best not to take them and if that means getting a hard two yards it means getting a hard two yards."

**Did you have any first start jitters or did it feel pretty good out there?**

RYAN AGNEW: "I mean, everyone I think has jitters before every game. I know I can't speak for everyone else but I think most people have jitters before a game, but it was really calming to have guys that I trust with me and they trusted me as well and that's made it a lot easier is just having my teammates around me."

**Could you talk about the final two minute drill you guys had at the end of the first half and just how important that was? You made a couple good throws.**

RYAN AGNEW: "Yeah, first and foremost the defense made a huge stop. Without them that drive's not possible and without that stop I think the momentum could have really swung in their favor whether they get three points or seven points that could really make a huge difference. So when we came on the field not everyone's expecting us to get down the field and get points, so I think it was a really big momentum shift there for us to go all the way down and score a touchdown at the end."

**Juwan how do you feel about the game, obviously another big rushing performance from you?**

JUWAN WASHINGTON: "Just confidence going into next week we played really well as a group, a collective whole we all went out there and executed what we were supposed to be going on and at the end result we ended up winning the game and that's something that you can just build on each week."

**What's it mean for this program to beat these guys for two straight years, especially this year they're ranked?**

JUWAN WASHINGTON: "Just shows that we can go play with anybody. A lot of people may not think that we can compete with a top level guys that's out there, but I honestly think we can go compete with anybody that's in front of us on our schedule, so we just got to go week by week and prove that so we can get to the conference championship and hopefully win that."

**Does it feel a little good for the running game to put that number that you guys did, just Arizona State coming in**

**being the top defense against the run coming into this game?**

JUWAN WASHINGTON: "That's something that I noticed a lot was taking pride in this whole week was going out there and being able to run the ball on them, because all week we been hearing about them being the number one run defense in the NCAA right now, so that's something we take pride and our offense is being able to establish the run and on our program we just want to be the most physical group out there and I think that really shows and starts with up front and those guys did a really good job in establishing the line of scrimmage this afternoon."

**Did you say anything to Chase during the second half? Obviously he finally got his chance to come in.**

JUWAN WASHINGTON: "No, I didn't say anything to him. The running back it's all reaction and you just got to be reactive out there, so he did a really good job of seeing things and hitting it and you just got to be able to trust what you see and just hit it."

**Was there any reason you weren't there physically at the end?**

JUWAN WASHINGTON: "Just got banged up a little bit but Chase was in there a hundred percent and I didn't want to go in there half stepping a little bit, so he did a really good job filling in for me."

**What's banged up mean?**

JUWAN WASHINGTON: "Just a little banged up a little bit that's about it, but I'm fine be ready to go next week."

**SDSU Junior Cornerback Kyree Woods, Junior Linebacker Kyahva Tezino & Senior Kicker John Baron II**

**Can you each talk about how it looked like you had the game well in hand and then you finish like that. What are the emotions you're going through.**

KYAHVA TEZINO: "Well, that right there, everyone's kind of scared at that moment. I mean we all were scared, I mean, but we just persevered, just was saying that we was just going to make this stop because our whole team deserved it. Throughout all the six months we worked we fought for moments like this and we just all wanted it and as you can tell we wanted it."

**What were you thinking Kyree there at the end?**

KYREE WOODS: "Just adversity. Coaches preach it every week that we're going to have some adversity, but we just going to have to pull through and tonight we pulled through major. And just props to Agnew and the offense giving us a chance to go out there and play ball and just props to everybody on the defense, just holding it down, because adversity hit and we finished strong."

**What was going through your mind just like seeing you guys run through the field celebrating that?**

KYREE WOODS: "It was a great feeling. The whole time I was thinking, just don't let him catch the ball and they didn't and so we won and just a great feeling. No matter how you get the W, it's always worth it. So we got it and that's all that matters."

**What was the feeling when you hear it's incomplete?**

KYREE WOODS: "Best feeling in the world. Best feeling."

**Did you have any idea that -- were you guys talking about you thought it might be?**

KYREE WOODS: "No. We were just getting ready to play another set of chains and then when the call got in, just joy and just one more play."

**I wanted to ask you about the defensive stand late in the second quarter. That seemed to kind of turn things your way. Defensively you guys were giving up some yardage before that. Thoughts about kind of how that fired you guys up to make that play?**

KYAHVA TEZINO: "Yeah, he was it was a big momentum swing. I mean we went into half, we switched some things up obviously because they was driving on us real quick, they was going hurry up offense, we just switched it up half, we made adjustments and we made it happen. That fourth down, that just, that was kind of like a statement to our defense on how we is as a football team."

**And then the second half they don't get a first down until three minutes are left in the game essentially. I think four three and outs. What were you guys doing that kind of changed things schematically or how you were playing?**

KYAHVA TEZINO: "We were running the same calls, I mean it was just all of our attitudes on that field. We all came into half and said we're going to go out here and win this game because our offense deserved it. They were up there putting up points. Ryan Agnew was doing an amazing job, what we all expected, so we just all had to go out there and win for each other because each one of us is like counting on us to win, so."

**John, for a while there it looked like those field goals you had were going to be the difference in the game. What goes through your mind on the first one, the career long one? Do you know you have that range or what do you talk to the coaches about?**

JOHN BARON II: "Coach Long asked me how I felt about it and I said, let's do it. And we went out there and you don't really think a lot when you're out there, you try not to. So not a lot was going through my mind, just make the kick and I'm glad I did. Glad I helped out the team."

**What's the longest one you tried from that side of the field going in warm ups today?**

JOHN BARON II: "In warm ups today? 57 I believe was what I ended at. But it had a lot on it. So I was like, I told coach, we're good from 60. I mean, it was a joke but I mean he kind of took it seriously, I guess."

**To reach that milestone it ties Donny Hageman for the second longest in history, it kind of just adds to what you've already been doing. Kind of talk about what it's meant to you to succeed as much as you have.**

JOHN BARON II: "I mean, when I go out there to play, all I want to do is help the team. I want to win, so at the end of the day, I mean, I, we all depend on each other. I mean, we depend on the offense and the defense to do their job and they depend on me to do mine. So that's all I'm really worried about is just helping out the team and I'm glad I can."

**What do you attribute specifically to being able to get so much more power behind your kick? Because in years past you've been lights out within 50 yards, but after 50 yards you've been a little bit iffy, you haven't been iffy this year, you're showing that you can hit from anywhere.**

JOHN BARON II: "I've only had two attempts from 50 before this year and I missed one, so that's why it's iffy. But I mean this year obviously coaches are putting a lot more trust in me and they're letting me reach my full potential and try to help the team as much as I can, so in games like this, it really works out."

**So is this something you've always been capable of?**

JOHN BARON II: "Yeah."

**To that question, John, have you lengthened kicks quite a bit this year like in practice and stuff? I mean, are you feeling more comfortable at that distance?**

JOHN BARON II: "Yeah, the whole off season I was really just working on longer field goals, trying to become more accurate on longer field goals and during spring I kind of did the same thing that I've been doing through other springs, but this year the opportunities just came sooner, I guess."

**Kyree, talk about the secondary's performance. Last week Coach Long said, he was saying that it was okay last week, so how would you rate this week's performance?**

KYREE WOODS: "We're getting there. I would say it's a little bit better steps from last week, we just got to make more plays out there, obviously eliminate the deep play, but that's what everybody, we're all in this together and we're going to work together, get back to the drawing board. But I'm excited this season because I feel like we're slowly getting there, we're progressing every week, so it's only a matter of time where we're just lights out."

### **Arizona State Head Coach Herm Edwards**

#### **Opening statement:**

"Obviously a disappointing loss for us coming on the road, trying to win our first road game. That did not come to fruition for us. I have to give San Diego State a lot of credit. Going into this game they knew what they wanted to do. They wanted to run the football, and they did run the football. They ran it for 311 yards. When a team can control a clock and play good defense like they did the second half, and not allowing us to score in the last minutes of the game — that's never good. There's a lot of things we have to look at. We have to get it corrected. I liked the way we fought back there — the couple minutes left in the game, trying to maybe have a chance to win it. We just fell a little short, but you have to give San Diego [State] a lot of credit. They ran the football on us, got to the second level. We missed some tackles, and 311 yards — it's hard to win a football game when you allow people to run like that."

#### **On the 4<sup>th</sup> & 1 the Sun Devils went for to end the first half:**

"It was a big sequence because at that point we're up feeling like if we make it, worst case scenario maybe we can get up two scores and if not — 'Hey they can't go 90 yards on us,' but they did go 90 yards on us, so that was a big swing for them. In the third quarter it was an even game and they kicked a field goal. Felt like we were still in the game. Then their rushing game just kind of took over. We couldn't get off the field and we weren't very good with offense either. There were a lot of three-and-outs. You can't play like that against a team like this. They know how to play in those circumstances. When they get a lead, they're going to milk the clock. They want to run the football. The quarterback hurt us a bunch too. He left the pocket at times, made some plays with his legs. Very disappointing because we knew what they were trying to do. They just beat us to the punch. I look at some of the decisions I made — I'd make that decision every time. I just think they did the same thing — they made their fourth-and-ones. We did not. I think there comes a point in the game when you have to make a decision, and when it doesn't work people will say 'why did you do it. You have to kick the field goal.' Going on the road like this and the game we were in, we had momentum on offense. I thought we could make fourth and one, and I'll do it again when deemed necessary. I'll do it again and hopefully our defense won't allow them to go 90 yards to score."

#### **On the targeting play and call reversal:**

"They look at everything. That happens. That's the rule. They're going to look at every facet of the play. It just happened to be that they said he didn't catch it. We thought he caught it. Felt like we had a good play dialed up to maybe score, but it didn't work out that way."

**On only having 13-yards of offense in the third quarter:**

"They stopped us for the most part. A lot of three-and outs. Due to penalties, we had bad field position. We're not doing a good job of fielding kickoffs. I mean, two times we come out – we've practiced all week three yards inside the end zone, don't come out - take it at the 25. We were backed up a lot of times. That's just mental errors. You can't do that. You can't bring that thing out and not get to the 25. We talked about it all week. We practiced on it all week. For some reason, we decided to come out. That's not good."

**Arizona State Defensive Coordinator Danny Gonzales****Opening statement:**

"None of our goals have changed. We still have everything in front of us. They'll get a good lesson tonight. We got out-physicalled by a really good football team. Don't forget, San Diego State is a really good football team. Coach Long did a great job on both sides of the ball. They were able to slow us down. We couldn't get off the field the second half. We held them to a couple field goals, and then they drove down there and got a touchdown. We didn't make any plays. We had opportunities to make tackles in the back field. We didn't, so give them credit. They physically outplayed us tonight."

**On if they were surprised with anything new on offense:**

"They had a couple new things in there that the offense hadn't seen, but they have good players. They made plays. That was the big difference."

**On coming back to play against San Diego State:**

"When it came down to it, it was another football game. I know all of those guys over there on the sideline. They're a good football team. They out-physicalled us. We're trying to build a culture here, establish what we want. They have an established culture and identity. We're still trying to get there. You learn lessons every game. I've said it the past two weeks, it's easier to teach when you win, but the point I've been trying to get across to them is don't believe were as good as everyone is saying because we weren't. I've been saying that for the last two weeks. We have a chance to be pretty good, but we got out-physicalled tonight, so the humbling will come. We can teach them at meetings tomorrow. We can move forward and get better as a football team. The good thing is, we got that turnover at the end – they fought. They kept on fighting. They never gave in, which is a part of establishing a culture, but we can't get physically whooped like that. We did."