

San Diego State University Football Media Conference

Sunday, September 17, 2017



Rocky Long Press Conference

ROCKY LONG: I think the players probably told you everything you need to know, but I'll answer any questions you have.

Q. Can you comment on Kam's play today.

ROCKY LONG: I thought he played well. We expect him to play like that. He's a talented athlete. He's an experienced guy. Now he's playing a new position. He's been a safety ever since he's been here. We moved him out to corner. He's still learning his skills out at corner.

But he made a lot of big plays tonight. But we kind of expect that out of him.

Q. How big was that play when he tracks down Bryce Love, you hold them to a field goal?

ROCKY LONG: Yeah, we tell our defensive backs to try to run him down and keep them out of the end zone. As long as they're not in the end zone, there's a chance they're not going to get in the end zone.

I take pride in our players because our players chase the ball as good or better than most defenses do. He was chasing the ball, saved a touchdown. That might have been the difference in the game. There were a lot of big plays out there, but that might have been the biggest difference in the game.

Q. Talk about Mikah Holder today.

ROCKY LONG: I think there was a lot of big plays out there. Mikah Holder played very, very well. I don't know what he says, but he's got bragging rights for the rest of his life, right? Any time they get into it, kind of two brothers get into it, he'll just bring up the score, he wins every time, right?

Q. How good was Christian on that last drive? He had to make two or three really big throws in that final drive.

ROCKY LONG: I think Christian was good the whole night. I thought he made some very good throws. I thought he made some good decisions. He was under harassment. He was under pressure a lot. He got hit a lot, too.

That shows you what quality he is as a quarterback. When you get hit a lot, usually you start throwing it bad

or start throwing it to the other team. He didn't. We had a bad series the series before that. Our fullback moves in the backfield. That's a five-yard penalty. Then we snap it. He doesn't catch the shotgun snap. We're even out of field goal range.

So the series before that, we didn't play very well. All of a sudden they went in there, and with his leadership, they took it down the field and scored the winning touchdown. That's a quality quarterback.

You can't be right every time, you can't play well every single snap and every single play. A quality player will have his good times and bad times, but he always comes out when it matters the most.

Q. Talk about the joy you saw on the field after the game.

ROCKY LONG: I thought it was a little scary. All those college kids running out there. I didn't know what to think.

But, no, I thought it was really neat. I thought it was cool.

Q. Is it hard to call this just any other game when you see your fans storm a field?

ROCKY LONG: Well, I mean, it probably meant something to the fans, right? Our football program, running a football program is different than being a fan.

Q. You've been here for a long time. Nothing like that has happened since you've been here. You must take some pride in bringing this program to where it is, getting kind of that reaction.

ROCKY LONG: I'm going to tell you the truth. All I've done is facilitate kids to have a chance to be successful. That's all I do. I don't make one play. In fact, one long run tonight was my fault because I called a lousy defense. If I'd have called the right defense, they might not have scored as many points as they did.

All I do is facilitate letting players play, try to point them in the right direction, give them a scheme that gives them a chance to win. Players win games, coaches do not. So I'm proud of them. I'm happy for them.

Q. What was their confidence like when you called those two blitzes with Kelly? Something you saw

in Stanford's alignment?

ROCKY LONG: I'm holding that.

Every once in a while a coach will call the right defense, too, and it works. Every once in a while that happens. Or a coach will call the right play, and it works. Every once in a while that happens.

Q. What did you say to the players when the lights went out?

ROCKY LONG: Didn't say anything to them. Told them they're going to come back on in 15 minutes and we better score a touchdown to win. I mean, what do you think we do? Go tell ghost stories?

Q. Talk about the winning play to Wells for the score.

ROCKY LONG: Yeah, at that time we were running the ball very, very well. So whenever you run the ball well, the defensive backs, their eyes start moving away from where they're supposed to look and start looking in the backfield. As soon as they start looking in the backfield, play-action pass works.

Even though there's a guy responsible for the tight end in that situation man-to-man, he's looking at the runningbacks, and all of a sudden the tight end gets a leverage position on the defensive back.

Christian did a nice job of faking the run, threw it to him, David Wells did a nice job of running over him into the end zone.

Q. Christian talked about a year ago he would have been more nervous in those situations, thought the year made the difference for him. Do you agree?

ROCKY LONG: Yes. I think that's true. This year he's a better quarterback than he was leading up to this year. I think most of the players in our program that come to us as freshmen, they're much better players when they're juniors and seniors because they work at it and they want to be. We just facilitate an ability to make them get better. If they don't get better, someone's not coaching them.

Q. How is he better in a way or two?

ROCKY LONG: I've already explained it. You don't take an average quarterback and chase him around and beat him up and knock him down, then have him come out and lead the game-winning drive down the field to win the game. A good quarterback does that. An average quarterback doesn't do that. Most likely freshmen quarterbacks can't do that.

Q. How do you keep this team rolling like this and avoid a letdown at all?

ROCKY LONG: I have no idea. I mean, you try to keep

things routine. You try to keep things on an even keel, which you guys make it very hard to do, by the way, because every game is the most important game in the history of this program.

But as a coach, you try to keep them on an even keel, on a routine, so there are no big ups and downs. That doesn't mean we're going to win every game. I hope we do, but we got to play at a certain level in every game to have a chance to win.

If you let them listen to the media, they'll be way up here and way down here. I mean, I'm concerned about next week's game because they're going to get patted on the back about this game. I'm happy for them. I'm proud for them. That was a big-time win. But we got a whole bunch more football to play. Our number one goal is to win the conference championship.

Well, we play a very good team next week, and it's our first conference game. Next week we play a very good team. They're our first conference game. Now, I didn't tell them that because I think they ought to enjoy it for two days. But Monday they're going to hear all about it.

Q. David Wells said your goal was to be the most physical team on the field every night. Do you think your team was tonight?

ROCKY LONG: No. I think both teams were equally physical. I thought we outplayed them. If it wasn't for three long runs, I think we would have won the game anyway. But the last drive, then Kam's interception, preserved the victory that I thought we deserved.

Q. Stanford offense started out slow. Time of possession was way in your favor. Your defense, were you feeling better about your decision to only play two safeties instead of three?

ROCKY LONG: We only played that defense against certain personnel that they put in the game. If you notice, when they put in extra offensive linemen, that's when we put in our package with extra defensive linemen and linebackers.

It worked pretty good most of the time until that last whatever it was, 60-yard touchdown run or 70-yard touchdown run. Up until that time, I thought it worked pretty good. Then I was wondering why we did it in the first place.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach.

ROCKY LONG: Thank you.



Christian Chapman

David Wells

Rashaad Penny

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. David, can you take us through the play you scored at the end.

DAVID WELLS: Oh, man. Well, I was hoping my number would get called. Thank Coach Horton. Put up a great play call. Just had a late release on the Sam. Once I was able to push him inside, Chapman found me in the flat, great pass.

Just thought to myself before the play, There's no way I'm not letting myself get in the end zone. It was just a willpower thing. Thanks to all my brothers out there. Everybody played such a great game. It was a hard-fought game from the beginning till the end.

It's an awesome feeling when you're able to get that game-winning touchdown and help all your brothers out.

Q. You said this was an opportunity game. What did this opportunity mean?

RASHAAD PENNY: Definitely gave us national recognition like we are a team to play with. I feel like everybody overlook because we just in the Mountain West. Tonight proved it. We can match up with anybody. We coming at you. You guys know what we're going to do.

Hats off to Stanford. They played so well. There were times where they stuffed us in the backfield. We got a lot of flags. Ball backing up. That just shows how greedy this team is and how fight, and the grit we play with. That's because of Coach Long. He instilled that in us. We take our hats off to him because he done a heck of a job. This is one of them wins, the nation is definitely going to be on the watch list for us.

Q. Christian, what goes through your mind during the long delay when the lights go out? Sitting there cold for 15, 20 minutes.

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: Yeah, I was saying it was the calm before the storm type of thing. We were all in

there, telling each other, This is it. Crazy. Can't write it any better. Lights shut off, everybody is showing their lights. The fans are going crazy. Telling our brothers, This is it, this is our drive. If we want to be something, this is what we got to do. Everyone came together. We finished off a great drive. It was amazing.

Q. How tough was this game for the defense?

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: They have great DBs. In the first half, they were bringing pressure throughout the whole game. They were getting to me a little bit. They were bringing some stunts, bringing some stuff here and there.

Hats off to them. They were doing well the first half. After the first half, make adjustments. That's what we did. We came out, we were firing.

Q. A game like this where suddenly it's over and there's so much emotion, all of a sudden you guys see these thousands of kids streaming at you, what is going through your heads at that point?

DAVID WELLS: It's an awesome feeling. Stuff you dream of as a kid. Scoring a game-winning touchdown, then the whole entire fan base rushing the field. It's an awesome feeling. Really is an awesome feeling.

But now it's time for us to get ready for Air Force. This is the start of Mountain West Conference now. Our goal this year is to win 22. To do that we've got to win every single game from here on out.

This was definitely a statement game for us, come out here and show what kind of team we are. Showed how tough we are, how resilient we are no matter what happened. Now it's time to get back to business.

Q. Rashad, have you ever been a part of anything like that before?

RASHAAD PENNY: Never. I mean, Cal wasn't like that. Cal was a totally different team. It was little bit of a revenge game.

This is Stanford. We talking about the same team that does the same thing. One thing Coach Long preached before the game is, Who is the most toughest? They know what we're going to do. We know what they're going to do. They going to pound us. We going to

pound them.

At the end of the game, you all know who the aggressors were. I think it was us. Hats off to them because they a heck of a team. They brought everything. It was fun.

Q. Given the reputation of this program, especially the last couple of years, was focused around the run game. When it came down to it, you had to make two or three important throws on the last drive. In a program that is so predicated around the run game, how satisfying is that?

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: The run game opens up the pass game. It's a complement of each other. Rashad was running the ball well tonight. That just opened up throws for me. We got into third down. I know my job is to get us out of third down. If it's third and long, I know how to make the throws. Got down to it. A lot of teams think we're going to throw the ball down there. We'll hit you with the play-action. You saw what David can do, all the grunt and grind he did to get into the end zone. Great way to finish it.

Q. How did you do your job?

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: I thought I did well for the most part. Got a third down a lot of times, a lot of good plays that coach called. But, yeah, I thought I did my job well tonight.

Q. Rashaad, right before the lights went out, on that play, you came off the field, maybe shaken up slightly. Did that delay help you gather yourself?

RASHAAD PENNY: Most definitely. I mean, I'm not in the greatest shape, but I know I'm in football shape. Sometimes I just got to tap my head.

Then again, it was an amazing drive. I mean, hats off to a young offensive line, which a lot of people thought couldn't do anything like this. But in that whole football program facility we got over there, we knew they could do this. Hats off to them. I think they the ones should be getting all this. All five of them should be sitting up here because not many people believed in them.

We was all in. That's four freshmen on that offensive line. They coming back next year. That's deadly.

Q. You're friends with Kameron Kelly.

RASHAAD PENNY: That's my roommate. I'm going to give him crap about it. I don't know what to say. I can't explain his game tonight. He played like a man possessed. He was all over the field.

This is the game we all wanted. Like I said, this is an opportunity game. We took this game. It's just another win for us. 3-0. I know everybody is going to make it

as big as possible, but it's just another game for us. We just getting ready for Air Force.

Q. You made some good plays to Mikah Holder.

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: I knew we were going to Mikah this game. Especially he was lining up on his brother. We tried to give him some opportunities to make some plays. Mikah is one of our best receivers, so we gave him some opportunities. I think he made the most of it.

There is probably a few he would tell you he wished he had back. For the most part, Mikah did well. Got to have bragging rights on his brother for a few years now.

Q. Any chance you set an NCAA record for selfies after the game on the field?

RASHAAD PENNY: That was awesome. Like I said, I never been a part of something like that. As a kid, all of us probably dreamed of just watching the field being stormed. But people running up taking selfies, the fans being excited.

This is something San Diego wanted. Sadly, the Chargers, but the Aztec gained ground around here. It's that one city, one team thing. Everybody is so excited about it. We're excited.

Like I said, it's just another win for us. We're getting ready for next week.

Q. Christian, you said this makes you 3-0. This is the first time this program beat a Power 5 team in 36 years.

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: For the city, too. I'm from here. How many people came up to me and said, So glad you stayed home, hometown guy.

It meant so much to me, meaning I can bring that back to my city, win something like that. It means a lot to me. Especially, I mean, to see all the Carlsbad kids here, Pop Warner kids here. To do that in front of my hometown people. No better feeling than that. A big win for us. I love it.

Q. David Wells in San Diego, they think about that other guy, the pitcher. Maybe a different David Wells we need to think about now.

DAVID WELLS: That man is a Hall of Famer. Of course, he's going to have all the bragging rights to the name. I'm just thankful, thank God for all of my opportunities. Thank you to the training staff for getting me back on to the field, getting me back from my injury. Thanks to Coach Hall, all my coaches, and especially my family. Couldn't have done any of this without them. Awesome feeling to make the Wells name proud.

Q. Christian, are you a different quarterback in any way from last year? If so, how did that one extra year of experience help you on the last drive?

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: I've matured a lot. Last year probably in those situations, you're super nervous. But I've kind of been in some things like that before. Got a little experience under my belt. Kind of I knew not to get overly excited or anything. I just had to do my part. When my number was called, just don't do anything stupid at that point. Don't throw an interception. Try not to take a sack in that last possession. Just move the ball as best as I can. I know that maturity does a lot. I think it kind of showed.

Q. Why should the rest of the country not be surprised by this?

RASHAAD PENNY: They shouldn't. To us, we not surprised. We just a San Diego State team trying to win.

DAVID WELLS: The way we're trained is be the toughest team on the field. That's our goal, is every single game to be the toughest team on the field. Stanford is known to be one of the tougher teams in the country. They're a Power 5 team. They run the ball just like us and everything like that. Now it's time for us to step out of that shadow, time to show everybody we're tough sons of guns out here. We're ready to come play ball against anybody.

Q. Should you be ranked now in the top 25?

DAVID WELLS: I don't see why not. I think we have a good plea to it. We beat a top-20 team. It was at home. But you know what, beat a top-20 team, we're 3-0. You know what, going to keep getting better from here.

Q. Christian, you agree?

CHRISTIAN CHAPMAN: Yeah. No one gave us a chance but the guys in our room, our coaches, the guys on our floor. The people around us believed in us. That was the expectation, is we don't care who you are, we're going to play smash-mouth football and compete with you. I think that shows the nation we're 3-0.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, guys.

San Diego State University
Football Media Conference
Sunday, September 17, 2017



Kameron Kelly

Mikah Holder

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Questions.

Q. Mikah, you see Alijah lined up across from you, he tackles you. What was that like?

MIKAH HOLDER: It was pretty exciting. I thought the ball was going to come my way. Alijah is really good at press, watching film. I took it upon myself to get off the line from him. I got a clean release, caught the ball. Once I got up, it was a great feel to know I got one catch against my brother. I'm going to hang it over his head for the rest of my life.

Q. How confident was Christian Chapman's passes to you? Do you feel you were able to catch the ball better today?

MIKAH HOLDER: You saying the accuracy of his passing? Christian was very accurate today. He's a really good quarterback. He's progressed in these last few years. He's just doing what he does.

Q. Your brother came after you, swiped the ball out of your hand.

MIKAH HOLDER: I wouldn't say that. It was me. I made a bad play. Ball went right through my hands. Got to give it to him, he had good cover sometimes.

Q. Mikah, to win and have the game you had, what's that like?

MIKAH HOLDER: It's big. Knowing just 'cause I had so many family coming. It was a lot of pressure, but it's something I wanted to embrace because the magnitude of this game was just crazy.

Being a twin, he's like my soulmate, just growing up together, just being like 13 years in the same bed, 18 years in the same room. We got a bond that you just can't break.

I love the guy.

Q. Can you talk about how happy you are (indiscernible)?

MIKAH HOLDER: You say is he hurting?

Q. Yes.

MIKAH HOLDER: It's a tough loss for them because it

was a battle. It was a good team. We're both good teams. It's got to sting for them.

But they'll bounce back. They're a good team.

Q. Saw you guys share some words out there at different points during the game. What did you say to each other?

MIKAH HOLDER: Me and Alijah, we're not smack talkers. It's all love. I was like, Watching some plays, man, you better keep your head up on that tackle, you're going to hurt yourself. I'm trying to see you after the game.

Q. Talk about how well you played.

KAMERON KELLY: Coach Long put me in a good position with all the plays he called. Those two corner blitzes, only two times he ran them, and they came up both times. First time he didn't see me, second time the runningback saw me, I made an inside move. Got to give it to Coach Long and the rest of the guys.

Q. When the throw came your way at the end, was it slow motion?

KAMERON KELLY: It was for sure slow motion. I think I told myself three sentences while the ball was in the air. You can't drop this, it's on you. If you drop it if, y'all are going to lose. Something like that. Then as soon as it hit my hands, bobbled a little bit. I had to just, like, grab on for dear life, yeah.

Q. How good did that feel to make that play?

KAMERON KELLY: It felt amazing. I give God all the glory. Put me in a great position. I honestly didn't think we were going to even come my way on that last play or even on the last drive. As soon as I seen the quarterback look at me, drop his shoulders, I was like, Here it comes.

Q. Kam, why should the rest of the country not be surprised about what just happened?

KAMERON KELLY: I mean, we've been doing this for three years, going on three years now. As much as we say the rest of the country probably shouldn't be surprised, they're always going to be surprised because we're just little old San Diego State.

We take that to heart, though. We take it to heart that people most of the when we play big games, the only

people that believe we're going to win are the ones in the locker room. We take that to heart, go out there on the field, give it our all.

again.

Q. Rocky kept saying this wasn't the biggest game of the year, Air Force was. In reality, was this the biggest game of the year?

KAMERON KELLY: I mean, our biggest goal is to win the conference championship. If we would have lost this game, we still could win the conference championship. Technically Air Force is the biggest game. This does a lot for the program and our confidence as well.

Q. Is that the biggest win of the year?

KAMERON KELLY: So far (smiling). So far until the conference championship, so...

Q. Was there more pressure on you, the corners in general?

KAMERON KELLY: A little bit. We knew that we were going to have to go out there and lock down. Bryce Love, 13 for 184. He's a great runningback. We knew if we could get as many people in the box as possible without letting them get deep shots down the field, we would be able to win.

Q. How big was the play when you tackled and forced them to kick a field goal?

KAMERON KELLY: That was real big. We work on that every day in practice. We work on running the ball. Coach White stays on me, Coach Long stays on me. They want me to take angles on the ball, even when it's not coming to me in practice every single play. Coach White always tells me, You're going to make a big tackle to save the game if you work on running the ball.

I just ran over there. I didn't even know it was going to pop. When it did, Here it goes.

Q. Mikah, several times in the last couple years, Christian has led miraculous drives at the end of the game. What is it about him that you see he's able to eliminate nerves?

MIKAH HOLDER: Christian is a big-time player. In big games, he steps up. The first time we played Wyoming, it didn't work out for us. The second time, he did the same thing.

Just a great athlete, a great quarterback. Just leads us to wins and the championship again.

Q. Did the coaches you tell you anything during the blackout?

MIKAH HOLDER: We are all in the zone. It threw us off a little. Our captain, Antonio, came in, brought the whole offense together, got all our minds focused



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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

GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | @AZTECSPR | #GOAZTECS

Postgame Football Quotes – Stanford at San Diego State Saturday, Sept. 16, 2017 – San Diego Stadium – San Diego, Calif.

Stanford head coach David Shaw

On the tough loss against SDSU:

"This is a really good football team. I hope we didn't take them lightly, but I didn't do a good job of getting us ready to play a very good, very physical football team that not only runs the ball but has a quarterback that can get out of the pocket and do a bunch of different things. Offensively, I think we ran the ball pretty well. Our protection was lacking at times and our quarterback play. (Quarterback) Keller (Chryst) up to this point was playing very well but did not have his best game today. We need him to play better and a lot of guys to play better for us to beat a team we want to beat."

On how much SDSU had the ball:

"I think it's hand-in-hand. We did not maintain it enough and at the same time, we didn't get enough stops. They had way too many second and shorts and a couple explosive plays on first down. We have to stop people. We did not stop a very good USC team last week and we did not stop this good San Diego State team enough tonight. It goes hand-in-hand. Offensively, we were moving the ball pretty well and then we get penalties and negative plays. It's hard to come back from being second and long, third and long especially when the other team is second and medium, third and short - it's too difficult to win."

On if the power outage affected his defense:

"I don't think so. If anything, San Diego State had the momentum. They had just gotten an explosive play, they had just converted a third down and got a big play before the lights went out. I commend the officials for keeping both teams informed so that we could get our guys some rest and some water and then we got a five-minute period to get them loose and get them warm. Our guys were ready to go."

On the chippy play during the game:

"First of all, I'll say coach Long, thankfully, at halftime did a great job of corralling his team. It showed the respect that they have for him. That chippiness was not on our part and in the second half it didn't show up again so I know that coach Long and his staff addressed it."

Stanford junior cornerback Quenton Meeks

On the defensive execution:

"It's disappointing. We just didn't play to our standard or execute the way we wanted to. Hats off to San Diego State; They're a great football team, a physical football team, but we just didn't play our football across the board."

On how they defended against Rashaad Penny:

"We had some plays where we stopped him pretty good, but he broke loose on a couple plays. I mean, he's one of the best backs in the country so got to give hats off to him, but like I said we let him loose too many times just not doing our jobs."

On how they performed against the SDSU passing game:

"I think we were solid. There were some plays we would like to have back, some plays I would like to have back. Hats off to him, he's a good quarterback. He made some throws in tough windows and he's got good receivers. Mikah Holder, he's a problem."

On the sequence after the power outage:

"You got to make plays. On that slant, I had tight coverage on him, but tight coverage is not good enough, you got to have perfect coverage. I got to get better on that and as a team we got to get better with doing our jobs across the board."

Stanford senior cornerback Alijah Holder

On his twin brother SDSU senior wide receiver Mikah Holder:

"[I covered him] countless times. But I'm so proud of him. I'm proud of what he did, I think he played an awesome game and everything he did out there, I really was rooting for him."

On if they underestimated SDSU quarterback Christian Chapman:

"I think we should have done a better job of preparing for him. Coming off that loss against USC with (quarterback) Sam Darnold, we thought we were ready for him and we underperformed. This week we were really worrying about the run game a whole lot because they run the ball 80 percent of the time. It could have been that we didn't prepare enough for the pass but it's not 'what if?' it's more what we need to do now. We can't look back on what could have been, we need to focus on what will be."

-SDSU-