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

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San Diego State vs. Wyoming Postgame Quotes

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif.

January 31, 2017

SDSU head coach Steve Fisher

Opening statement:

"Nice to get a win. Sometimes it doesn't matter how or who, but win. It felt good for us to be able to do that. We had some stretches where we looked good getting the win. We had other stretches where we didn't look very good, but we got the most important thing done: close the game with a victory. Start of the game, 28-11. I liked the start of the second half. I thought we had better movement of bodies. It was really nice to see Montaque (Gill-Caesar) come in and have some productivity, get a few more minutes. So that was nice. Malik (Pope) and Dakarai (Allen) — Dakarai is a guy whose offense has improved significantly where he's someone now that can do things on both ends of the floor. Malik, when we have him out there available, he can do some things. I told Ted Leitner after the game that Malik, for two-and-a-half weeks, I sensed that excitement. He's come into the locker room with a smile on his face, not forced and not phony. You can sense that he feels privileged, happy, fortunate and content to be in there able to play. We need him to finish the season on the floor and I'm hopeful that will happen. If it does, he will get better and we will get better. All in all, choppy game with all the fouls on both ends, but we got ourselves a win. Now we need to focus on playing better and to get another win on Saturday in Fresno."

On shuffling the starting lineup:

"I started Valentine (Izundu, senior center) because they had big 33 (Jordan) Naughton in there and I felt as if Val presented a matchup where I was unafraid to say, 'Guard him one-on-one.' If we had started who we've been going with, who we went with, Malik and Max, then we're either going to jeopardize ourselves with early potential fouls or have to double and set up potential threes. We did that from a situational standpoint. I told Max (Hoetzel), 'I'm not saying that you're a guy that I've got to get out of the lineup and I'm blaming you for two-straight losses. I think this is important.' And he understood. And I said, 'You're going to probably play as many minutes as you normally do.' It was situational."

On Montaque Gill-Caesar's performance tonight and change over the season:

"I don't know. We'll find out. We'll find out. (Montaque) is somewhat of a volume shooter. He took more shots than anybody on the team with 14 [shots]. But he's not afraid to take a shot if he misses a shot. You have to appreciate a guy like that also. It's never easy when you come in with expectations of your own and higher expectations at times from the outside world. I try to give guys what I think they earn and sometimes it's one man's opinion and you got to blow your back and keep working and not worry too much when you don't. Today was (Montaque) birthday also along with (freshman forward) Jalen McDaniels. It was nice to see him celebrate his birthday getting a few more minutes, getting on the scoreboard and getting 12 points — which I think tied his career-high with the exhibition game that we had. It was nice. We'll see what it brings. It gives me confidence to say that I remember what he did. So maybe he will get an opportunity earlier on on Saturday."

"He's been working hard pre-and-post-practice shooting. You have to believe you're going to make shots and then you can start tinkering with your shot. Changing mechanics if you feel you're doing it. You just have to stay with it, keep going, keep grinding away at it. He's done a pretty good job at that. We've had a lot of guys where it's not about instant gratification. That's what all of us want. Just because you're out there 45 minutes extra every day, it doesn't mean it will show up in minutes on the court or productivity when you get there. In the long haul, it will show up. I am proud of what he is doing. Hopefully he can go 7-14."

On sophomore guard Jeremy Hemsley's mindset and performance tonight:

"You play. You play for the team. Don't worry about statistics. Be a good teammate. Our thought was move, move, play for others, don't try too hard, take what's there, take what's presented. I think that speaks in a positive way for Jeremy. He's not out saying, 'I'm going to hunt my shot. When I go in, I'm going to hunt my shot.' He's doing what he needs to do to help us win. He's another one that's worked very, very hard before and after practice to get that shot better."

On sophomore forward Zylan Cheatham's injury progress:

"Yeah. I think he is. I think Zylan is making progress. I'm cautiously optimistic. I'll underline cautiously that we'll have him available to suit up on Saturday. He's not done anything with any type of hard-cutting. He's done a little bit of spot shooting and he says it's feeling better so we'll let Zylan and (the trainer) and (the doctor) be the dictators of whether he'll play or not. You want to what's right. He wants to be back so we'll have to nurture him like we did Jeremy last year. He won't have a lot, a lot of practice but I hope he's able to play quickly."

SDSU junior guard Trey Kell**On winning after two straight losses:**

"We just came off two losses, especially the last one where we felt like we played good enough to win, but they made some great plays down the stretch. It's just one of those things that we had to bounce back and take each game one at a time, and I'm glad we got that done."

On difference tonight versus Saturday:

"I can't pinpoint something and say that was the difference. It's just one of those things that we have to go out there and do it. We've been talking for awhile about where we have lapses, where we look sluggish, or just that were not having pressure. It's just one of those things that we have to go out there and do it, and today we did."

On not having Zylan Cheatham on the floor:

"Losing a player like Z (Zylan) is definitely going to hurt. He is an energy person for sure. He's versatile, can guard guards, guard the bigs too, and he helps us a lot on the defensive end. Losing someone like him hurts, but like we said, we just have to have the next man step up and not use Z as an excuse."

On Montaque Gill-Caesar's game tonight:

"Confidence can do anything for a player. Seeing (Montaque) work out from when he got here to where he is now. It's one of those things where I've never questioned his ability, you could just tell his confidence was low. As a teammate, you hit him and tell him to shoot it, and if he misses tell him to shoot the next one. We're glad as a team and as a teammate to see shots fall down for him."

On team's injuries this year:

"It's bad to say, but we're kind of getting used to it. We wish we had the full team because that's when we're at our best, but it looks like we have a little bit of the injury bug this year. If someone goes down, whoever is taking his place is either going to have to pick up his slack or we just pick up the slack as a team. With Z (Zylan) out, that puts a lot of pressure on Malik because he's going to take more of his minutes, but then that also puts pressure on the rest of the team because Z helps us in rebounding, scoring down low and stuff like that. As a team we just have to bring what he's missing right now."

SDSU sophomore guard Montaque Gill-Caesar**On the close game at the end:**

"I think just mostly getting stops was what helped us. We realized that we were fouling a lot and putting them at the line, so I think the emphasis was just to get stops and play defense. We were getting good looks and getting to where we needed to get. We were getting open shots. It was just on the opposite end of the floor where we really needed to dial in and focus."

On game being a confidence booster for him:

"I think this was a big confidence booster for me personally, even though some of the shots that were wide open didn't fall. They felt good, and I know that if kept shooting they would fall. That was my mindset, that the next one was going to go in regardless of whether it was a three, or a mid range, or a layup. This was a very big confidence game for me."

On what created his shots today:

"Today I felt like the floor was really spaced. We decided to go four out. We were passing and cutting. There was no specific offense. The defense was really spread out and once I saw that, I realized I could attack certain gaps. There was just a lot of space, and that worked for me."

On finding his role with the team:

"I think just transitioning to a different team where you don't know your role yet played a part. Coaches didn't really specify my role. They told me different things to work on, but of course I have Matt and Dakarai to look at and learn from and just wait my turn."

Wyoming head coach Allen Edwards**Opening Statement:**

"Like I told the guys, I just apologized to them. Especially, for a technical so early on in the game, but at the same time you feel like as a coach you're fighting. Again, I don't think it was warranty it's just coaching. I think sometimes we don't bring in the human factor in the game, but it's not an excuse for a loss. I though San Diego State did a tremendous job attacking the offensive glass, playing through contact, getting to the foul line, and making the most of what they had. I told my guys you have to continue to trust, get better and believe in the process."

On Wyoming's defense:

"I think one of the things that helped us was building up to half time. At timeouts we started moving the basketball, then attacking. I felt like early on there was a lot of hand checking, so when that is the case you say to yourself, 'Well, let's be more certified over just popping the ball around the perimeter.' I thought we did a good job there. I thought we did a good job overall defensively. We came back from behind and it's something we dealt with early on in the year, and I thought we were kind of over it. There were a lot of live ball turnovers. That gave them opportunities to get out and play and transition and score. I want to say when the guys came in at half time they had 10 or 12 points in transition and a few at the foul line. They truly only scored three or four buckets."

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