



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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Head Coach Brady Hoke:

Opening Statement:

“Playing the last game for our seniors in the stadium was pretty special, obviously. I thought we played hard. I thought that our mentality was what we look for. We just didn't execute in some areas and that's something that we've got to do a better job coaching and that falls on us first. The first drive of the game on their touchdown ticked me off, but I know better because getting the triple option and what it does as far as your timing. They broke the one on the influence trap and it was literally the timing and the speed that the game's played with. From that point on, I thought the defense did a nice job.

Offensively, we really never got anything going. Even when we did, we had some penalties. Again, we've talked about that, that's a lack of discipline, and it's something that we will continue to coach and put ourselves in better positions to be successful that way. We got to execute better offensively obviously and it's disappointing for the seniors that played their last game at home.”

Reaction to the bowl announcement:

“Oh, excited. I haven't been to Hawaii in a while. The only times I've been is for football games, so why not keep the streak going? We're excited about it. Our team, we just texted out to them so that they would have an idea of what's going on. Playing Middle Tennessee State, they're a good football team offensively. They will play with some tempo, and a little bit of Mike Leach in there with the air rate. From that standpoint, that's really all I know about them right now, but we'll be excited and we're going to prepare ourselves to play our best.”

On game preparation differences between regular season games and bowls:

“I've been to enough bowls to understand the procedure and preparation. How you want to do things and how you want to execute things. It's different obviously— we do think it's a reward for the kids for what they've done, and the players and how they've worked all year. We're going to make sure that there's enough that they can enjoy but also get ready to win a football game.”

On playing on Christmas Eve:

“We'll come right back that night. We'll be there about six days before. We're starting those calendars now and putting everything together.”

On if having an extra week of preparation offers a huge advantage:

“No, not really, it's about right. We need to heal and rest up a little bit. So what we'll do and what Coach Hall will do from a running standpoint, we will make sure that we're not killing them from what we're doing and lifting in the weight room. Then early next week, we'll start doing some things football-related with some practice.”

On balancing new and old players into practices:

"I think you can do a little bit of both. We'll have some vet days, is what we call them, for the veterans where we'll do a lot of inside drills. A lot of things physically with the younger guys and the guys who haven't played to get them ready for spring to some degree. But also at the same time, we've got to do a good job of how the game plan will fit in."

On the Air Force defense:

"It was funny you ask that because I just got done looking at the film, and this is one of the better defenses they've had. I don't think we undersell anybody, but they were a little better than I thought, personally, than I saw on film. They were fast. Talking to Troy [Calhoun] afterwards, he felt the same way as in their defense, maybe the best defense they've had. I thought they were pretty good last year. I mean, they had a couple of defensive linemen last year that were pretty good."

On if the offensive line took a step back:

"I don't know if it's a step back. Obviously, we wish we would have played better, executed better. The part I don't like is, you can call it a step back, is discipline. When you don't follow through and the false starts, it drives me crazy. Keshawn [Banks] had an offsides penalty, that drives me crazy too."

On recruiting from Hawaii:

"We've got, I think, four or five guys, from the islands and I think that's important. Going there and having the opportunity to engage with some of the high school coaches and those kinds of things I think is really beneficial."

On recruiting when in Hawaii for bowl game:

"We will be able to, besides where we practice, and I don't know exactly where that's at yet. Where we practice, that high school we're allowed to go to. There is a dead period that starts again."

On Jalen during Air Force game:

"You've watched Jalen enough and he's going to get out of the pocket. Usually, he's going to go towards his throwing hand. Well, they did a really good job, how they pushed the pocket, and then how they took away his throwing hand. I think he pressed a little bit; I haven't had a conversation yet since they were off yesterday. He was helping with recruiting yesterday. So, I think he pressed a little bit too much. Again, it's just not the quarterback, we got to protect better, and we got to run better routes. It's all part of that, so it's something that he'll learn from, I know that, and he'll do a good job with."

On this week (recruiting & Middle Tennessee):

"Yeah, we're doing a little bit of that. We're also having meetings with guys, just starting to break down Middle Tennessee also."

On Kyle Crum:

"He's, he's been doing a lot. He's throwing the ball, he's going much quicker than I thought he would be. So, I think Crum and Liu, I think both those guys you know will provide great competition."