



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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Fresno State at San Diego State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State 72, UNLV 61

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif. | January 6, 2024

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"I'm pleased with our effort tonight. This was a very good UNLV team that is improving. They weren't caught up to everyone playing together long enough, but they're getting better. We knew it'd be a challenge, and we got off to the kind of start you want when you're playing a good team. We got ahead early and maintained that lead. They forced us into some turnovers, and we made some bad decisions. They pressured the ball really hard and bothered us. We had 17 turnovers, probably the most we've had in a long time. That's a credit to UNLV's defense, plus some of our decision-making. It's a combination. Usually, it's not just all you. They have something to do with that. They defended us really hard. Jaedon [LeDee] went out of the game in the second half, and we stood. We didn't build the lead, but we didn't crumble and collapse. We maintained it. When Jaedon came back down the stretch, we built our lead again where it was comfortable, and we didn't have to be nervous over the last three minutes of the game. It was a good, solid performance, and now we do the hardest thing in college basketball – go on the road and try to win some road games."

On how home-court advantage benefits the team's momentum:

"It's an incredible environment. It just builds on itself. We start rolling downhill, the crowd gets in the game, the other team is wondering what's going on, and the arena gets loud. The other team can't communicate with their coaching staff unless they take a timeout because it's so loud and they can't hear. Our crowd is everything to us. Viejas Arena is the kind of environment anybody in the country would want to play in front of, and we get to play in front of it every game."

On the continuity of San Diego State culture:

"We have a culture that's established. People often talk about their culture over a year or two. We've been here for 25 years. That's what culture is. We built it, and everyone knows about San Diego State. They may not know a player on the team, but they're going to say, 'Boy, they really guard, don't they? They get great crowds and talk about all team culture. They don't talk about individual players or Fisher or Dutcher.' It doesn't matter. San Diego State is San Diego State. We guard at a high level, win titles, and play the right way."

On the difficulty of playing on the road in the Mountain West:

"The Mountain West is hard. It's going to be hard all year. You better have the right mentality to go on the road if you're going to win in this league. San Jose State won't have a great crowd, but they led the first two Mountain West games they played in for basically three-quarters of each game and couldn't find a way to get over the hump. We have to make sure

we're not that team that San Jose finds a way to get 40 points against. We have to play well to win there. When we go to New Mexico and The Pit, that's the home-court advantage everybody wants, too. I can hardly coach the team there. It's so loud. They're so behind their team. The Mountain West is a tough league to win on the road in."

Senior Forward Jaedon LeDee

On the high turnover rate in today's game:

"We were excited to play today and got careless on early possessions. We had seven turnovers, and they were all unforced. That's something mentally we can just fix and get right back to."

On going on the road for the next two games:

"In college basketball, games on the road are tough. The coaches will prepare us the best way they can, and we will lock in on the game plan. We will just go out there competing, give it our all, and come back hopefully with two wins."

Senior Guard Darrion Trammell

On finding his rhythm after recovering from his injuries:

"I'm finding my rhythm by being more confident. During the injuries, I never really worked out. It was kind of just practice, rehab, and home. I feel like I'm starting to get a rhythm back to my workout routine. It's all about getting back to that, getting back to myself, and staying confident through it all."

On the team this year compared to last year:

"We have a lot more offensive firepower this year. We have a lot of new guys as well. The defense is something that we always have to work on. Last year, we had guys who had been in the program for five or six years. It's up to the guys who have been here to relay that message that defense is going to carry us to the next level and then show up or continue for us to keep being top dogs in this league."

UNLV Head Coach Kevin Kruger

On starting from behind and the impact on the results:

"Once the dust settled a little bit, the guys did a good job competing and trying to get results. It was just a rough start to get going. We certainly don't want to do the moral victory, but getting going early is something that we have to figure out how to get better at because, with the way the Mountain West is this year, we can't start every game with a deficit. Unfortunately, that's what happened today."

On what he saw from San Diego State:

"It was exactly what we expected. I don't think San Diego State does anything overly surprising. It's been 25 years of the same thing that's led to a lot of wins. The prep work is easy in terms of what you say. It's just the hard part is putting it into action. All we can do now is our best to get ready for the next one."

On the message to his team after this loss:

"The message is we have to keep worrying about only the objective. We had some stretches there where we got a little wide-eyed and didn't accomplish what needed to be accomplished. You can't go through stretches against a good team like that and not get results. Every possession has to be a competition for results if you expect to go win a road game."

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