



SAN DIEGO STATE COMMUNICATIONS

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

GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | #GOAZTECS

San Diego State Football Press Conference Quotes

September 9, 2024

San Diego, Calif.

Head Coach Sean Lewis

Opening Statement:

"It feels good to get back into game week. There was great energy in the building all during the bye week. The kids put in great work last week, Tuesday through Thursday, and enjoyed some downtime on Friday and Saturday. Coaches have done a tremendous job on the road recruiting and pouring into the kids. Again, I love where we're at as an organization. The kids came back yesterday, doing things the right way, and had some good early work on a Sunday. I'm looking forward to getting into our normal routine as we prepare for a trip up to Mount Pleasant to play Central Michigan. Obviously, they're coming off a really big win. They've won six out of their last seven at home. They know how to protect their home turf and found a way to win this past week. They're a dangerous team that can do it both through the air and on the ground so we have to do a great job on our end preparing to go win and handling our day-to-day process the right way."

On what stood out to him when watching film on Central Michigan:

"It all starts up front with their guys. They returned three out of their five starters from last year and they settled in nicely together as a unit. They're a physically imposing group up front. I mean, four of the five are over 300 pounds. And then Joey Labas, a kid from Ohio that I was actually one of his first early offers in a former lifetime ago. He ended up going out to Iowa and now transferring back like he's the straw that really stirs the drink for them. A lot of their run game has RPO concepts that are built into it. He's a good decision maker and it's putting them in a good position to be successful. They're a very balanced attack in that regard."

On Central Michigan's overall balance:

"They are a well-balanced team. They're well-coached. Coach McElwain and his staff do a really good job. They have really talented kids in all three phases of the game and they have dangerous returners. They have dangerous, explosive playmakers on offense and a very sound defensive scheme. If you give them a chance, like their pick-six week one, they're opportunistic. They get their hands on it, and they're able to change the course of the game that way."

On what the defense will need to do to slow down Central Michigan:

"We need to have a really good knockback but with really good fundamentals. We need to make sure that we're setting a good edge so that the ball doesn't break our leverage and contain. And make sure that we're gap sound and play in and play out with all of it."

On coaching the team for Central Michigan's running backs:

"Find the guy with the ball and tackle him and get a lot of hats to the talent. Regardless of who's towing and who's carrying it, they all do a really good job. They're all really talented. We have to control what we can control. And again, we got to set a firm edge and be gaps sound. We got to relentlessly fly to the ball regardless of who's carrying it for them because they're all really talented. We got to show up with multiple hats to the ball and to bring that ball carrier down."

On challenges they will face due to quarterback Bert Emmanuel Jr.:

"He can do a lot of different things. They're starting to grow his package a little bit. So, you just have to be aware of how they're utilizing the different people and their different personnel packages and everything. He has a unique skill set with his package and as he continues to earn trust, you can tell that it's growing."

On being able to watch some prospects over the weekend:

"It was awesome to be able to wrap up practice here on Thursday and head up to the LA area to watch some high-caliber kids and shake hands and connect with the high school coaches in the area to continue to get to know them. We spoke to those relationships and building a deeper bond with them as well, so they know what we're building in the environment and culture that we're creating here, and that it's going to be an ideal setting for them and their kids. Then, we watched numerous games on Thursday and Friday night. Then, turned around and came back home, and had an unbelievable official visit and continued to build for the future with the guys who are here. Again, the staff has done a tremendous job. We went far and wide. It was great information that we were able to gather, and the guys did a great job this weekend as well."