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San Diego State-UNLV Postgame Quotes

October 8, 2016

SDSU head coach Rocky Long

Opening Statement:

"It was a nice win. I thought the team responded well from what happened to them last week. I thought we played hard, played physically and played aggressive. We called plays as such and I thought that we were the better team on the field tonight."

On the team's approach to the game:

"They're basically an option team, even though they line up in the spread. You have to play them like an option team because one of their best runners is their quarterback. They do a lot of things and spread you out from sideline to sideline and you have to defend it like you're playing an option team. They get a lot of one on one matchups in the passing game."

On SDSU's running back combination:

"It's very difficult to defend because they have two different styles. You can never feel comfortable. DJ (Pumphrey) is going to go wide and then plant a foot and go straight up the field. Rashaad (Penny) comes out and does the opposite: he runs in a straight line. The combination of the two of them makes it very difficult on a defense."

On junior running back Rashaad Penny:

"I think he's a lot more comfortable. One of the reasons DJ Pumphrey has so much success is that he is spelled by Rashaad who brings a different style. He catches the ball well out of the backfield too. He's a hard guy to tackle because he is a straight line runner and weighs over 200 pounds."

On SDSU receivers blocking:

"I think our receivers blocking had a lot to do with our ability to run the ball outside. We got big plays on the outside runs because the wide outs and wide receivers were picking the defensive backs off."

SDSU junior running back Rashaad Penny

On running and pounding on UNLV's defense:

"The big offensive line we have, it takes a lot of people. You can see the defense fold a little bit, big eight-yard and nine-yard gains. That is when you finally come out the back end and score. Just our preparation at practice is key. It is something we did a lot this week."

On his number of carries:

"I mean, it really never hit me. I just go out there and run. I just try to go out there and get positive yards. My mind is just trying to get down the field as soon as possible and get the offense off the field. I mean, it is an awesome feeling."

On 100-yard games:

"I am so used to kickoff returns. Now I am developing more as a running back. There are a lot of open seams I am taking. The offensive line is creating, just like kickoff return, once you see a hole you hit it. The offensive line is getting big blocks. You have to take advantage of what you see."

SDSU senior safety Malik Smith

On being a defensive player:

"I think it's a little bit of wear and tear on you. Our offense is real physical. Straight downhill. Run right at you every down. It wears you down as a defensive player."

On expectations of the defense:

"I wouldn't say expect, but we always want to be dominant. So the fact that we came out and dominated the game that was a good thing for our defense."

On junior cornerback Derek Babiash setting the tone at beginning of the game:

"Definitely set the tone for our defense, especially for our DBs. We wanted to come out and really shut them down this game. I think him doing that really set the tone."

SDSU redshirt sophomore quarterback Christian Chapman

On SDSU's offense tonight:

"I felt like the offense was doing pretty good for the most part. We were mixing it this game. There was a lot of passing to mix with the running to keep them off their balance, and for the most part I thought we did well. [We have to] keep them off their feet. We tried to not let them stack the box like a lot of teams try to do. We were trying to keep them backed off a little bit. We just got to mix it with throwing a little bit. We just have to finish drives. I thought that was the main thing. Penalties too, they kill us. Again, it's something we need to keep working on."

On this week's preparation:

"I just wanted to make sure that the game plan was second nature to me. I wanted to know exactly what the coaches were thinking went down each distance to run stuff. I was in the film room a lot this week and just wanted to make sure I knew what UNLV would bring to us on certain down distances and things like that."

On SDSU's plan of attack:

"I think we thought we could get the edge a little bit against them, so we ran a little bit more tosses this week and outside zone type of stuff. We also ran a little bit more sweeps too, which was something we thought we could get UNLV with a little bit. I think that worked for us for the most part."

UNLV Head Coach Tony Sanchez

Opening Statement:

"Frustrating night; you really saw the youthfulness in a lot of places tonight. (Those are) not excuses; you could see they were a more physical football team and we've done a good job of becoming more physical. They were more physical; that was probably the first time you saw the youthfulness in our front. We really struggled with some of the calls and blocking those guys up front. (UNLV quarterback) Dalton (Sneed) had kind of a grace period last week; nobody really knew what to expect. You go against a team like San Diego State, Coach Long's team, you get a whole different beast. We struggled throwing the ball and you become that one-dimensional. You're not just going to line up and pound a team like San Diego State. They're a much more physical team than that, so we struggled on first down and really never got into a rhythm throwing the football."

On UNLV's lack of experience:

"It's a young group out there and it showed tonight. They played hard; both sides of the ball played extremely hard. Bottom line is, we got beat by a better football team. They're a better football team. They showed it in really all three phases. Defensively, I thought we had a really good game plan, did a really good job giving ourselves a shot, but really we never got in any rhythm at all offensively. Their defense was just flat out better than our offense and it showed."

On UNLV's defensive performance against SDSU and holding running back Donnel Pumphrey to 141 rushing yards:

"We thought going into the game we figured if we could hold him to 150 (yards), most guys you say under 100, don't give up any really big long runs, which we didn't; we played well enough . . . (SDSU is) kind of the barometer . . . San Diego State and Boise (State) are the tip of the sword in our conference when it comes to playmakers."

UNLV redshirt freshman quarterback Dalton Sneed

On difficulty for the offense to get into a rhythm:

"It's hard to get into a groove when you go out there and you have a negative play on first down or a big negative play on second down. That will just kill the drive and we never really had a chance to get momentum going. Especially when I came out and left (a pass) short, turned the ball over on the first play of the game; that's just unacceptable. I put my defense in a bad position and they ended up getting points . . . and so I have to learn from it and go into next week."

UNLV senior linebacker Ryan McAleenan

On UNLV's performance against SDSU this year compared to last year:

"There are no moral victories, but I think we definitely made strides from last year. I think our defense fought really hard; last year we gave up 52 points so I think we did a lot better. But we're going to have to go in, watch the film, and try and get better for next week."

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