

**San Diego State University  
Football Media Conference**  
Saturday, October 21, 2017



**Rocky Long**  
Press Conference

Fresno State - 27, SDSU - 3

ROCKY LONG: Obviously we didn't play very well and we haven't played very well for the last two weeks. If I knew why, obviously we would have fixed it. Since we didn't fix it, it's obviously a coaching error. We're not approaching them the right way or we're not teaching what we want them to do the right way, because they're not playing at a very high level. I thought tonight was going to be okay, because we did what we normally do, we drove the ball right down the field and then we mess the it up with a fumbling the ball down there, so we came away with no points and after that everything kind of looked like last week.

**Q. How much of an affect do you think that fumble had like on the team the rest of the game? Because you guys did seemed seem to be right back on track.**

ROCKY LONG: I don't know. Obviously, when the team is struggling they have, their confidence level is shaky. When we have a young team their confidence level is shaky. And if they come out and things are going pretty good and then all of a sudden something goes wrong, sometimes that changes their attitude.

**Q. What are you seeing on offense as far as the keys to why you are not effective right now?**

ROCKY LONG: We're not blocking them. It's a very simple deal. We're not blocking them. And then on defense they ran the ball really well against us, they were blocking us, and we weren't able to get off blocks and make tackles.

**Q. You mentioned like their attitude, like compared to last week do you feel like this week their attitude once they felt down they weren't able to bounce back?**

ROCKY LONG: No, I don't question at all their want to and they try hard, they're just not performing at a high level. We dropped snaps from center, we get a good play and we're lined up where we cover up the tight end so there's an ineligible receiver down field. There's a lot of instances of either them not concentrating or us not coaching them well enough. I don't know, I think they try, I think they want to, I think they're running around pretty good, they're just not playing very well.

**Q. Do you think the lines regressed or were some of its issues just masked when you guys were making big plays earlier in the season?**

ROCKY LONG: No, I think the line's, offensive line's struggling with some injuries. We started a true freshman at center tonight, he played the whole game. I think that you guys have heard me tell this, the closer you get to the line of scrimmage, the more of a man you have to be. So when you're immature at the line of scrimmage, it's a killer. Where you can be immature at wide receiver or something like that and it's not a killer, because the real battle is going between the offensive and defensive linemen. So it doesn't matter how big and how strong he is, if he's 18 years old, there's some 22 and 23 year old's out there beating him up.

**Q. At some point on the game did you consider moving Keith Ismael back to center?**

ROCKY LONG: No, we didn't have a guard.

**Q. Gudino?**

ROCKY LONG: I mean, he would have had the same problem at guard as he did at center.

**Q. Rosales, did he stop practicing this week or he just wasn't cleared or?**

ROCKY LONG: No, he couldn't go. He's been trying to go for the last two or three weeks, he hasn't performed at a very high level and we're trying to get him well.

**Q. Say anything in particular at halftime? You're down 14, but it's still a ball game.**

ROCKY LONG: No, I told them it was an opportunity for us to go back out there and show what kind of competitors we were and turn this thing around and win the game. And then I actually thought we were going to. I think it was -- they had the ball first, we were three and out and we returned a punt to about the 50 yard line and we were unable to do anything with it.

**Q. How disappointing is a loss like tonight?**

ROCKY LONG: They're all disappointing. They're all the same. They're all just as disappointing. I don't feel any different than I did last week.

**Q. Was the homecoming and everything, does that make it any different just --**

ROCKY LONG: I think that maybe more people came because of the homecoming festivities. The difference

between the approach of a team should never be different. No matter what the occasion is, it shouldn't be different. Consistent football teams play pretty good most of the time. Everybody has a -- they have some drop offs, they have some valleys in there, but consistent football teams should play the same every week.

**Q. Going back to those first three plays after you guys had the good punt return, three straight runs with Penny, the last linebacker just blows right through you untouched. In that early going were you just trying to reestablish something again as far as you guys come out from halftime and you wanted to reestablish the run or hoped to reestablish the run?**

ROCKY LONG: No, I think that what was it, third and three? Or third and two, might even have been third and two, I don't exactly remember.

**Q. It was third and six or something.**

ROCKY LONG: It was third and six?

**Q. Because he had gained two yards, two yards, so it was like third and six. Third and four.**

ROCKY LONG: Third and four. There we go. Third and four. We have just as much chance making it with him on third and four as we do throwing it. And then I know the passing game doesn't look good, but our passing game is built on play action pass. And if you're not running the ball very well, the passing game's not very good either.

**Q. Can you remember the last time the offense wasn't able to score a touchdown at all and what's that like as a defensive coach?**

ROCKY LONG: I don't remember the last time. I mean, whenever you don't score, it's disappointing.

**Q. Do you feel like Christian's making the best decisions he can, given the situation he's in, as far as being under pressure as much as he's been?**

ROCKY LONG: He's been under a lot of pressure and when we go back to pass -- I don't know, I have to watch the film to figure out if he's going, if nobody's open and that's why he's scrambling, that's why he's getting sacked or if he's hesitant about throwing the ball when a guy comes open or should come open if he's hesitating on throwing it. I don't know until I see the film. I mean, our offense the last two weeks has been pretty ugly. I mean, the question people ask, well why don't you spread it out and throw it. That's not, that's not the formula to winning. I mean, some people can do that, not very many. Most people that win a lot of games establish the run. So we can't change our formula, we just got to do it better.

**Q. Are you seeing a difference in the way the defenses are playing you guys as you go through the season?**

ROCKY LONG: No, they played us exactly the same way last year too. They're not lining up any different, we're just not blocking them as well.

**Q. Quality different though? The quality of the opponent different?**

ROCKY LONG: Oh, I think this whole year to this point the schedule has been very difficult. I mean, we have played some very talented football teams. And we have beat some of them and we haven't beat some of them.

**Q. In some ways the Boise state and Fresno State have played almost better against you than Stanford did, does it say something for the teams in the conference?**

ROCKY LONG: Yeah, I think it says something about the quality of some of the teams in the conference. I think that the top four or five teams in the conference can play against anybody and play well. I mean, before Fresno State got their run going and got their system established on offense and defense, they hung in there with Alabama and they hung in there with Washington. I bet you it would be a completely different game right now the way they're playing. I bet you they could play real well against them right now. A lot better than Tennessee did.

**Q. Do you think when Fresno, basically in the first half, when they connected on those passes that it kind of kept your DB's and linebackers from playing the run as aggressively as they would?**

ROCKY LONG: I think when you get beat deep it prevents you from attacking the line of scrimmage as quickly at safety. You're a little more hesitant to run to the line of scrimmage if you've had some guy run by you.

**Q. Does did it happen a little too much tonight and why did it happen just the deep balls getting completed?**

ROCKY LONG: I said this once before, one deep ball was a great throw and our DB didn't make -- how many deep balls did they have? What do you count as a deep ball.

**Q. 30 plus.**

ROCKY LONG: 30 plus? How many did they have?

**Q. Maybe four or five.**

ROCKY LONG: I'm guessing two. One of them was a great throw and a great catch and one of them their guy was a whole lot faster than our guy.



## Mikah Holder

## Trey Lomax

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#### **Q. Trey, what's your initial reaction to the game?**

TREY LOMAX: Just disappointing. We're not responding very well right now to adversity. We get down and things just kind of fall apart, so it's all I can really say. I know we didn't play remotely close as hard as we have before and we're not making enough plays on defense, we're not getting stops, we're not controlling the line of scrimmage, we're not covering well, it's a combination of everything defensively. It's tough right now, that's a huge loss. We came in we thought, we were prepared, and we just got dominated, so we got to bounce back Monday. We only have 12 guaranteed opportunities this season, so we've got to come out and take advantage of every week and approach each week one game at a time and just get better. But we're not playing very well right now.

#### **Q. What are your thoughts on their game plan offensively?**

TREY LOMAX: We knew what they were doing, it was plays we practiced, plays we defended against in practice during scouts and stuff, but they just dominated. I don't think anyone on our defense can say they won any of their one-on-one matchups tonight. I know I didn't, there's a lot of plays that I left on the field that I should have played. And when you're not winning your matchups you're not going to be successful and defense and I'm sure it's the same on offense, so. That's all I got.

#### **Q. When they were completing those deep balls early on, do you think that had an effect on you guys not attacking the run as quickly and aggressively?**

TREY LOMAX: We were basically calling the same, we were basically running the same defense. It's the first deep ball we gave up I kind of sat on -- they ran like a post and a dig and I kind of hesitated on the dig, and it opened the post up. It's not nothing that they were doing that had us out schemed, we just weren't executing very well. It wasn't that we were out of position and things like that. I mean we were out of position, but that's on us, it wasn't anything with the play calls, we just didn't execute very well.

#### **Q. Mikah, has the way defenses are covering you guys sort of letting scheming for you guys, has that changed during the course of the season?**

MIKAH HOLDER: I don't think it's changed. Everybody is playing us basically the same. They're stacking the box and putting us mostly man on the outside. I think it just might look different because we were not executing the same way we were early on in the year. We just hit a slump within these last two games that we got to bounce back from.

#### **Q. Can you remember a game where you guys weren't able to score a touchdown or if you have it had like in college or even high school?**

MIKAH HOLDER: No, it's been awhile for this type game so it's a little embarrassing. It's something that can't happen with us. We got to put the ball in the end zone at least once, especially at home. Something that just can't happen. So we got to bounce back from it, like I said.

#### **Q. Did you have a feeling at halftime like you could still turn it around? Or did you have a feeling like we're getting outplayed out executed, I mean, did you know at halftime, okay, we got a chance back into this, or has this slump thing just kind of been an internal thing that?**

TREY LOMAX: I knew that, we knew that we weren't out schemed or anything like that, it was just a matter of guys going out and playing hard enough. So we knew, obviously, if we turned around and played like the team we had been at the beginning of the season that we're still in the game, we're still -- still have 30 minutes left on the clock, a whole half was plenty of time. But we knew we were getting out executed, we knew the guys weren't playing hard enough and that was addressed at halftime. So we had full confidence coming out that we could still turn it around and come back. But defensively we didn't, we couldn't make a play all night, we haven't had a turnover now in three games which is something that's been huge for us the last couple years and that was a big part of our success and we haven't done that. We're not giving our offense good field position, we're not getting off the field on third down, we're not making plays when we need to make plays. So we just got to improve for our team to have a chance to win.

**Q. You talked about a lot of those different things. Do you feel like you know the answers for what you have to do, it's just a matter of doing it or is it trying to figure out what's going wrong and not sure yet?**

TREY LOMAX: If we knew we wouldn't be in this position, but it's definitely something that we got to figure out if we want to have a chance to win games, because right now we are not controlling the line of scrimmage, which is a major part of our success here both offensively, we want to run the ball and defensively, the way our defense is schemed up we have to control the line of scrimmage and that's something we're not doing, guys aren't playing hard enough, and that starts with the seniors down. So I don't think we're doing a good enough job, I know I'm not doing a good enough job out there playing hard enough making enough plays and setting a good example for the younger dudes. But yeah, I don't know, we don't have the answers right now but we got to figure it out.



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# San Diego State-Fresno State Postgame Quotes October 21, 2017

## **Fresno State head coach Jeff Tedford**

### **On being 4-0 in the Mountain West:**

"It's more than just the big picture. This one outing was nice to see. To go on the road and beat a quality team like that, that's not easy to do. I'm really proud of our guys and our staff."

### **On bringing the Old Oil Can Trophy back to Fresno:**

"That's always great. It's icing on the cake when you can do something like that. It's great to see them hold that up, have pride in it, and be able to take it back home."

### **On the rivalry against San Diego State:**

"It's there, but really the focus is on us and our execution, preparation, and things like that. Our players do a really good job of focusing on that and not getting too emotional about things and just going out and staying focused on the job at hand."

### **On the team's defense the past two games:**

"Defensive staff is doing a great job, led by Orlando Steinauer. Players are playing really hard, playing physical. That's a tough offense right there and to be able to stop the run and try to make them one-dimensional. That always helps when you can play a team game and get a lead. Then it turns them in to somebody that they don't really want to be – and that's throwing the football. I thought we pressured the passer really well, too. We put some heat on him and then let him sit back there. Excellent job by our defense."

### **On using the same game plan as Boise State:**

"Stuff that we do, it fits in to our scheme. I think one of the biggest assets of Orlando is he really includes the staff, and so it's a group effort by them. They coach real hard here during the week and the players really take to it. There was a lot of focus coming in to this game. I'm really proud of them."

### **On running back Josh Hokit's performance tonight:**

"He ran hard, him and Jordan Mims. Mims had over 100 yards. Josh ran hard as well. That was the game plan coming in. We were going to be patient with the run and run down hill. Be physical up front. Those guys are just carrying the ball though. It's the guys up front that are creating the creases. I thought the line played excellent tonight."

### **Fresno State offensive lineman Aaron Mitchell**

#### **On being 4-0 in the Mountain West:**

"I haven't even had a chance to think about it yet. Our fans travel really well. I had a bunch of family here. I know a bunch of guys had a lot of family here. You heard them. You heard them in the fourth quarter. They were loud. We let them know Fresno State was here. We play with a chip on our shoulder. We play hard. We haven't arrived at all yet. I don't think we've even played our best game.

#### **On if it felt like a home game:**

"I've been saying this was a home game since the beginning of the week. I'm from here, Christian Cronk is from here, a lot of guys are from around here. I said it before the game. It's a home game. No doubt. Last time I played here was when I was a senior, and it's hitting me. I love it here, but I'm a Bulldog. Fresno State travels well, and I'm super proud of them. Can't appreciate the fans enough. They give us juice. They bring the noise. I'm looking forward to going back home and giving them a game to watch.

#### **On preparing for this week:**

"We prepped really well this week. I have to give it up to our scout team. They gave us a hell of a look. They worked hard on it. They grind just like we do. They gave us a great look. Every team has a weakness. We knew this game was going to be a big battle, and it was. We ran the ball really well. I'm a little disappointed – two yards away from our goal, but for a team that pressures like that, I have to give it up to our backs. They fought hard."