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SDSU Football vs. Hawai'i Postgame Quotes November 24, 2018

San Diego State Head Coach Rocky Long

Can you talk about missing the first field goal in regulation and then going for two in overtime, your thoughts?

"Well, I thought obviously we have great confidence in John Baron. We thought we had done it just right. Thought we were going to win the game. Then John missed the field goal. Obviously they scored in overtime first. We scored on the first play, what gives you big-time momentum and we have a two-point play that we've worked on for about half the season that is really a difficult play to stop, so I thought we had a decent chance to win the game right there and there was no reason not to try to win it right there. And then obviously we executed the play which we've practiced for the last five or six weeks, we executed the play poorly. We even got a penalty being in the wrong formation. So that's a lack of concentration on some people's part."

Was it supposed to go to Kahale Warring there?

"No. You mean the one they actually threw? That one was called from the sideline. The one where we got the interference call is the one we work on in practice all the time."

Was it always the plan to go for two, or was it just like you said, because you scored?

"No. We scored on one play. We had all the momentum in our favor, so we decided to go for two then."

All these yards in the first half, what kind of things did you guys do? I mean, you shut them out the second half, but what changed?

"Well, we did a very poor job of coaching in the first half. I mean, we thought they were very explosive. We put some things in during the week that we thought that would confuse them a little bit, and maybe give us a better chance to win, and obviously that wasn't true. Maybe we confused ourselves more than we confused them because we didn't play worth a darn in the first half. We made some adjustments at halftime and ran those the whole second half, and obviously played a lot better on defense in the second half which gave us a chance to get back in the game, so that's all on me. That's all coaching."

You stuck with Christian Chapman most of the game and went to Ryan Agnew.

"After the first half we thought he was playing okay and then the second half we didn't think he played very well. We weren't consistently moving the ball. Even though we were playing decent defense, we didn't have a chance to get back in the game unless we got a spark from somebody or a play or two. And so Ryan went in and gave us a nice spark that gave us a chance to get back in the game and had two chances to win it."

You guys are Bowl-eligible, but with it getting crowded with teams and the number of Bowl opportunities, how do you feel going into this post-season?

"That's out of our control. So you don't think about it or worry about it."

Not concerned with the way the team played down the stretch here?

"Got a lot of concerns about the way we played down the stretch. So you have to evaluate everything that you're doing, starting number one with me. I've got to evaluate on how the program is being run and the message that is being given, because obviously the message is not getting across, or they are not accepting the message. Because you should get better as the season [goes along] -- now, injuries have a little to do with that, but you should get better as the season goes along and I don't think we got better at all. I think we're the same football team tonight that we've been for the last seven weeks -- six, seven weeks -- we were the same football team tonight. So we haven't gotten better. So number one, that starts with coaching and I'm not just talking about me. I'm talking about our whole coaching staff. I mean, there were some things done tonight by coaches that aren't good coaching."

Any thoughts on the senior class this year?

"Well, I feel bad for them, since they were a part of a lot of wins. I mean, we still have a winning season this year, too. So that class has been -- they have never had a losing season. They have had some great seasons and this one is kind of average, but they have been around here where we've done nothing but win. So you know, it's nice that they had that kind of career. I'm sure when they get over the hurt of this loss, they will feel good about themselves."

What would allow the team to be able to bounce back and go into a potential Bowl game?

"I don't know, whenever you play poorly, if you get extra practice sessions, obviously that helps you get better. And we have so many young players on our team that haven't improved like they should have, it gives you another -- it actually gives you another like spring practice so you can work on some things; other than about the last week of the preparation, you get ready for the game. The first week of the preparation, you can develop your team."

You said the Bowl is out of your control. Do you have any concerns that you could possibly get left out?

"Yeah, I think we could get left out. I've been there before. A couple times, I've been there before, a couple times."

What did you think made it difficult for you guys to stop the passing against Hawai'i?

"In the first half, I thought the game plan was terrible. I mean, we didn't execute it very well, either, but the game plan was terrible, and we changed what we were doing at half-time and it was much better the second half. In fact, they didn't score -- I mean, they scored in overtime, but they didn't score the whole second half. Now one of their drives, they were down by two scores but they fumbled and we recovered. But we played much, much better on defense in the second half than we did the first half."

Junior Running Back Juwan Washington

Do you want to talk about what happened there in that overtime?

"You know, we just went out there tried it do our best to convert it. We just didn't capitalize."

What do you think was the reason for deciding to go for two?

"Had a lot of momentum coming in. We were at home. Figured, just go for it."

Obviously scoring on the first play of the overtime period, or do you think that it was, like you said, the right decision?

"You know, any time the coaches call a play, that's the right decision for us. We just went out there and tried to execute. Just didn't get it done."

Can you talk about Ryan Agnew coming in in the fourth quarter?

"You know, just whoever is up, that's what we preach on our team is make plays, and that's what Agnew did when he came in. He just made plays for us. And no matter who is in there, somebody is going to make a play for us, get a chance to win a game. I just think that's what he was doing."

With obviously not getting the result that you guys wanted, what do you think is the message going forward, just being composed as a team?

"I think just we had plenty of opportunities to win this game, so going forward, we just need to see what those plays were and try to get better at them as we move forward because every game we've played in and ended up with a loss, there were opportunities to win the game. We just have to figure out how to keep those from happening and just get better."

Junior Linebacker Kyahva Tezino

Can you talk about on the defensive side, how you guys were doing? Obviously you hunkered down in the second half, and they gave up most of their points in first.

"Like Juwan said, we came out with momentum. You know, all the underclassmen, we felt like, just come on, because this is the seniors' potentially last game. So that's what we was really trying to do it for, trying to come out for the seniors and try to get a win."

Looking ahead, where do you think the team is at now? Obviously this is a tough loss, but how do you feel with another game potentially?

"We're good. I mean, we just got to keep building. I mean, a loss is a loss. It happens. You win some, you lose some. We just got to keep building and we have to take this momentum next year and we'll see if we're in a Bowl game."

Can you talk about, obviously they had a lot of passing yards tonight. What led to that in the first half and what changed?

"As a team, you know, we knew that they were going to come in passing the ball. We knew that they were a high percentage team of passing the ball. Our defensive backs weren't trying to give up deep balls. Obviously they gave up some deep balls, but that was the whole plan not to give up deep balls and their plan, soften coverage -- I mean, you know, after you keep going throughout the game, you're going to get comfortable. As you can see, second half, we started hunkering down, and stuff started going our way. We just couldn't finish."

Hawai'i Head Coach Nick Rolovich

Opening Statement:

"That's a big win for the program. What a football game. Rocky [Long] — hell of a coach. We knew we were going to be in a battle. Wish we could have come out of the second half being more productive and kind of put that game away. We were prepared. We were ready to go as long as needed to win that football game."

On going into overtime:

"I was hoping it would only take one. I went to overtime with Rocky when we were in Nevada, so I know he's a go-for-two guy. We lost that one, so I expected him to go for it."

On making big plays at the end:

"I thought Marcus Armstrong-Brown made some very clutch plays for us down the stretch. JoJo [Ward] and Cedric [Byrd] made some very big catches. I think they [SDSU] were very worried about John [Johnson], which a lot of people are. I just thought the closeness of our group right now is back to a level I think it was when we started the season."

On QB Cole McDonald's performance:

"We had a lot of discussions about it. We had a lot of situations, but I thought he had a really good week of practice. That's why we sent him back out there."

On the team's resiliency:

"To have two turnovers and lose that turnover battle, lose the opportunity to get a red zone score in the third or fourth quarter — this team has some nice character about it, and I think they really enjoy representing the people of Hawai'i."

Hawai'i Wide Receiver JoJo Ward

On scramble/initial route:

"It was actually a post, when we hit the goal line I just worked back to where I was going, once I knew it wasn't open, I immediately went to the opposite side and Cole [McDonald] was there to hit me. I didn't know he was going to hit me, I scrambled out that way and he happened to scramble out that way, it just worked out perfectly."

On the second half:

"In football, you have different adversities, teams, there will be ups and downs during the games. It's just football, that's what we do. We love to play it and just came out victorious at the end."

On if this was his favorite game as a player:

"No, last game was one of my favorite games so far, but this was a good one. We haven't beat San Diego State in a while, in 30 years. It feels good to come here and beat them, especially for the seniors."

Hawai'i Running Back Rojesterman Farris II

On the last play:

"I was just thinking, make the play if the ball comes my way. I just have to make a play on the ball and game is over."

On the pass interference call:

"I do think that was a bad call, but I can't do anything about that. It's done in the past now but I just have to move on and play the next play."

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