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

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**San Diego State Football
Virtual Press Conference Quotes
Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2020**

Head Coach Brady Hoke

Opening Statement:

"Welcome everyone. Excited to win a football game last week. Obviously, it's great to win. Thought we started a little slow overall, but I think our kicking game gave us a little spark with the two returns. Defensively, we played much better in the second half than we did the second quarter and offensively, I thought Jordon (Brookshire) did a nice job of really handling and managing the offense to some extent. He was very decisive when he wanted to run the football and pull it and was aggressive with it. Then I thought he did a nice job on a couple of the RPO throws, so (I was) excited about that. We've got a big opportunity this week, obviously, playing 14th-ranked team in the country. BYU was doing a lot of things great. I know they are disappointed after last weekend, but you know they took the game on Thursday. For their defense going into play an option style of an offense in two days, that's tough duty. But I do think they're an awfully good football team and we're excited to have the opportunity to play again."

On whether he was surprised with Jordon Brookshire performance and efficiency:

"Not really. When we talked three months ago or two months, whatever, when we made the decision, we told him to be ready because there's a good chance that we'll all come back to you. I thought he did a nice job coming to work every day and preparing. I think he felt more confident as the game (went on), which you would expect."

On the style of BYU's Zach Wilson and if he reminds him of any other quarterbacks:

"Maybe Andy Dalton a little bit when TCU was in the league. But I can tell you, I think he is unbelievable (in) his ability to get the ball off and his ability to extend plays. He does a great job and he'll be a real test for our defense."

On if he thinks Zach Wilson also compares stylistically to NFL quarterback Patrick Mahomes:

"I think that's a lot to put on a guy to be honest with you. But what I've seen of Zach, I think he's got great timing within the passing game itself. I think he's got a really good group of receivers; I think a lot of them can hurt you, good tight ends. He takes care of the football and I think he does a great job. Look, they're 9-1 for a reason."

On what it means to play a team like BYU at this stage of the season:

"Believe me, we had good practice last night and I expect the same thing today. I think our guys are competitive and this program is based on competition, so they're excited about it. They know the history. We try and remind them of the history that the two schools have. I think this is our 38th time playing each other, so we'll be excited."

On the difference of BYU's offense compared to last year:

"I think up front there's a little bit of difference even though some of those guys played a year ago. I do believe, like any other player, the more mature and the older you get and from experience, that you improve. So I think on that front, they're a little better there. I think the other thing is the opportunities. Again, their defense is playing lights out. You know, (BYU head coach) Kalani (Sitake) is very similar to how I am, very much a defensive guy, and they're really playing well on defense. And when you play well on defense, you give more opportunities to your offense."

On what comes to mind when he thinks of Aztecs' last trip to Provo in 2010:

"Number one, it's been a long time. You know, I thought we played pretty well up there. If I remember, there was a replay that didn't go our way that we would've liked to have go our way, obviously. But you know, it's a different team and we're a different team."

On if the replay controversy had any positive effect on the league:

"Not knowing all the ins and outs completely, did it make a change in how replay is done? Yeah, it did. So I guess that's a good thing."

On if the loss to BYU in 2010 sparked the team for the rest of that season:

"You know, we had a really good class. There was a good group of seniors. Ryan (Lindley) was our quarterback and had some receivers there that could do some things with a football. Ronnie (Hillman) kind of got himself going. But it was a heck of a football game; we wish we would've won it."

On if LaVell Edwards Stadium is tougher to play in than other venues:

"I don't know. Obviously when it's full and loud, it's just like any other place you go to on the road (with) a good crowd and good student section. All that makes it a little bit more difficult. I do know that they'll have family members there and we're gonna have some of our guys with their families there, so it's gonna be neat to have some sort of crowd during the game."

On the uniqueness of BYU's last opponent Coastal Carolina and how it might help in this week's preparation:

"We'll look at our offense and gauge personnel and who we think their playmakers are on defense as much as anything. From a scheme standpoint, that's not us, you know, the quarterback runs and that kind of stuff. But more so, we'll be looking at personnel and evaluating personnel."

On the status of offensive lineman William Dunkle:

"He'll be a guy who will get a lot of snaps for us. Coming back, we wanted to take it easy with him a little bit because he hasn't had much practice. So I think we monitored him really well, and he'll play more as we get into this week."

On whether Lucas Johnson would be available this week if necessary:

"If the opportunity comes, he will. You know, Jordan's earned the right to be the first one in and start the football game and as it proceeds. If needed, there's no doubt that Lucas will have the opportunity."

On whether the Aztecs should play BYU given his predecessor Rocky Long's disdain for playing them:

"When they left the league, I think that was tough on everybody. Having the opportunity to have them in the league, I thought it was great. They obviously feel they've got to do what's right for their university and their program. We'd like them to be a league member playing them."

On if a bowl berth hinges on the Aztecs defeating BYU:

"I have no idea. I know one thing, we schedule games, we play games and we play them all to win. That's our goal. I mean, it's that simple. We're not making any more out of this than it is. It's a great opportunity for us to go and play football again."

On how the team has handled the pandemic this season:

"The only thing I can tell you, and I've said this weekly, I'm really proud of how our players have handled this whole pandemic. I can tell you that they have done a tremendous job, the same thing I've said before (about) our medical staff, our people, our coaches, our leadership from our seniors, the accountability. They've done a tremendous job. Does it affect you any more week to week? You know, we've kind of gotten into a nice rhythm with our testing, how guys are taking care of themselves and all the protocols. Obviously, not being able to play Fresno (hurt), but picking up Colorado was something we were really happy with (being) able to do."

On comparing BYU's offense to last year when the Aztecs held them to three points:

"I think they're getting more opportunities because their defense is playing so well. They've given up 14 points a game or something like that. Yeah, they're playing pretty salty. So like any other defense, we want to give as many opportunities (from) three-and-outs to our offense. I think they're doing a really good job that way. And I would say guys who have played multiple games, they're going to play better because they're getting older, more mature, understanding the game (more), all those kind of things."

On Jordan Byrd's resiliency overcoming difficulties earlier in the season:

"He's a little guy, but he's a tough little guy, and he loves to play the game. He really does a tremendous job every day out there. Works his tail off, is consumed with the game of football. I think his work ethic and ability to bounce was shown the other day."

Junior Defensive Back Darren Hall

On the biggest difference with BYU compared to last season:

"They're experienced. Their quarterback (Zach Wilson) was only a sophomore last year, so just having another year under his belt just fine-tuning the offense with the receivers and timing the receivers. Their (offensive) line's also coming back, so I think they're a good team just as they were last year."

On stopping BYU last season despite Zach Wilson throwing for over 300 yards:

"Just bend but don't break... He's a good quarterback, but we just can't let them score. That's our philosophy."

On if LaVell Edwards Stadium is tougher to play in than other venues:

"It's going to be pretty cold and they're going to have fans out there, but we have to go out there and play football just like we always do."

On if he is aware of how big of a game BYU is to the San Diego State community:

"Yeah, I know the rivalry. We haven't played them in quite a while besides last year, but we know it's a big rivalry. We see the fans talk on Twitter all the time, but we're going to go out there and play football. We can't make the game bigger than any other game. It's the last game of the regular season, but we'll go out there and try to get a victory."

On wide receiver Jesse Matthews:

"He has very good hands and feet. Just seeing the way he's come up from being a walk-on and earned a scholarship. I've seen his work and his talent has just progressed seemingly every year. Just seeing him out there and the work he puts in, translates to Saturdays and the plays he makes out there."

On BYU quarterback Zach Wilson:

"I think that Zach Wilson is a very talented quarterback. I think he has a very strong arm. He's agile, he's mobile. I would compare him more to like Aaron Rodgers, I would say personally. Just the arm strength that he has, the way he moves in the pocket. He has some savvy. But we're going to go out there and try to do what we can do to stop his team this weekend."

On what it means to play BYU this Saturday:

"It's just a great opportunity just knowing that a lot of teams' games have been canceled and we've been blessed to have played all eight scheduled games, even though we had to find a game a couple weeks ago. Also just knowing that it's BYU. We have a rivalry with them, even though we haven't played them as much of late. But it's just a big game for us to just go out there and prove that we are still the San Diego State Aztecs and that we're a great team."

Junior Running Back/Kick Returner Jordan Byrd

On his reaction to playing at BYU in December when the schedule was released earlier this fall:

"It was good. I miss the cold. I'm from New Mexico. It's always snowing there, so it's going to be a really good game in the cold. I used to run (club) track there all the time at BYU, so it's going to be really good to go there and play again."

On if the cold weather will have any effect on the game:

"Just a little bit. A lot of guys on the sideline will be kind of cold. But other than that, it's going to be really good, especially feeling the coldness again. I miss that."

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On why BYU is still considered a rivalry:

"I just heard that we used to be in the conference together, so it's probably a really good (rivalry) from there. And I think they broke off around 2011, so some of the fans still have that kind of connection. We respect them from last year, so it's going to be a really good game."

On if he's played in the snow before:

"I've actually played in the snow up to my ankles, so it was bad. I was a quarterback at the time, so it was a little rough. But it was a fun experience to have snow during a high school game."

On his advice for playing in the snow:

"Just to have fun with it. We were practicing in it all week, and it was really cool to go on the field and play. A lot of the kids had fun with it."

On earning MW Special Teams Player of the Week honors:

"I give credit to my coaches and my team. They knew I messed up a couple times and they still had confidence in me. They gave me the chance to go out there and give my all. I did that, and that gave me more confidence this week to do it again. I feel better about that. My coaches have been there supporting me. I've been practicing every week and playing hard."

On quarterback Jordon Brookshire:

"He came in confident. You know, a lot of quarterbacks come in nervous and they don't get the chance to get their feet wet. He got his feet wet and he showed what he could do. The offense has confidence in him and I know the defense has confidence in him, too. The coaches gave him a chance and he took that chance and it showed. He's a really good guy and I'm glad he's the starting quarterback."

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