



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State-San José State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State head coach Brian Dutcher

Opening statement:

"You know, no one knows how hard it is. Everyone thinks you are just going to roll over people. In the first half they made it hard on us. They executed and they threw the ball inside. They are a well-coached team. Their problem is they always run into stretches where they turn it over a few times, and I thought we did a good job when they turned the ball over. We really got out on the fast break, we ran the floor well, and the thing I am most proud of is the way we shared the ball. I think we had 25 assists, which is a season high, and only nine turnovers. So when you share the ball and take care of the ball you give yourself a chance to win. I thought we did that tonight. I think we had four players in double figures. They packed the paint. So a lot of times we drove in there with a lot of traffic and maybe ran over a guy a time or two. But I thought, when we drove it in, for the most part we kicked it out and looked for the open shot, then played second penetration, which we knew we had to do today because whether they were in zone or man they've got four defenders in the paint. They made us shoot some threes and we didn't shoot it well. As a coach you, always sit there at halftime, going, 'We are 14 for 30 from the field, but we are two for 12 from the three.' The tendency is to say quit shooting the three. Well, you know as soon as you do that, they are going to pack even further in. So at some level you have to take good threes and I wanted them to shoot the three off penetration, not just shoot the first three, but shoot them off drive and kick. It's always a fine line when you are two for 12, everyone is saying quit shooting the three. It's, 'Quit shooting hard threes, not deep ones.' Toe the line, get a little closer, and don't shoot them further than you have to. It's not overreacting going two for 12 in the first half from three. I don't even know what we shot the second half. I think Max (Montana) tried to set an NCAA record for the number of threes in a period of time. He got hot, incredibly hot. I liked every one of them, except that last one. That was a heat check, that last one where he dribbled in the corner and threw that up. Proud of the way the guys played, and I know we are going to have the ultimate challenge at Boise on Saturday against a very good team that's also going to contend for the title. I don't know how the game ended up, I think Boise was up late on Fresno. They'll have a leg up on us because they will have two road wins. That's always a challenge. It's going to be a real battle on Saturday and we are excited for the challenge."

On the slow start in the first half:

"I thought we were ready to play. I think the fact that the boys beat us last year at their place was enough for our guys. At least the veterans know that anybody is capable of beating you if you don't play well. They played well at the start of the game. They got it inside, they took care of the ball, and they had a lot of second chance opportunities. They played well to start, but we eventually kept grinding away and ended up with a nine-point halftime lead. Then the second half of the last couple home games, we have really turned it up with the press. When they are in front of our bench, we can get them to go a little harder and trap a little more. Even if we don't create steals, at least we create a tempo against set play teams. San Jose is a set play team; Utah State was a set play team. Sometimes pressure disrupts the rhythm of their sets. We will have to be careful about pressing Boise because they are more of a free-flowing driving team, so they will take advantage if we get out of position. We will have to be very careful how much we pressure them and when."

On Jalen McDaniels entering the starting lineup:

"Sometimes the decisions are easy, when the players make it easy. Jalen off the bench was playing quality minutes and he was playing really well. We moved him to the starting lineup and he continues to play quality good minutes. He just plays with such a high motor, he plays so hard, and he attacks the glass. What he lacks in physical strength he makes up with quickness and speed. Jalen has been very productive both off the bench and as a starter. That doesn't say anything against Kameron (Rooks). He's done a good job off the bench and given us quality minutes. The hardest thing as a coach is when you take a guy out of the starting lineup, that you don't lose him mentally. So that's Kameron, Jeremy (Hemsley), and Max Montana. They are all guys that have started this year. That's a tough adjustment. No one wants to come off the bench. They aren't going to say they want to come off the bench, but they are all going to say they trust in the process and trust in the coaches. They want to win. They have accepted roles that maybe aren't ideal. Everybody wants to start, but they have done a good job filling in the roles they have been moved in to, and they have been productive for us."

On Jalen McDaniels's energy:

"You don't have to call Jalen's number or call a play for him to affect the game. It's running the floor, it's getting the defensive rebound, or the offensive rebound, it's dunking the ball. It's just the effort stuff. Some guys need their number called for them to do anything because they are so programmed into, 'Well if they call my number, then I get to do this.' Jalen is the complete opposite. You don't have to call Jalen's number for him to be productive. He just plays off everybody else. You have to have instincts to do that and Jalen has great instincts when he is out on the floor. He knows where to move, how to move and how fast to move."

On the second half lead:

"I think it's our press, just to continue to press. Even if we don't steal the press, if we are picking up 94 feet then we have to play hard. That's a lot of work to pick up 94 feet, to turn a guy and run it down. Instead of saying, 'We scored a basket, let's run back to the top of the key.' Then get the defense set down there and rest a little bit. By making them press, we have to use our bench. You can't play 94 feet and not use your bench. So we are using our bench and keeping guys fresh. We aren't afraid to use our bench; it's a strength of ours. Anytime we went to the bench, the thing you want to see as a coach is that the production doesn't stop. We'd go to the bench and the lead would grow. Then we'd come back with the starters and they'd continue to grow the lead. Everybody that is playing is playing as hard as they can when they are out there. They make mistakes yes, but they are usually not due to energy or effort."

On not pressing earlier this season:

"It's just so much to put in and so much to do. We knew going into the Utah State game that we wanted to press them, so we devoted more time to it. When you have spent time in it in practice, then you can use it in a game. As you work on everything else, whether it is half-court defense, offense, baseline out-of-bounds, and the shot clock plays, there is only so much time to practice. You can't put five minutes of press on the practice play and it be very good pressing. Going to Utah State we spent some more time on it. The last two days we spent eight, 10, 12-minute segments on the press. We knew this team would have a guard take out, so it's totally different. You know a big takes out, it's a whole different press. A guard takes out, it's a whole different look. This is where scouting comes in, where you [see] what they do to break a press. Everybody has to fill different roles in the press."

On the loss against SJSU last season:

"I think you only bring it up maybe one time and you know instantly if they are buying in on it or not. I brought it up and I sensed Trey (Kell) was already, 'Got you on that, Coach.' They had obviously already talked about losing there last year. All losses stink. We are remembering some of the teams that beat us last year, and trying to repay a little bit of those losses. As a coach you are trying to find ways to motivate your team. Is it playing because we lost last year, is it just saying execution? Just trying to find that button to push for that game that might get a little extra response out of your team. So obviously we talked about losing there last year."

On the future of Jalen McDaniels's basketball career:

"Jalen took two threes today and didn't make them, but that's part of his game. He can shoot the three. He does it in practice. Although when he misses, everyone probably cringes. What's he out there shooting for? He's so good going to the basket and rebounding. That's part of his game that will continue to grow. He can shoot the ball; he's a good passer. Sky is the limit. It all depends on how much work he wants to put in the months he is away from us. They always say, the summer is to build your game and then the fall is to build the team's game. We might work on shooting and some skill work, but it's not the skill work they work on their own in the summer. The two to three hours in the gym on your own, that's the work the coaches reap the most benefit from. They improve themselves as players, then they get more roles and we put the team together. Right now it's all about the team. In the summer, Jalen worked very hard between his redshirt year and this year. If he continues to work hard in the summers to develop his overall game, we will see it on the floor once the team starts playing."

On the upcoming Boise State game:

"They know Boise State. This is a team we played. I think we only played them only once in the regular season last year. They beat us at their place, and then we beat them in the second game of the Mountain West tournament last year."

SDSU freshman forward Jalen McDaniels**On comfort level on court as freshman:**

"I feel like when I play, even when I wasn't starting, I am always comfortable out there. It is something I have been doing for a long time, so I feel no pressure. I just go out there and do what I can for the team."

On dunks and an energy boost in second half:

"It gave us energy. It gave me energy. It gave the whole team energy. After that happened we all picked it up, stepped our game up and I feel like it translated."

On no turnovers in 23 minutes:

"I just play patiently and try to value the ball, take care of the ball as much as I can. Not having turnovers helps us win."

On defensive play:

"Malik and I are both quick. Defenders—since we aren't that big—they think that we are soft, but it's not like that. Post-double, we have high hands when we come over and they usually throw it away, throw it into our hands."

On what he needs to work on:

"Three-point shooting, making those open shots—that's where I feel like I can grow the most and I feel like that will elevate my game more and help our team win."

On this win going into Boise State game:

"We know what to expect. At Boise, they are going to play hard. We are going to use this confidence to go in their house and play hard."

SDSU junior guard Devin Watson

On dunks and an energy boost in second half:

"It definitely helped us go on a run."

On momentum from the first to second half:

"We just kept the pressure on them, kept pressing them, got easy baskets. The defense full court, the pressure, really helped us and really got us going."

On not playing in last year's loss against SJSU:

"We did hear about that game. We wanted to get a win this year, we lost to them last year at their place, but we knew we would have momentum coming to play here, so we executed the game plan."

On Jalen McDaniels's performance as a freshman:

"He is doing well, he is not playing like a freshman. He really used last year to get better and I feel like it paid off."

On coming back from the tight game in the first half:

"Just the defensive pressure—we really picked up on full court, started getting steals and layups and easy baskets, and that kept the momentum going."

San José State head coach Jean Prioleau

On tonight's performance:

"I thought we played well in probably the first 10 minutes of the game. I'd have to look at the book, I don't know what the time was. They're (San Diego State) very talented. They can score from multiple positions, and we weren't able to stop them. We tried to go zone, we tried to go man, and we turned the ball over. And, they don't really press, but they pressed us because we have trouble handling the ball. We have another game coming."

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