

**San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes**

**Tuesday, Sept. 25, 2018**

**Head Coach Rocky Long**

**Opening statement:**

““Coming off a tough victory (vs. ASU), you know, we’re pretty happy about winning that game (against Eastern Michigan) because I think I told you last week that they were going to be that kind of team. It was going to be a tough win for us, but the worst part about the situation is we lost a couple of players to injury. How quick they’ll be back nobody knows for sure. So we’re getting younger and younger as the season goes along, which makes it harder to win.”

**On whether running back Juwan Washington needs surgery:**

“No, there’s a crack in his clavicle somewhere. It wasn’t too bad. It’s still attached, so they think it’ll heal in six weeks on its own.”

**On whether he had to consult with placekicker John Baron on the field goal distances last Saturday vs. EMU:**

No, I didn’t have to ask him at all. They just started trotting out there before I said anything. Now obviously in overtime, we worked it out so that we knew he was going to kick a field goal. But the other one when I think it was a 50-yarder, I looked at him and he just started trotting out on the field.”

**On who will pick up the slack at running back behind Chase Jasmin after Juwan Washington’s injury:**

“There is no pecking order yet. We’ve got a little bit of time to figure out who’s going to be the best or the second guy in, and we’ll use this week and next to figure that out. So nobody has been given the backup role yet. Except Chase won’t get hit as much in practice as he used to.”

**On the possibilities available to assume the backup role at running back:**

“We’ve got Kaegun Williams, we’ve got Chance Bell, and we’ve got Jordan Byrd and Zidane Thomas. Two of them we’ve actually seen in practice and spring ball, and the other two (Byrd and Thomas) are true freshmen. So other than what they did in fall camp, we don’t know exactly what we’re getting. But we really don’t know with Kaegun or Chance either.”

**On the criteria used to determine who the backup will be:**

“The guys who make the fewest mistakes in practice are going to be the guys that get the first chance, and you can kind of tell. Now, we’ve had Jordan Byrd and Zidane Thomas on the defensive side down with us on the scout team and you know how well they read a hole. You know how tough they are when they run through a hole and all that kind of stuff. But Chance Bell and Kaegun Williams were down there last year, so we know that about them, too.”

**On the coaching staff’s agenda during the bye week:**

“Locally the coaches are going out in the morning and they’re getting back in time for meetings and for practice. After our last practice on Thursday, several of our coaches will fly out to different areas of the country and (stay) there on Friday and Saturday and get back on Sunday. A couple of coaches will be here in town going to (high school) games on Friday and Saturday. I haven’t decided if I’m going out to a game or not yet, and I haven’t really looked to see what the big matchups are yet either. But starting Thursday our coaches are already out in the mornings going by the high schools and talking to the high school coaches and all that and then on Thursday night all 10 coaches will be out somewhere for two days recruiting.”

**On his thoughts in general about high school recruits de-committing from a school:**

“It’s been like that for maybe the last five to 10 years. Way back when I first started, when a kid committed he stayed committed until he signed (with) a school. When you had a committed kid, you saved the scholarship for him until signed. In the last 10 years, that’s not been the case on both sides. There are schools that have dropped committed kids that they promised scholarships to; they drop them and don’t sign them, and then now there are a lot of kids that will commit just as an insurance policy and keep getting recruited and keep taking trips to see if they like any place better. I don’t think it’s good, but that’s just the way it is, so you don’t worry about it. You live with the way it is.”

**On fullback Isaac Lessard and the rest of the team’s health:**

“He’s hurt right now, too. It’s a positive report on him, but we don’t know how quick he’ll be back either. So I told you we’ve got a whole bunch of guys beat up now. We might get one back. (Defensive tackle) Noble Hall might be back for the Boise (State) game. But other than him, we’ve lost some starting players who are standing on the sidelines and watching. So if you lose your starting tailback and your starting fullback, I would say that makes it much harder to run the ball or you’re guessing that the guys coming in can do it, but they haven’t proved they can do it yet.

“I don’t think it’s going to change our offense. We do what we do and then we’re going to try and say next man up and hopefully those guys will perform well, too.”

**On quarterback Ryan Agnew’s performance so far this year:**

“I think he’s played well. I think coming in as the backup, you hope that they (all) play like he has played to this point. I mean, it’s a very similar situation as Christian Chapman when he took over. When he had to take over, he came in and played really well, too. So that’s a sign that our coaches are doing a good job of recruiting and a good job of coaching because you don’t go in if you don’t have some kind of talent. You probably shouldn’t have been recruited. Obviously, he has the talent to play the position and if you haven’t been coached very well, when you get your chance you don’t play very well. He’s played pretty well, so you’ve got to give the coaches a pat on the back for that, too. But part of that is Ryan’s personality. He was ready, he was ready to have his turn and so far he’s played well.”

**On the team’s routine during the bye week:**

“It’s just like a regular week for us Monday through Thursday and then our players will get Friday, Saturday and Sunday off, so it’s nice for them. But once we get into the season, coaches work anywhere from 12 to 16 hours a day and it doesn’t change just because it’s a bye week. They’ll be out recruiting instead of sitting in and watching film. So until the season is over, it doesn’t change for a coach. Now for our players I’m sure they’re happy about getting a couple of days off. They’re really happy about it.”

**On whether the bye week will afford the team extra time to prepare for the Boise State game:**

“I don’t think it makes a darn bit of difference. I don’t. We’re not using this week to prepare for Boise anyway. We’re using this week to try and get all our young guys more up to speed, so we don’t make as many mistakes when we actually play a game. We won’t get into Boise prep until Monday, so we’re not doing anything as far as Boise’s concerned this week.”

**On his thoughts in general about college players transferring in the middle of a season:**

“I think there’s some issues on both sides. I think anytime there’s an issue on both sides and you try to make both side happy, I think you’re going to have problems. I mean, the push now is that the players should have more control of what they can do and what they can’t do. They’re making the rules so that a player has more options that he didn’t used to. You used to not be able to transfer right away and all that, so they’re giving them more options. I don’t know if that’s right or wrong, but it makes it a lot more insecure. Your team is a lot more insecure because if a kid doesn’t play, he might leave you the next day.

“I guess it’s my age (but) if you can’t control it, why worry about it. And I can’t control that just like I can’t control a lot of things. So I don’t worry about things I can’t control.”

**On if he thinks there are any surprises in the Mountain West so far this year:**

“No I think Boise is as good as everybody thought they were going to be. I guess there’s two teams that weren’t very good last year and I think they’re pretty good right now—Utah State and Hawai’i. Then Nevada is scoring a ton of points. So I think those might be surprises. I don’t think anybody thought that before the season started.”

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