

# AZTEC NEWS



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SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS

MEDIA RELATIONS OFFICE

## Game 1

South Florida Bulls (0-0) vs.  
San Diego State Aztecs (0-0)  
Sept. 4, 1999 6:05 p.m. (PDT)  
Qualcomm Stadium (71,400)

### Television

The contest is part of ESPN's Gameplan pay-per-view package and will be televised in the Tampa area. No local TV is available.

### Radio

The SDSU-USF contest may be heard live on KCBQ Radio (1170 AM), beginning with the pregame show at 5 p.m. Following Padres baseball, the game will be joined in progress on KFMB (760 AM) in addition to KCBQ. Ted Leitner will call the action with former Aztec quarterback Mark Halda providing analysis.

### On the Web

The radio broadcast is also available on the SDSU website at goaztecs.com.

### Following The Aztecs

The Rick Bay Show, KFMB, 760 AM, Thursdays, 6 p.m. Aztec Sports Weekly, Wednesdays after the Padres and Thursdays at 7 p.m., on Cox 4.

### Fax-On-Demand

Call 1-800-300-2050  
Mountain West Conference code: 692  
Aztec Release and Directory: 2005  
To set up an account: 770-399-0096

### 1999 SDSU Schedule

Record: 0-0 (0-0 Home; 0-0 Away; 0-0 MWC)  
Date Opponent W-L Score Att.  
S.4 South Florida  
S.11 at Illinois  
S.18 at USC  
S.25 at Kansas  
O.2 Air Force  
O.9 New Mexico  
O.16 at Colorado State  
O.23 at Utah  
N.6 Brigham Young  
N.20 at UNLV  
N.27 Wyoming

For Immediate Release

Aug. 27, 1999

## Aztecs Host South Florida In '99 Opener Bulls, SDSU Meeting For First Time

The San Diego State Aztecs open their 1999 football season Saturday, Sept. 4th, against the South Florida Bulls. Kickoff is set for 6:05 p.m. at Qualcomm Stadium. USF is ranked 23rd in the I-AA preseason national poll. The two schools are meeting for the first time.

### Last Season

- San Diego State is coming off a 7-5 record, including co-championship of the WAC Pacific Division and a trip to the Las Vegas Bowl. A total of 12,500 Aztec fans made the trek to Nevada for the postseason game.
- USF, which is I-AA in 1999 but on track for a I-A debut in 2001, finished 8-3 in 1998.
- The San Diego State contest marks the first for the Bulls against I-A opposition and marks the first road opener in the school's brief grid history. Incidentally, the largest road crowd that the Bulls have faced is 14,161 at Georgia Southern in 1998.

### The Coaches

#### San Diego State Head Coach Ted Tollner

- Ted Tollner enters his sixth season as head coach of the Aztec football program. In 1998, Tollner was recognized as the Western Athletic Conference Pacific Division "Coach of the Year" for his efforts in leading SDSU to a 7-5 record, a share of the WAC Pacific Division championship and the school's first bowl appearance in seven years.
- He has compiled a 32-26 record (.552) in his five seasons at SDSU. Overall, Tollner has amassed a record of 58-46-1 (.557), which includes four bowl berths, including a win in the 1984 Rose Bowl while at the helm of Southern California.
- In the spring of 1996, Tollner signed a 10-year contract with San Diego State University, an agreement unprecedented in the California State University system.
- Prior to being named SDSU's 14th head football coach, Tollner served eight years as an Aztec assistant (1973-80), under Claude Gilbert, now SDSU's defensive coordinator. The 59-year-old Tollner also spent seven years as an NFL assistant coach (Buffalo Bills -

1987, San Diego Chargers - '89-91, Los Angeles Rams - '92-93).  
 •As a head coach, Ted Tollner is 7-1-1 in season openers.

### South Florida Head Coach Jim Leavitt

•On Dec. 12, 1995, Jim Leavitt became the first football coach in University of South Florida history.  
 •The 39-year-old Leavitt enters his third season at South Florida with a 13-9 overall record. In the program's second season, he led the Bulls to an 8-3 finish and a national ranking as high as 11th, before finishing 17th.  
 •A two-sport standout (football and baseball) at the University of Missouri, Leavitt became South Florida's head coach after a six-year stint as a defensive coordinator/linebackers coach at Kansas State.  
 •Leavitt was instrumental as the defensive coordinator at K-State, in building a Wildcats defense that progressed to number one in the nation in 1995.

### The Series

•Tonight's game marks the first meeting between SDSU and South Florida.

### Significant Numbers

•The San Diego State defense allowed 20.4 points per game last season while South Florida scored 36 points per outing on its way to an eight-win season.

### Comparative Statistics (1998 Final Stats)

	SDSU	USF
Record	7-5	8-3
Conference Record	7-1	0-0
Rushing Yards/Game	186.5	191.5
Passing Yards/Game	146.9	217.4
Total Offense Yds/Game	333.5	408.9
Points/Game	20.9	36.5
Opp Rushing Yards/Game	134.3	179.3
Opp Passing Yds/Game	202.2	102.6
Opp Total Off Yds/Game	336.5	281.9
Opp Points/Game	20.4	16.2

### Very Special Teams

The South Florida Bulls have not allowed a special-teams touchdown in their two years of play. The Aztecs, meanwhile, feature Damon Gourdine, who returned a pair of punts for scores and finished second nationally with an average of 18.4 yards per return, including an SDSU record 95-yarder against Utah.

### Aztec Openers

•SDSU is 42-30-4 all-time in openers, including 4-1

under Ted Tollner.

•The Aztecs are beginning their season at home for the ninth consecutive year. In California, the winning percentage improves dramatically. The Aztecs are 15-1-1 when opening a season in Mission Valley and have suffered just two losses in season-opening home games since 1962. One of the setbacks came last season against Wisconsin.  
 •SDSU has not opened consecutive seasons with home losses since 1959 and 1960.  
 •San Diego State is 6-2-1 in its 1990s season openers.

### Qual"calm"

•San Diego State is 27-4-1 in home openers at Qualcomm Stadium. Overall, the Aztecs are 146-54-6 in their Mission Valley home.  
 •The Aztecs have won their last four games at Qualcomm Stadium and will be trying to win five straight home games for the first time since 1996 when SDSU went 6-0 at home and stretched the streak to seven by winning the 1997 opener against Navy.

### The Sunshine State

•South Florida is San Diego State's first opponent from the Sunshine State since 1992 when the Aztecs faced Miami.  
 •SDSU is 3-5 against teams from Florida (2-0 vs. Florida State and 1-5 vs. Hurricanes).

### First Timers

•The Bulls are one of three first-time foes for SDSU this season. The Aztecs will also meet Kansas and Illinois for the first time in 1999.  
 •The USF game marks the first competition for the Aztecs against non-Division I-A competition since they opened the season against then-Division II CSU-Northridge in 1993.

### Defensive Encore

•The 1998 Aztec defense finished ranked 35th in nation, allowing 336.5 yards per game. It was the best showing by San Diego State since 1970, when Claude Gilbert was in his first stint on Montezuma Mesa.  
 •Every defensive back who intercepted a pass last season, returns for 1999 (10 interceptions by three players).

### Winning Ways

•San Diego State heads into 1999 seeking its fourth winning season in five years. It would be the best Aztec run since the program reeled off 17 straight winning seasons from 1961 to 1977.

### Senior Nights

San Diego State's rebound under Ted Tollner has been

keyed by the 1999 senior class. Twenty-eight seniors were introduced at last week's Kickoff Luncheon. Eighteen of the seniors are projected starters.

**Aztec Aches**

The Aztec injury report heading into the South Florida game:

- Aazaar Abdul-Rahim, cb (right ankle sprain) - probable
- Josh Allen, de (neck sprain) - out
- Jason Asbury, ls (low back strain) - probable
- Damian deBeaubien, dt (concussion) - out
- Brad Elmore, ot (right hamstring) - probable
- Akbar Gbaja-Biamila, de (left knee sprain) - doubtful
- Damon Gourdine, wr (right ankle sprain) - probable
- Ryan Iata, de (right ACL) - out for season
- Sean Pierce, wr (right hamstring) - probable
- Sheldon Pope, db (concussion) - questionable
- Garric Simmons, rb (left ankle sprain) - out
- Greg Spillane, ot (left ankle sprain) - out

**Aztec Updates**

**Rico Curtis**

- Enters the season ninth all-time in the SDSU record book for total tackles with 272 in 34 games (8.0 tackles per game).
- Although it is doubtful he could make enough stops to wrest the top spot from Whip Walton, who tallied 407 from 1974-77, Curtis only needs 57 to surpass No. 2 Jason Moore (328 from 1994-97). If Curtis keeps making stops at his current pace, that could happen as soon as the Utah game on Oct. 23.
- Curtis is third nationally in tackles, among active defensive backs.

**Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila**

- Is taking dead aim at the Aztecs' all-time record for career sacks and tackles-for-loss. SDSU's current sack record is held by Mike Douglass, who registered 26 sacks in just two seasons from 1976-77. Gbaja-Biamila enters the season with 21 career sacks and needs just six more to take over as SDSU's all-time sack master.
- The senior All-America candidate also needs just 13 tackles-for-loss to supplant Kevin Richey in stops behind the line of scrimmage. Richey recorded 37 TFLs during his career at SDSU from 1979-82.

**Damon Gourdine**

- It may seem like a long way off, but if wide receiver Damon Gourdine is able to duplicate his successful junior year, it could catapult the pre-season All-America return man into SDSU's top-10 for career receptions.
- Gourdine enters the season with 76 career receptions

and needs to haul in another 47 to edge Webster Slaughter (122 from 1984-85) out of the 10th position. Gourdine had 55 catches last year.

**More On Gourdine**

- Damon Gourdine is sure to be watched closely by opposing defenses this season. As a junior, he hauled in 55 catches — more than a third of the Aztecs' total receptions — and scored four touchdowns.
- On special teams, Gourdine was perhaps even more dangerous ranking second in the nation in punt return average (18.4), including two TDs.

**Jonas Lewis**

- Splitting time in the San Diego State backfield with Larry Ned last season was Jonas Lewis. He carried the ball 181 times for 897 yards. A duplicate season would move the 1998 second-team All-WAC performer into No. 2 all-time in both rushing yardage and rushing attempts.
- Both records are currently held by Aztec legend Marshall Faulk, who rushed for 4,589 yards on 766 attempts between 1991-93. Lewis is currently No. 8 in rushing yardage (2,031) and No. 7 in carries (432).

**Streaks**

- It only seems like senior center Mike Malano and senior defensive end Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila should have exhausted their eligibility years ago. Entering the 1999 season, Malano has started 33 consecutive games. On the other side of the ball, Gbaja-Biamila is currently in the midst of a 24-game starting streak.

**Lewis and Larry Show, Part Deux**

- Hollywood sequels are rarely as good as the originals, but the Aztecs are hoping that a follow-up episode to the Lewis and Larry show provides just as many thrills as the original. In 1998, Lewis and Ned combined to rush for 1,659 yards and 11 touchdowns. Each average over five yards per carry and as a tandem put up a Heisman-like 184.4 ypg.

**Justin Sisco**

- With the departure of two-year letterman Don Copeland following last season, the SDSU punting game was left bare. That fact was clearly evident during the spring as the Aztecs struggled with no heir apparent. The coaching staff, however, is breathing a little easier with the signing of junior-college transfer Justin Sisco.
- A *JC Gridwire* All-American out of Riverside CC, Sisco averaged 44.8 yards per punt last season. That consistency appears to have carried over to fall camp, where he averaged in excess of 40 per try in both

scrimmages.

•Sisco will have some big shoes to fill nonetheless, as the previous two Aztec punters, Copeland and Noel Prefontaine, both averaged in excess of 42 yards per punt with Prefontaine earning first-team All-America honors (*Associated Press*).

**Aztec Accolades**

•Four Aztecs have received a plethora of preseason publicity and have been recognized by the national media as players likely to be honored again at the end of the season. The following is a synopsis of some of the recognition already bestowed on individual Aztec players:

•Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila (DE): Mike Fox/Bronko Nagurski Trophy candidate (nation's best defensive player), Preseason All-America (*NFL Draft Report*), All-America second team (*Athlon*), All-Mountain West Conference first team (*Athlon, Football News, Lindy's, Sporting News*), No. 8 defensive end in the country (*Sporting News*).

•Rico Curtis (SS): Jim Thorpe Award candidate (nation's best defensive back), All-Mountain West Conference first team (*Athlon, Lindy's*), All-Mountain West Conference second team (*Sporting News*).

•Damon Gourdine (WR/KR): All-American second team - punt returner (*Athlon*), All-Mountain West Conference first team (*Athlon, Lindy's, Sporting News*), No. 8 return man in the nation (*Sporting News*).

•Mike Malano (C): All-America second team (*Football News*), All-America third team (*Athlon*), All-Mountain West Conference (*Athlon, Football News, Lindy's, Sporting News*), Sixth-best center in the nation (*Sporting News*).

**South Florida Notes**

•SDSU marks the first-ever Division 1-A opponent for USF. The game will also mark the longest road-trip in USF's three-year existence and the largest road stadium in which the Bulls have played. The Bulls travel to San Diego after an 8-3 season that saw them post a national ranking that reached as high as 11th and finished 17th.

•Defensively, USF is at its strongest this season, returning 10 starters who have played their position for the majority of the 22 games in the program's history. The Bulls will offer an attacking 4-3 scheme, that finished ninth in the nation in overall defense in 1997, and 11th in 1998. USF held the number-one ranking

through the first five games of the 1998 season.

•The glue to the Bulls defense is their secondary, a unit which has played together since USF's inaugural season. Leading the quartet is senior Anthony Henry, a 6-2 free safety, who is flanked by two outstanding cover men in Glenn Davis, 5-11 and Bernard Brown, 5-10. The two accounted for six of USF's nine interceptions last season.

•The Bull defense is at its weakest when middle line-backer Jason Butler is absent from the lineup. In 1998, USF allowed 74 points during a two-game stretch in which Butler recuperated from a severe knee sprain. A major concern for Leavitt is the depth at the defensive front. Aside from the projected starters, only two other defensive linemen return with college experience.

•The USF offense will have to replace a starting quarterback who finished with a passing efficiency of 156.11, a receiver with 23 catches for 537 yards (four touchdowns), two linemen and a tight end.

•Junior Glen Gauntt was named the Bulls' starting quarterback coming out of spring practice. Gauntt saw action as a backup last season, completing 62.7 percent of his 59 attempts, throwing just two interceptions. The offense does like to score, averaging 36.6 points per game last season, good for a national ranking of seventh.

•Geographically, Leavitt has done well recruiting in talent-laden Florida, carrying 82 players on this season's roster.

**On the Horizon**

Six future Aztec opponents will be in action this week, including four Mountain West foes. SDSU's next opponent, Illinois, opens the season against Arkansas State.

- Arkansas State at Illinois
- USC at Hawi'i
- Villanova at Air Force
- New Mexico at UTEP
- Colorado State at Colorado
- Wyoming at Tennessee

Depth Charts

San Diego State  
Offense

SE	1	Damon Gourdine (5-7, 165, Sr.)
	11	Deric Martin (6-2, 185, So.)
WT	69	Mike Houghton (6-5, 305, So.)
	62	Chris Williams (6-5, 300, Jr.)
WG	66	Ted Printy (6-4, 300, Sr.)
	60	Johnathan Ingram (6-2, 285, Fr.R)
C	53	Mike Malano (6-2, 300, Sr.)
	64	Zach LaMonda (6-1, 290, So.)
SG	76	Andrew Kline (6-2, 300, Sr.)
	63	Kareem Missoumi (6-2, 295, Jr.)
ST	62	Chris Williams (6-5, 300, Jr.)
	78	Brad Elmore (6-3, 305, Sr.)
TE	88	Jim Ange (6-4, 240, Sr.)
	85	Sakimo Randall (6-3, 260, So.)
FL	2	Sean Pierce (5-9, 175, Jr.)
	80	J.R. Tolver (6-3, 200, Fr.R)
QB	18	Brian Russell (6-2, 205, Sr.)
	5	Jack Hawley (6-2, 215, Jr.)
RB	32	Jonas Lewis (5-9, 215, Sr.)
	4	Larry Ned (5-11, 210, Jr.)
HB	86	Gray McNeill (6-2, 250, Jr.)
	12	Lonny Mitchell (6-2, 205, Sr.)

Defense

DE	93	Kabeer Gbaja-Biamila (6-4, 245, Sr.)
	50	Amon Arnold (6-4, 235, Fr.R)
DT	92	Antwone Young (6-3, 265, Sr.)
	99	George Heather (6-5, 290, Jr.)
NT	51	Jerome Haywood (5-9, 280, So.)
	96	Jared Ritter (6-4, 255, Fr.R)
DE	97	Scottie Nicholson (6-3, 265, Sr.)
	98	Mark Scott (6-3, 275, Sr.)
SLB	52	Martin Chlumak (6-1, 240, Sr.)
	48	Brian Berg (6-1, 240, Jr.)
MLB	55	Joey Mayo (6-0, 240, Sr.)
	48	Brian Berg (6-1, 240, Jr.)
WLB	46	Michael Duran (6-2, 230, Sr.)
	38	Mac Cleary (6-1, 230, Jr.)
CB	23	Aazaar Abdul-Rahim (5-8, 175, Sr.)
	3	Ricky Sharpe (6-1, 185, Fr.R)
SS	37	Rico Curtis (6-1, 210, Sr.)
	47	Will Demps (5-11, 200, So.)
FS	19	Jermaine Watkins (5-10, 185, Sr.)
	24	Stan Bogard (6-2, 195, Jr.)
CB	22	Tairou Smith (5-7, 160, Sr.)
	36	Kevin Burton (6-2, 200, Sr.)

Specialists

PUNT	17	Justin Sisco (6-1, 185, Jr.)
PK	14	Nate Tandberg (5-9, 180, Jr.)
	1	Brian Simjanovski (6-3, 225, Fr.)
SNAP	59	Jason Asbury (5-11, 220, Jr.)
	48	Brian Berg (6-1, 240, Jr.)
HOLD	17	Justin Sisco (6-1, 185, Jr.)
PR	1	Damon Gourdine (5-7, 165, Sr.)
	2	Sean Pierce (5-9, 175, Jr.)
KOR	1	Damon Gourdine (5-7, 165, Sr.)
	21	James Truvillion (5-10, 195, So.)

South Florida  
Offense

SE	82	Rj Anderson (6-2, 185, Sr.)
	19	Leon Matthews (6-2, 190, Jr.)
LT	74	Kenyatta Jones (6-4, 308, Jr.)
	70	Larry Scott (6-3, 295, Jr.)
LG	77	Brent Whitfield (6-4, 320, So.)
	76	Billy Attix (6-3, 285, So.)
C	68	Joey Sipp (6-0, 285, Jr.)
	64	Ben Pultorak (6-3, 315, Fr.)
RG	75	Jimmy Fitts (6-3, 318, So.)
	67	Anthony McKenzie (6-2, 285, Jr.)
RT	73	Joe Condron (6-7, 330, Fr.)
	65	Isaac Bristol (6-3, 255, Jr.)
TE	84	Richard Guerrero (6-2, 240, Fr.)
	41	George Higgins (6-2, 205, Fr.)
FL	1	Charlie Jackson (5-9, 165, Jr.)
	16	Scott McCready (6-1, 190, Sr.)
QB	17	Glen Gauntt (6-3, 220, Jr.)
	10	Marquel Blackwell (6-1, 205, Fr.)
FB	21	Otis Dixon (5-9, 220, Jr.)
	27	Dyral McMillan (5-10, 220, Sr.)
TB	22	Jermaine Clemons (5-11, 190, Sr.)
	28	Rafael Williams (5-9, 190, Jr.)

Defense

LE	56	Tchecoy Blount (6-3, 235, So.)
	57	Chris Daley (6-2, 245, Fr.)
DT	63	Therrimann Edwards (6-4, 265, Jr.)
	47	Matt Dunkle (6-3, 250, Fr.)
NT	97	Ron Johnson (6-2, 280, Jr.)
	51	Joey Camero (6-0, 265, Sr.)
RE	88	Shawn Hay (6-4, 250, Jr.)
	55	Steve Hatley (6-2, 225, Jr.)
WLB	45	Demetrius Woods (6-0, 210, Jr.)
	49	Kawika Mitchell (6-2, 238, Fr.)
MLB	50	Jason Butler (6-1, 245, Jr.)
	46	Marshall Smith (5-10, 205, Jr.)
SLB	44	Vassay Marc (6-2, 230, Jr.)
	42	Brian Wilson (5-11, 210, Sr.)
RC	23	Bernard Brown (5-10, 180, Jr.)
	5	LaFann Williams (5-11, 185, Sr.)
SS	11	Roy Manns (5-11, 185, Jr.)
	38	Joe Morgan (5-10, 185, So.)
FS	12	Anthony Henry (6-2, 200, Sr.)
	31	Jay Mize (5-11, 185, Jr.)
LC	24	Glenn Davis (5-11, 185, Jr.)
	3	Ron Hemingway (5-11, 175, Fr.)

Specialists

PUNT	35	Tony Umholtz (6-0, 195, Sr.)
PK	7	Bill Gramatica (5-10, 180, Jr.)
	35	Tony Umholtz (6-0, 195, Sr.)
SNAP	53	Ryan Benjamin (6-2, 240, Jr.)
	52	Jason Malouf (6-0, 215, Jr.)
HOLD	17	Glen Gauntt (6-3, 220, Jr.)
PR	1	Charlie Jackson (5-9, 165, Jr.)
KOR	22	Jermaine Clemons (5-11, 190, Sr.)
	5	Lafann Williams (5-11, 185, Sr.)

