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**San Diego State Football
Virtual Press Conference
Early Signing Day Quotes
Wednesday Dec. 16, 2020**

Head Coach Brady Hoke

Opening Statement:

"Number one, you know it's an exciting day. Signing days always are. I think they've changed a little bit when you have an early signing date, but it's an exciting day across the country for a lot of young student-athletes. We're excited about the 23 guys that we signed today. I think staff-wise, we worked really hard, as well as with our players because your players do have a lot to do with influencing your signees and influencing them to come. We worked hard to recruit guys who fit our culture of toughness – mental and physical. We evaluated our needs and think that we have addressed those needs. You know, nothing is ever certain, but we feel very good about the young men we have recruited. And we've recruited them in a manner that we're going to create competition at all positions. And at the same time there are some guys who'll benefit from the development that (coach) Adam Hall and our guys on the strength staff (provide). And then obviously from a fundamental and technique standpoint. So, (we're) really, really happy and excited about the class, and (we) look forward to getting them on campus."

On the comparison of recruited quarterbacks Jaylan Mayden, a Division I transfer, and high school senior Will Haskell:

"I remember when I was at Oregon State from 1989-94, there was quite a bit of eight-man football, so we were recruiting some of those guys and you always worried. But when you play eight-man football on that field, you can really see guys who have athleticism. Obviously with Will, we think he's a guy who will come in and compete along with Jaylan. We like the dual threat that they both give us. Will's numbers are pretty incredible, and we're really excited about Jaylan and him wanting to be here."

On the ability to get Jaylan Mayden to transfer from Mississippi State to San Diego State:

"(Former Aztec assistant coach) Zach Arnett's there. Conversations with Zach. You use what you can, you find out as much as you can."

On how much Will Haskell's athleticism has impressed him after seeing some social media posts:

"I mean, he does something on social media that you look at. I know he did a 52-inch box jump after doing power cleans and a back flip and all those things. You know, I don't think I would recruit myself because I can't do either one of those things. But when you see a guy with that kind of athleticism and then obviously how he plays. I remember a long time ago when I was an assistant at Michigan, we met with a scout from the (Miami) Dolphins, a player personnel director. It was an eight-hour meeting and on the last page of the booklet he gave us, it said, 'The film, The film, The film.' You know, we can be enamored by athleticism and things that guys can do, but it's got to come down to what they put on tape. And that's why we recruited Will."

On Jaylen Mayden's eligibility:

"Yeah, he will be immediately eligible, but there are a couple of waiver deals that we have to do."

On the direction of the quarterback position at San Diego State:

"Everybody talks about the dual-threat (quarterback) and believe me from a defensive perspective, it seems to be a lot harder defending those type of teams. But if we get the guys that we know we can get, dual-threat or pro style, whoever is going to help us win games. After talking with both Will and Jaylan, interviewing them, watching the tape that's out here, we feel like those two guys will come in and compete."

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On if the quarterback position has become crowded:

"We'll find out some time here. I think they're all competitive. You know, like anything else, everybody wants to play. It just so happens at that position, there's only one that plays. So I think there may be some guys who possibly may decide to find another home and we're going to support them."

On which recruits in this class could possibly see the field first:

"I never answer that question because I don't know. I mean, we like them all. We think they're good enough. We think that some will compete more than others, but if I named one guy, then I'm going to tick off 22 other households, so I'm not going to name anybody."

On if the pandemic somehow helped get some recruits to SDSU due to lack of practice last spring or playing this fall:

"I think there isn't any doubt (of) that because of the lack of exposure from spring football. I love going to spring ball and watching guys live and watch them interact with teammates and try and get a good idea of what kind of personality they're bringing in and how competitive they are. I don't think there's any doubt there are some guys in here I know have been recruited by the Pac-12, let's say, or some other conferences nationally that we were fortunate enough to have come to San Diego State."

On the challenges of recruiting during the pandemic:

"I don't think there's any doubt that you really have to do your due diligence. From Zoom meetings and conversations, to getting to know the family, to getting to know and trust coaches, high school coaches, having the right guys who fit our culture and also our needs... It's a different year from a recruiting standpoint."

On the high number of recruits from the Dallas area compared to other parts of Texas:

"Coach (Jeff) Horton has a pretty good reputation recruiting that area. He has a lot of ties. When he was at Wisconsin, he recruited that area. He's from the area. Right now, we have five guys on our team from Texas. All have (had significant playing time). Texas high school football is really good, just like California high school football is really good. Just like San Diego County. You know, we want to keep as many guys here as we can from this county, and I think we need a little help sometimes. But I do think familiarity with that area is part of it."

On whether all needs have been met in this class or if he's looking at more players:

"Well, we've got one for sure left, maybe two. This week, I'll have conversations with all the upperclassmen, the seniors, and have some conversations with some underclassmen who may make decisions, if they're not playing, to find another home. And we will help them. There may be another (defensive) lineman, the right guy who we want. Between a receiver and a running back, (there) could be two other options."

On if the pandemic factored in signing just two players from San Diego since there was no high school football this fall:

"That's a good question. I think there's probably some (truth in that) But you know, we recruited nine guys within this county and really got two. And we were in it with them pretty hard. (With) most of them, we were the first ones to offer because we feel and we need to know more about them than other schools. There are guys who want to get away from home and I get that. There are guys who are going to go to the Pac-12. Now, we want to compete against the Pac-12 for all of them. And then there's going to be guys who we don't feel (fit) our blueprint and culture that we're looking for. So we're going to recruit the crap out of San Diego. That's why I said we need a little help. You know, you guys have a voice; you can help us."

On how much of the lack of a senior season this fall hurt potential recruits in receiving offers:

"Because of the technology today and the ability of getting HUDL tape and getting every game a guy's played as a junior, as a sophomore, there are a lot of decisions being made on juniors. But you're always going to have one of those guys who is a late bloomer (and) did not have the ability to play, so it really hurt them. So I guess that's my answer to it. Yeah, I think it does hurt some guys."

On whether the pandemic hindered the ability to sign junior college players:

"Most of them, they get the one year and most of them are going to be there for two. So you get the one year and that may have been this year or last year, and the tape is out there. But I feel bad for those guys. You know, I feel bad for guys who may be free agents in the NFL because they're going to fight every free agent from a year ago. I mean, we had two guys who were free agents and they were in camp for two days. They didn't get an evaluation. Now, I'm talking about the National Football League. That's the same thing as you look at junior college guys. So do I think it hurts? Yes. The whole thing sucks with a lot of guys not being able to play a game they love."