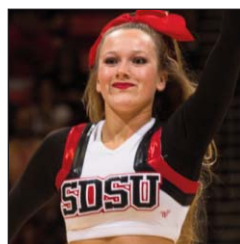


Table of Contents



11 CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES ► 10-TIME MW CHAMPIONS



Introduction

Media Information 2 • Rosters 3 • Outlook 4 • Schedule 10 • Broadcast Roster 11 • Steve Fisher 12 • Fisher's Men in the Pros 14 • Viejas Arena 16 • Jeff Jacobs JAM Center 18 • Mountain West 20

Coaches and Staff

Steve Fisher 22 • Brian Dutcher 38 • Justin Hutson 39 • Dave Velasquez 40 • Mark Fisher 41 • Support Staff 42

Players

Dakarai Allen 46 • Zylan Cheatham 50 • Niksha Federico 52 • Jeremy Hemsley 54 • Trey Kell 56 • Ben Perez 59 • Malik Pope 61 • Matt Shrigley 64 • D'Erryl Williams 68 • Montaque Gill-Caesar 72 • Max Hoetzel 73 • Valentine Izundu 74 • Nolan Narain 76 • Jalen McDaniels 76 • Devin Watson 77 • Emmanuel Wilson 78

2015-16 Review

Notes 80 • Results 82 • Game-By-Game Statistics 86 • Miscellaneous Statistics 91 • Departed Senior Bios 93 • Box Scores and Recaps 96 • Mountain West Statistics 109

Records

Team 112 • Team Season 114 • Individual Game 116 • Top Game Performances 118 • Miscellaneous Records 120 • Individual Season 122 • Individual Career 125 • Freshman Records 128 • Mountain West Records 130 • Viejas Arena Records 131

History

Year-By-Year Results 134 • vs. Nationally Ranked 147 • vs. All Opponents 148 • All-Time Series 149 • Jersey Numbers 159 • Year-By-Year Summary 160 • Statistical History 162 • Awards & Honors 164 • 1,000-Point Scorers 166 • Annual Stat Leaders 172 • Letterwinners 174 • Individual Div. I Stats 176 • National Postseason 181 • Conference Tournaments 192 • Attendance/Home Record 195 • Rallies/Clutch Shots 196

University

SDSU 198 • Aztec Culture 201 • Dr. Elliot Hirshman 202 • Jenny Bramer 203 • Media Information 204 • Broadcast Partners 206 • Viejas Arena 207

The 2016-17 SDSU Men's Basketball Media Guide

The 2016-17 San Diego State University Men's Basketball Media Guide is a publication of the SDSU athletics media relations office. The publication was written, edited and designed by assistant athletic director/media relations director Darin Wong and senior associate athletic director/communications and media relations Mike May.

Assistance was provided by assistant athletic director/media relations Jamie McConeghy, assistant media relations directors Dave Kuhn, Jim Solien and Jen Heisel, media relations coordinator Lauren Weaver, student assistant Vivian Nguyen and *GoAztecs.com* senior writer Mick McGrane.

Cover design by Jim Solien and Darin Wong.

Photography

Ernie Anderson, Ken Jacques, Stan Liu, Derrick Tuskan, Mountain West, NCAA Photos, NBA Photos, NBAE/Getty Images, Philadelphia 76ers and the *Associated Press*.

Printing

L+L Printers

Media Information



11 CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES ► 10-TIME MW CHAMPIONS

General Information

Location San Diego, Calif., 92182
 Founded1897
 Enrollment33,726
 NicknameAztecs
 ColorsScarlet and Black (PMS 187)
 PMS Color185
 ArenaViejas Arena at Aztec Bowl
 Opened1997
 Capacity12,414
 AffiliationNCAA Division I
 ConferenceMountain West
 PresidentDr. Elliot Hirshman
 Alma Mater (Year)Yale (1983)
 Interim Athletics DirectorJenny Brammer
 Alma Mater (Year)Oklahoma (1996)
 Athletic Department Phone619-594-3019
 Ticket Office Phone619-283-7378
 or 619-283-SDSU

History

Seasons of BasketballEntering 96th
 First Season of Basketball1921-22
 All-Time Record1,423-1,087-1
 NCAA Tournament Appearances13
 Seasons of Div. I BasketballEntering 47th
 First Season of Div. I Basketball1970-71
 All-Time Div. I Record735-642
 NCAA Div. I Tournament Appearances11
 Last NCAA Appearance2015
 NIT Appearances6
 Last NIT Appearance2016

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Basketball Staff

Head CoachSteve Fisher
 Alma Mater (Year)Illinois State (1967)
 Record at SDSU (Years)367-195 (17)
 Record Overall (Years)551-277 (25 full)
 Basketball Office Phone619-594-6249
 Best Time to Contact FisherContact May
 Associate Head Coach/
 Head Coach in WaitingBrian Dutcher
 Alma Mater (Year)Minnesota (1982)
 Assistant CoachJustin Hutson
 Alma Mater (Year)CSU Bakersfield (1994)
 Assistant CoachDave Velasquez
 Alma Mater (Year)San Diego State (2007)
 Assistant to the Head CoachMark Fisher
 Alma Mater (Year)Michigan (2001)
 Asst. AD/Dir. of OperationsMatt Soria
 Alma Mater (Year)San Diego State (2002)
 Director of Player DevelopmentTim Shelton
 Alma Mater (Year)San Diego State (2011)
 Basketball TrainerSergio Ibarra
 Alma Mater (Year)Alfred University (2006)
 Administrative AssistantLeana DeKock

Team Information

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Home</i>	<i>Away</i>	<i>Neu.</i>
2015-16 Record	28-10	16-4	9-2	3-4
2015-16 MW Record	16-2	8-1	8-1	
Mountain West Finish	.1st			
MW Tournament	.Finalist (2-1)			
Postseason	.NIT			
NIT Finish	.Semifinals (3-1)			
Starters Returning/Lost	.3/2			
Letterwinners Returning/Lost	.8/3			

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2016-17 Roster Breakdown

Starters Returning (3)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Zylan Cheatham	6-9	220	So.	F	7.9	5.4
Jeremy Hemsley	6-3	190	So.	G	12.0	2.4
Trey Kell	6-4	210	Jr.	G	12.6	3.7

Total Letterwinners Returning (8)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Dakarai Allen	6-5	200	Sr.	G	6.4	2.7
Zylan Cheatham	6-9	220	So.	F	7.9	5.4
Jeremy Hemsley	6-3	190	So.	G	12.0	2.4
Trey Kell	6-4	210	Jr.	G	12.6	3.7
Ben Perez	6-3	175	So.	G	2.9	0.8
Malik Pope	6-10	220	Jr.	F	7.3	5.0
Matt Shrigley	6-6	190	Sr.	F	2.4	1.0
D'Erryl Williams	6-3	205	Sr.	G	1.3	0.7

Others Returning (5)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Niksha Federico	6-7	200	Sr.	F	1.1	0.1
Montaque Gill-Caesar	6-6	215	So.	G	--	--
Max Hoetzel	6-9	210	So.	F	--	--
Nolan Narain	6-9	220	RFr.	F	--	--
Emmanuel Wilson	6-2	185	RFr.	G	--	--

Newcomers (3)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.
Valentine Izundu	6-10	240	Sr.	C
Jalen McDaniels	6-9	190	Fr.	F
Devin Watson	6-1	165	Jr.	G

Starters Lost (2)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Winston Shepard	6-8	210	Sr.	F	11.3	6.4
Skylar Spencer	6-10	240	Sr.	F	3.8	5.6

Total Letterwinners Lost (3)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Angelo Chol	6-9	215	Sr.	F	3.9	3.1
Winston Shepard	6-8	210	Sr.	F	11.3	6.4
Skylar Spencer	6-10	240	Sr.	F	3.8	5.6

Others Lost (1)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Parker U'u	6-5	220	Jr.	G	0.4	0.4

Honors Candidates

Dakarai Allen - All-MW, MW Defensive Player of the Year
 Zylan Cheatham - All-MW, All-Region
 Montaque Gill-Caesar - All-MW, MW Newcomer of the Year
 Jeremy Hemsley - All-MW, All-Region
 Trey Kell - All-MW, MW Player of the Year, All-Region
 Malik Pope - All-MW, All-Region





2016-17 San Diego State Alphabetical Roster

Most Recent Div. I Season										
No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Exp.	PPG	RPG	APG	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
4	Dakarai Allen	G	6-5	200	Sr.	3L	6.4	2.7	1.2	Elk Grove, Calif. (Sheldon High)
14	Zylan Cheatham	F	6-9	220	So.	1L	7.9	5.4	0.9	Phoenix, Ariz. (South Mountain High)
33	Niksha Federico	F	6-7	200	Sr.	SQ	1.1	0.1	0.1	San Diego, Calif. (Cathedral Catholic High)
23	Montaque Gill-Caesar	G	6-6	215	So.	TR	9.1	3.0	0.5	Vaughan, Ontario, Canada (Huntington Prep (W.Va.)/Missouri)
42	Jeremy Hemsley	G	6-3	190	So.	1L	12.0	2.4	1.8	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. (Damien High)
10	Max Hoetzel	F	6-9	210	So.	TR	2.4	1.3	0.3	Calabasas, Calif. (Wilbraham & Monson Academy (Mass.)/Indiana)
45	Valentine Izundu	C	6-10	240	Sr.	TR	3.8	2.7	0.3	Houston, Texas (Lamar Consolidated High/Washington State)
3	Trey Kell	G	6-4	210	Jr.	2L	12.6	3.7	1.4	San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine High)
5	Jalen McDaniels	F	6-9	190	Fr.	HS	--	--	--	Federal Way, Wash. (Federal Way High)
24	Nolan Narain	F	6-9	220	Fr.	RS	--	--	--	Hamilton, Ontario, Canada (La Lumiere School (Ind.))
2	Ben Perez	G	6-3	175	So.	1L	2.9	0.8	0.2	San Marcos, Calif. (Air Force Prep Academy (Colo.))
21	Malik Pope	F	6-10	220	Jr.	2L	7.3	5.0	0.8	Sacramento, Calif. (Laguna Creek High)
20	Matt Shrigley	F	6-6	190	Sr.	3L	2.4	1.0	0.6	San Diego, Calif. (La Costa Canyon High)
11	D'Erryl Williams	G	6-3	205	Sr.	3L	1.3	0.7	0.3	Sacramento, Calif. (Sheldon High)
12	Emmanuel Wilson	G	6-2	185	Fr.	RS	--	--	--	Dallas, Texas (Plano East Senior High)

2016-17 San Diego State Numerical Roster

Most Recent Div. I Season										
No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Exp.	PPG	RPG	APG	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
2	Ben Perez	G	6-3	175	So.	1L	2.9	0.8	0.2	San Marcos, Calif. (Air Force Prep Academy (Colo.))
3	Trey Kell	G	6-4	210	Jr.	2L	12.6	3.7	1.4	San Diego, Calif. (St. Augustine High)
4	Dakarai Allen	G	6-5	200	Sr.	3L	6.4	2.7	1.2	Elk Grove, Calif. (Sheldon High)
5	Jalen McDaniels	F	6-9	190	Fr.	HS	--	--	--	Federal Way, Wash. (Federal Way High)
10	Max Hoetzel	F	6-9	210	So.	TR	2.4	1.3	0.3	Calabasas, Calif. (Wilbraham & Monson Academy (Mass.)/Indiana)
11	D'Erryl Williams	G	6-3	205	Sr.	3L	1.3	0.7	0.3	Sacramento, Calif. (Sheldon High)
12	Emmanuel Wilson	G	6-2	185	Fr.	RS	--	--	--	Dallas, Texas (Plano East Senior High)
14	Zylan Cheatham	F	6-9	220	So.	1L	7.9	5.4	0.9	Phoenix, Ariz. (South Mountain High)
20	Matt Shrigley	F	6-6	190	Sr.	3L	2.4	1.0	0.6	San Diego, Calif. (La Costa Canyon High)
21	Malik Pope	F	6-10	220	Jr.	2L	7.3	5.0	0.8	Sacramento, Calif. (Laguna Creek High)
23	Montaque Gill-Caesar	G	6-6	215	So.	TR	9.1	3.0	0.5	Vaughan, Ontario, Canada (Huntington Prep (W.Va.)/Missouri)
24	Nolan Narain	F	6-9	220	Fr.	RS	--	--	--	Hamilton, Ontario, Canada (La Lumiere School (Ind.))
33	Niksha Federico	F	6-7	200	Sr.	SQ	1.1	0.1	0.1	San Diego, Calif. (Cathedral Catholic High)
42	Jeremy Hemsley	G	6-3	190	So.	1L	12.0	2.4	1.8	Rancho Cucamonga, Calif. (Damien High)
45	Valentine Izundu	C	6-10	240	Sr.	TR	3.8	2.7	0.3	Houston, Texas (Lamar Consolidated High/Washington State)

Head Coach: Steve Fisher (Illinois State, 1967), 18th Season
Assoc. HC/HC in Waiting: Brian Dutcher (Minnesota, 1982), 18th Season
Assistant Coaches: Justin Hutson (CSU Bakersfield, 1994), Ninth Season
 Dave Velasquez (San Diego State, 2007), 15th Season
Assistant to the Head Coach: Mark Fisher (Michigan, 2001), 15th Season
Asst. AD/Director of Operations: Matt Soria (San Diego State, 2002), 17th Season
Director of Player Development: Tim Shelton (San Diego State, 2011), 10th Season

Eligible in 2017-18

Most Recent Div. I Season										
No.	Name	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Yr.	Exp.	PPG	RPG	APG	Hometown (High School/Previous School)
0	Devin Watson	G	6-1	165	Jr.	TR	20.3	2.5	4.9	Oceanside, Calif. (El Camino High/San Francisco)

► Pronunciations Dakarai Allen Duh-kar-ree Allen Zylan Cheatham ZY-lin Cheat-um Niksha Federico NEEK-sha Federico Montaque Gill-Caesar Mahn-take Gill-Caesar Max Hoetzel Max HOTE-zull	Valentine Izundu Valentine i-ZOON-doo D'Erryl Williams DEE-air-ol Williams	Juniors (3) Trey Kell, Malik Pope, Devin Watson Sophomore (5) Zylan Cheatham, Montaque Gill-Caesar, Jeremy Hemsley, Max Hoetzel, Ben Perez Freshmen (3) Jalen McDaniels, Nolan Narain, Emmanuel Wilson	► By Position Guards (8) Dakarai Allen, Montaque Gill-Caesar, Jeremy Hemsley, Trey Kell, Ben Perez, Devin Watson, D'Erryl Williams, Emmanuel Wilson Forwards (7) Zylan Cheatham, Niksha Federico, Max Hoetzel,	Jalen McDaniels, Nolan Narain, Malik Pope, Matt Shrigley Centers (1) Valentine Izundu
	► By Class Seniors (5) Dakarai Allen, Niksha Federico, Valentine Izundu, Matt Shrigley, D'Erryl Williams			

The 2016-17 Season Outlook



The Journey Back

By Mick McGrane

As has long been established, San Diego State does not do second place. It has no room for runner-up and gets no consolation from games tethered to the word "consolation."

It is a national player, a program accustomed to the stage and one with scant understanding of surrender.

So when the curtain closed on the 2015-16 season, with disillusionment wed to disappointment, the Aztecs found themselves situated in a most unusual site, a site not designated to host an NCAA tournament game.

For seasons on end, SDSU had virtually made Selection Sunday part of its schedule. It had become part of the routine, part of the regimen, a day devoted to high-fives and higher aspirations.

But for the first time in the history of its league, despite winning the Mountain West in less a photo finish than a full-fledged landslide, the Aztecs were stood-up, absent a date for The Dance. And for the first time in seven years, the NCAA tournament would go on without them.

"We were disappointed when we didn't make the NCAA tournament; that's our goal every year," said coach Steve Fisher, whose team responded by steamrolling three straight NIT opponents at Viejas Arena before falling to George Washington in the semifinals at New York's Madison Square Garden.

"We've always said that our primary goal was to win the conference, because for 16 straight years, as long as the league had been in existence, the Mountain West (regular-season) champion had gone to the tournament. Last season, that didn't happen, even though we ran away with the conference.

"I'm disappointed that the perception of the league wasn't better. The league was better than the perception, and yet we didn't win enough non-league games. But we can start with ourselves. We can't say that (the NCAA Selection Committee) overlooked us. We were a team that could have gotten in, but we were also a team where you could say, 'This is why you didn't get in.'"

It was difficult to fathom on many fronts. The Aztecs won 28 games, a feat matched by only 21 teams in the country. They finished 16-2 in league play and won the Mountain West by three games, tying the largest margin in conference history.

Yet there were other numbers that left SDSU in a less favorable light, the most unsightly being 7-6, the team's record in non-league games. Included were three games against teams --- Utah, West Virginia and Kansas --- that finished in the Associated Press Top 25 and another, California, that only fell out of the rankings in the final week of the season. While never a team to flee from a fight, the Aztecs went 1-3 in the





Junior Malik Pope averaged 11.7 points and 6.9 rebounds, while shooting 47.5 percent from the field, including 50 percent from three-point range, over his final 13 games in 2015-16.

Team Breakdown

2015-16 Record	28-10
MW Record	16-2
MW Finish	1st
MW Tournament	2-1
NIT	3-1

Starters Returning (3)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Zylan Cheatham	6-9	220	So.	F	7.9	5.4
Jeremy Hemsley	6-3	190	So.	G	12.0	2.4
Trey Kell	6-4	210	Jr.	G	12.6	3.7

Total Letterwinners Returning (8)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Dakarai Allen	6-5	200	Sr.	G	6.4	2.7
Zylan Cheatham	6-9	220	So.	F	7.9	5.4
Jeremy Hemsley	6-3	190	So.	G	12.0	2.4
Trey Kell	6-4	210	Jr.	G	12.6	3.7
Ben Perez	6-3	175	So.	G	2.9	0.8
Malik Pope	6-10	220	Jr.	F	7.3	5.0
Matt Shrigley	6-6	190	Sr.	F	2.4	1.0
D'Erryl Williams	6-3	205	Sr.	G	1.3	0.7

Others Returning (5)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Niksha Federico	6-7	200	Sr.	F	1.1	0.1
Montaque Gill-Caesar	6-6	215	So.	G	--	--
Max Hoetzel	6-9	210	So.	F	--	--
Nolan Narain	6-9	220	RFr.	F	--	--
Emmanuel Wilson	6-2	185	RFr.	G	--	--

Newcomers (3)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.
Valentine Izundu	6-10	240	Sr.	C
Jalen McDaniels	6-9	190	Fr.	F
Devin Watson	6-1	165	Jr.	G

Starters Lost (2)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Winston Shepard	6-8	210	Sr.	F	11.3	6.4
Skylar Spencer	6-10	240	Sr.	F	3.8	5.6

Total Letterwinners Lost (3)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Angelo Chol	6-9	215	Sr.	F	3.9	3.1
Winston Shepard	6-8	210	Sr.	F	11.3	6.4
Skylar Spencer	6-10	240	Sr.	F	3.8	5.6

Others Lost (1)

Player	Ht.	Wt.	Cl.	Pos.	PPG	RPG
Parker U'u	6-5	220	Jr.	G	0.4	0.4



Season Outlook



11 CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES ► 10-TIME MW CHAMPIONS

four games and also saw a 15-game home win streak against non-conference opponents snapped in a loss to NCAA tournament qualifier Little Rock.

"You can pinpoint a couple of those games that were crucial," Fisher said. "We need to make sure we understand that every game matters. What I was proud of was the way we said, 'OK, our turn is now going to come in the NIT.' And we played three great games to get (to the semifinals). We did not play well against George Washington, but we played three great games in the NIT, which was important to me because I didn't want us to act like we didn't belong there."

"So, now we need to start a new streak (of NCAA appearances). We had gone six straight times, and there were only seven teams that had gone more than that. So, now we have to say, 'OK, let's make (last season) a blip on the radar. Let's get back to the NCAA tournament.'"

SDSU will begin that quest bolstered by the return of three starters -- junior guard Trey Kell, sophomore guard Jeremy Hemsley and sophomore forward Zylan Cheatham --- as well as two players --- senior guard Dakarai Allen and junior forward Malik Pope --- who contributed significant playing time last season.

Of particular interest is the return of the 6-foot-10 Pope, who after starting the final 12 games of 2015-16 entered the NBA Draft before withdrawing in late May. Posting career highs last season in scoring average (7.9), rebound average (5.0), assists (29), blocked shots (29) and steals (10), Pope was a terror down the stretch, averaging 11.7 points, 6.9 rebounds and 1.2 assists while shooting 47.5 percent in the team's final 13 games.

"Malik didn't get invited to the (NBA) combine, which tells you something in terms of what (the NBA) is thinking," Fisher said. "When he had workouts, he had some good workouts where people said, 'This is what you're good at, and these are areas that you really need to work on and concentrate on.'"

"As with anybody, experience is a great teacher. If you're a good listener and you hear the same thing from a lot of different folks, then you say, 'Hey, this is something that I have to work on.' It was a win-win for him. He put his name in, he got an opportunity to look at what it would be like in the NBA with NBA people working with him, and he made the right decision to come back. Now we need to

help him get better."

Meanwhile, the idea of the backcourt of Hemsley and Kell getting better is more than a bit chilling for opposing Mountain West coaches.

Hemsley, who was tabbed the league's freshman of the year, broke from the gate in high style, finishing with 11 double-figure scoring efforts in the Aztecs' 13 non-league games. While a foot injury suffered in February proved problematic after starting the season's first 25 games, Hemsley nonetheless ranked second on the team in scoring (12.0), assists (1.8) and three-point field-goal percentage (.356).

"Initially, I think Jeremy took the world by storm," Fisher said. "He wound up being the freshman of the year in our league and it was well-deserved. He's playing the hardest spot on the floor as a point guard. You have to be a cerebral decision-maker, handle the ball a lot and make good decisions. And for a freshman, he was very good."

"Now we're hoping he takes a big step forward between Year 1 and 2. He will no longer be that third or fourth guy that coaches talk about on the scout board, he'll be a primary guy that teams will be focused on. It won't be easy, so it's important that he grows his game."

"But Jeremy is a great kid and the ultimate teammate. He cares about winning and it shows. I think that will bode well for him and for us."

Particularly when paired with Kell, who was selected by coaches to the all-MW first team. Though he averaged a team-high 12.6 points to go along with 3.7 rebounds and 1.4 assists, Kell was a force in league play, averaging 16.2 points, 4.4 rebounds and 1.7 assists. He finished in double figures in scoring in all 18 MW games.

"We're rock solid (in the backcourt) and we're proven," Fisher said. "When you have the freshman of the year and a guy (Kell) who was first-team all-league, that's a pretty good start. You want everybody to take the step forward (as a sophomore) that Trey did. He backed up talk with action. He went from telling everybody how good he was to proving it. He brings intelligence and a really good feel for how to play, which helps everybody. He makes everybody better by being on the court."

As does Cheatham. Following a frustrating true freshman campaign in which he was sidelined for the season with a broken foot, Cheatham had horsepower to burn in 2015-16, infusing

an infectious blend of dogged determination and drive. Displaying no effects from the injury, he played in all 38 games and made 26 starts, averaging 7.9 points (52.8 percent shooting) and 5.4 rebounds.

"Zylan was our energizer last year," Fisher said. "He was a guy who brought consistent high energy to the table. We need that to remain. He must be a guy who doesn't try to go too fast, because that leads to turnovers. He doesn't need to try and make the home-run play offensively, but his offensive game should be better."

"He's worked hard to be able to face you up from 15 feet. If you guard him, he can go by you. If not, he needs to be able to make an open shot. Play within yourself, play as hard as you can, and if Zylan does that he will be a huge guy to deal with for the opposition and a big plus for us."

Similarly, if senior guard Dakarai Allen's offseason push to enhance his own offensive game pays dividends, watch out. One of the premiere defenders in the nation on a team that finished first nationally in field-goal percentage defense (.373) last season, Allen, according to Synergy Sports, concluded his junior campaign ranked No. 1 in the country among 949 Division I players in points per possession allowed (0.591) with at least 200 possessions defended. He turned in six double-figure scoring efforts in his last nine games.

"In the past, we've had Skylar Spencer as the league's back-to-back defensive player of the year," Fisher said. "We want to keep that honor at San Diego State. We're the best defensive team in the league and we want to have the best defensive player recognized. In that regard, Dakarai is the leader of the pack. He knows it and he takes pride in it. He worked very hard on his offensive game in the offseason. He's confident, and we're looking forward to that translating into better production at the offensive end."

The guard trio of seniors Matt Shrigley and D'Erryl Williams, along with sophomore Ben Perez, round out the returning players from a team that last season won 28 games and advanced to the postseason for the 11th straight year.

Shrigley, a projected starter for the 2015-16 season before suffering a torn ACL last summer, returned to play in 18 of the team's final 19 games while averaging nearly 12 minutes.

"Matt and I both go out now and neither one of us thinks about his

Career Games Played/Started

Player	GP	GS
Dakarai Allen	100	18
Matt Shrigley	84	20
Trey Kell	73	53
Malik Pope	69	16
D'Erryl Williams	56	0
Valentine Izundu	47	13
Zylan Cheatham	38	26
Jeremy Hemsley	37	25
Max Hoetzel	31	0
Montaque Gill-Caesar	27	13
Ben Perez	25	0
Niksha Federico	16	0
Totals	603	184

Includes games played and games started at all Division I schools for eligible players this season.

SDSU's KenPom Defensive Adjusted Efficiency (Since '06-'07)

Season	National Rank
2006-07	18
2007-08	50
2008-09	22
2009-10	40
2010-11	2
2011-12	49
2012-13	17
2013-14	9
2014-15	4
2015-16	3

Junior Trey Kell averaged 12.6 points to lead the Aztecs in scoring 2015-16. Against Mountain West competition, he scored 16.2 points an outing.



Season Outlook



11 CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES ▶ 10-TIME MW CHAMPIONS

knee," Fisher said. "No one worked harder to get back for an opportunity to play than Matt did after he tore his ACL. I'm very proud of his toughness and commitment. Now he needs to say, 'I'm going to make every open shot I take and I'm going to take every open shot I get' and not worry about results.

"Matt will bring a fifth-year senior mentality to the table where you play within yourself, you play for the team and you know what you're good at. He's at that stage where he knows who he is and knows what he needs to do to be effective to help the team."

Which, as no one need remind Fisher, is to provide consistent scoring for a team that despite its myriad successes last season ranked 263rd in field-goal percentage among the nation's 346 Division I teams.

"I'm confident that we will be more consistent with our offensive game," Fisher said. "A year ago, we had some games where you could say, 'Boy, that team is really good offensively' and some games we weren't nearly good enough. I think we have guys with the ability to make shots and we have more of them, so if one guy is struggling we'll have somebody else to look for who has a hot hand.

"I do strongly feel that our offense will be better, but how much better will be the key. Will there be a huge difference? I don't know. But I do know that we'll be better."

If they are, much of that improvement could hinge on the production of no fewer than five newcomers, including a trio of Division I transfers in sophomore forward Max Hoetzel (Indiana); sophomore guard Montaque "Teki" Gill-Caesar (Missouri); and fifth-year senior center Valentine Izundu (Washington State). Also new are redshirt freshman forward Nolan Narain and freshman forward Jalen McDaniels.

The 6-foot-9 Hoetzel, who spent one year at Indiana, provides SDSU not only with another shooter, but a player unafraid of mixing it up inside.

"Max is a guy that can really shoot the ball," Fisher said. "When he has an open shot, you think it's going in. He also has size. He needs to be able to know what's a good shot. If he does that, he'll be a step ahead. He's also shown that he can be a very good rebounder, so I like that facet of what he does. He needs to show that he can guard, because we're a program where if you don't guard you're not going to play as much as you want to play. So, he needs to grow at the

defensive end."

Gill-Caesar enters 2016-17 after averaging 9.1 points at Missouri in 2014-15, the highest freshman scoring average at the school since 2006-07. A versatile player who, like Narain, is a native of Ontario, Canada, Gill-Caesar was a top-50 recruit coming out of high school.

"Teki is a scorer; he has a knack for scoring," Fisher said of the 6-foot-6 Gill-Caesar. "And that should give him an opportunity. With our help, he has to be in position where we can accent what his strengths are. He's a big wing who can score moving to the rim. He's capable of making an open jump shot. He needs to know the difference between a good shot and a bad one and he needs to play to his strengths."

While Izundu merely faces the prospect of replacing the MW's two-time Defensive Player of the Year in Spencer, his credentials would suggest he's up to the task. Although Spencer blocked 72 shots last year compared to the 6-foot-10 Izundu's 50 at WSU, the latter also averaged 3.8 points in 14.9 minutes. Spencer finished with the same scoring average while averaging 24.2 minutes.

"I really like Valentine," Fisher said. "He's not a person who will say much, but he'll also never say anything that he can use as an excuse. He's a good listener and a fifth-year senior who will provide a low-post presence both offensively and defensively. I don't know that he will be Skylar in terms of blocking shots, but he's a good shot-blocker. He has the ability to catch and finish in the low post. He's going to provide us an element in the low post with size that I'm excited about. We're looking forward to him being part of what we're doing."

Narain, who at 6-9 gives SDSU a roster comprised of six players standing 6-9 or taller, provided the Aztecs with one of the more formidable scout teams in the country while redshirting last season. A product of national prep power La Lumiere School in Indiana, Narain was a four-star player and a top-70 recruit.

"Nolan is a player who you would term a hard-guard," Fisher said. "He's big, but he's a pick-and-pop player, too. He's a guy that can make an open shot. He needs to be able to avoid taking hard shots, and that's a theme with a lot of our guys. He'll need to be able to provide strength and defense in the post area, but he brings size and the ability to stretch the defense at the offensive end."

McDaniels comes to Montezuma Mesa after a sparkling senior season at Federal Way High in Federal Way, Wash. A 6-foot-9 forward, McDaniels earned Associated Press first-team all-state honors after averaging 21 points, 10 rebounds and four blocks in leading Federal Way to a state title.

"Jalen is going to be a terrific player," Fisher said. "He's got length, he's got athleticism, he's got instincts. He's what we've won with. He's a long, athletic, multi-dimensional player who can play a variety of spots.

"We have more guys right now than I think we ever have where I can look at one of them and say I think he's capable of helping us," Fisher said. "I have never played with a double-figure (rotation). Now we've got 10 or 11 guys who are all capable of helping this team. Now we need to say, will there be separation that will occur? Or will it be where we have two or three guys who play the same minutes that three or four guys have in the past, or seven or eight guys who play and don't play quite as many minutes? That will be what we'll have to work through. The players will help dictate that and the coaches will have decisions to make.

"I like our team. We've got a lot of new faces. We've got a lot of veterans coming back whose games should be better. Who will emerge? That's part of the excitement and the challenge of what we're doing and where we are right now."

Which, for a program void of an NCAA tournament appearance, means somewhere between irritated and wholly indignant.

"I was proud of our team last year," Fisher said. "We achieved our first goal, which was to win the league. And we did it going away. If you look at how many teams won their league by three games, there weren't very many. How many teams won 28 games overall? Very few.

"We're spoiled. With success comes expectations that start within. Nobody has greater expectations of what I think we're capable of doing than we do as a coaching staff, and our players are a close second. Our fans are fully invested. We want them to be disappointed if we don't get to the tournament. And we're in need of their continued excitement for the team and the program. That manifested itself all season long and was capped off by how they responded and supported us in the three NIT home games. But we want to be in the NCAA tournament."

Save Us A Seat

Below is a look at the longest active postseason appearances in an NCAA-sponsored event (NCAA or NIT) entering 2016-17.

Rk.	Team	Berths
1.	Michigan State	28
2.	Kansas	27
3.	Kentucky	25
4.	Duke	21
5.	Gonzaga	19
6.	Wisconsin	18
7.	North Carolina	14
8.	San Diego State	11
	Brigham Young	11
	Ohio State	11

Winners Win

Below is a list of the longest active seasons with at least one victory in an NCAA-sponsored event (NCAA or NIT) entering 2016-17.

Rk.	Team	Seasons
1.	North Carolina	14
2.	Kansas	10
3.	Gonzaga	8
4.	Oregon	5
5.	San Diego State	4
	Virginia	4
	Wichita State	4

Among the Best

Below is a list of the highest winning percentages in the country since the start of the 2010-11 campaign and entering 2016-17.

Rk.	Team	Win Pct.
1.	Wichita State	.823
2.	Gonzaga	.822
3.	Kansas	.821
4.	Duke	.806
5.	Kentucky	.805
6.	Arizona	.789
7.	San Diego State	.786

2016-17 Schedule



11 CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES ► 10-TIME MW CHAMPIONS

Date	Day	Opponent	Site	Time	TV
Exhibition Games					
Nov. 3	Thurs.	UC SAN DIEGO	Viejas Arena	7 p.m. PT	
Nov. 7	Mon.	CAL STATE SAN MARCOS	Viejas Arena	7 p.m. PT	
Nov. 11	Fri.	SAN DIEGO	Viejas Arena	8 p.m. PT	ESPNU
ESPN College Hoops Marathon					
Nov. 14	Mon.	at Gonzaga	Spokane, Wash.	9 p.m. PT	ESPN2
Nov. 16	Wed.	SAN DIEGO CHRISTIAN	Viejas Arena	7 p.m. PT	
Nov. 21	Mon.	vs. California	Sacramento, Calif.	8 p.m. PT	Pac-12 Networks
Nov. 28	Mon.	SAVANNAH STATE	Viejas Arena	7 p.m. PT	
Mountain West-Missouri Valley Challenge					
Dec. 3	Sat.	at Loyola	Chicago, Ill.	3 p.m. CT	ESPN3
Dec. 7	Wed.	at Grand Canyon	Phoenix, Ariz.	7 p.m. MT	
Dec. 10	Sat.	ARIZONA STATE	Viejas Arena	4 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Dec. 12	Mon.	ALABAMA STATE	Viejas Arena	7 p.m. PT	Campus Insiders
Hawaiian Airlines Diamond Head Classic (Stan Sheriff Center; Honolulu, Hawaii)					
Dec. 22	Thurs.	vs. Southern Miss	Honolulu, Hawaii	2 p.m. HT	ESPN2
Dec. 23	Fri.	vs. Tulsa/Stephen F. Austin	Honolulu, Hawaii	11:30 a.m./1:30 p.m. HT	ESPN2/ESPN3
Dec. 25	Sun.	TBD	Honolulu, Hawaii	TBD	ESPN Networks
Jan. 1	Sun.	NEW MEXICO*	Viejas Arena	2 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Jan. 4	Wed.	at Nevada*	Reno, Nev.	8 p.m. PT	ESPN2 or ESPNU
Jan. 7	Sat.	at Boise State*	Boise, Idaho	9:15 p.m. MT	ESPN2 or ESPNU
Jan. 10	Tue.	SAN JOSÉ STATE*	Viejas Arena	8 p.m. PT	ESPNU or ESPN3
Jan. 14	Sat.	UTAH STATE	Viejas Arena	7 p.m. PT	ESPN3
Jan. 17	Tue.	at UNLV*	Las Vegas, Nev.	8 p.m. PT	ESPNU or ESPN3
Jan. 24	Tue.	at Air Force*	USAF, Colo.	9 p.m. MT	ESPNU or ESPN3
Jan. 28	Sat.	COLORADO STATE*	Viejas Arena	3 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Jan. 31	Tue.	WYOMING*	Viejas Arena	8 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Feb. 4	Sat.	at Fresno State*	Fresno, Calif.	4 p.m. PT	ESPN3
Feb. 7	Tue.	at San José State*	San Jose, Calif.	8 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Feb. 12	Sun.	NEVADA*	Viejas Arena	1 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Feb. 15	Wed.	at Utah State*	Logan, Utah	8 p.m. MT	CBS Sports Network
Feb. 19	Sun.	UNLV*	Viejas Arena	1 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Feb. 22	Wed.	FRESNO STATE*	Viejas Arena	8 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
Feb. 25	Sat.	at Colorado State*	Fort Collins, Colo.	6 p.m. MT	CBS Sports Network
March 1	Wed.	AIR FORCE*	Viejas Arena	7 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
March 4	Sat.	at New Mexico*	Albuquerque, N.M.	8 p.m. MT	CBS Sports Network
Mountain West Championship (Thomas & Mack Center; Las Vegas, Nev.)					
March 8	Wed.	First Round	Las Vegas, Nev.	TBD	TBD
March 9	Thurs.	Quarterfinal	Las Vegas, Nev.	TBD	CBS Sports Network
March 10	Fri.	Semifinal	Las Vegas, Nev.	7 or 9:30 p.m. PT	CBS Sports Network
March 11	Sat.	Championship	Las Vegas, Nev.	3 p.m. PT	CBS

* - Indicates Mountain West game. CAPS indicates home games at Viejas Arena. All times subject to change.

2017 NCAA Div. I Men's Basketball Championship Dates and Sites

First Four

UD Arena
Dayton, Ohio
Host: Dayton
March 14 and 15

First/Second Rounds

First Niagara Center
Buffalo, N.Y.
Host: MAAC
March 16 and 18

BMO Harris Bradley Center
Milwaukee, Wis.
Host: Marquette
March 16 and 18

Amway Center
Orlando, Fla.
Hosts: UCF, Stetson
March 16 and 18

EnergySolutions Arena
Salt Lake City, Utah
Host: Utah
March 16 and 18

TBD
TBD
Host: TBD
March 17 and 19

Bankers Life Fieldhouse
Indianapolis, Ind.
Hosts: Horizon League, IUPUI
March 17 and 19

BOK Center
Tulsa, Okla.
Host: Tulsa
March 17 and 19

Golden 1 Center
Sacramento, Calif.
Host: Sacramento State
March 17 and 19

Regionals

Sprint Center
Kansas City, Mo.
Host: Big 12
March 23 and 25

SAP Center
San Jose, Calif.
Host: Pac-12
March 23 and 25

FedExForum
Memphis, Tenn.
Host: Memphis
March 24 and 26

Madison Square Garden
New York, N.Y.
Hosts: St. John's, Big East
March 24 and 26

Final Four

University of Phoenix Stadium
Phoenix, Ariz.
Host: Arizona State
April 1 and 3

2016-17 SCHEDULE ◀ INTRODUCTION

AZTEC BASKETBALL MEDIA GUIDE

Broadcast Roster



11 CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES ▶ 10-TIME MW CHAMPIONS

INTRODUCTION ▶ BROADCAST ROSTER



0 Devin Watson
Jr. • G • 6-1 • 165
Oceanside, Calif.



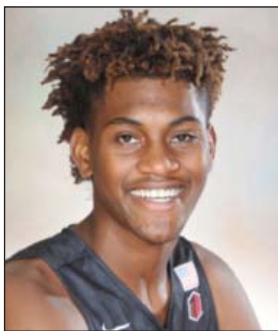
2 Ben Perez
So. • G • 6-3 • 175
San Marcos, Calif.



3 Trey Kell
Jr. • G • 6-4 • 210
San Diego, Calif.



4 Dakarai Allen
Sr. • G • 6-5 • 200
Elk Grove, Calif.



5 Jalen McDaniels
Fr. • F • 6-9 • 190
Federal Way, Wash.



10 Max Hoetzel
So. • F • 6-9 • 210
Calabasas, Calif.



11 D'Erryl Williams
Sr. • G • 6-3 • 205
Sacramento, Calif.



12 Emmanuel Wilson
Fr. • G • 6-2 • 185
Dallas, Texas



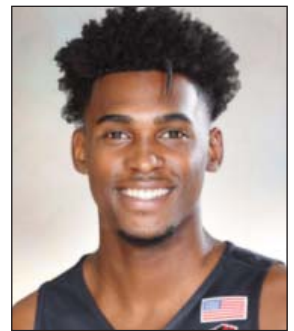
14 Zylan Cheatham
So. • F • 6-9 • 220
Phoenix, Ariz.



20 Matt Shrigley
Sr. • F • 6-6 • 190
San Diego, Calif.



21 Malik Pope
Jr. • F • 6-10 • 220
Sacramento, Calif.



23 Montaque Gill-Caesar
So. • G • 6-6 • 215
Vaughan, Ontario, Canada



24 Nolan Narain
Fr. • F • 6-9 • 220
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada



33 Niksha Federico
Sr. • F • 6-7 • 200
San Diego, Calif.



42 Jeremy Hemsley
So. • G • 6-3 • 190
Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.



45 Valentine Izundu
Sr. • C • 6-10 • 240
Houston, Texas

AZTEC BASKETBALL MEDIA GUIDE

STEVE FISHER



"Consistency is the key with Steve Fisher. He consistently brings in great players, consistently wins big games. His players respect his national championship, but just as importantly, relate to his teaching."

—Tom Hart, ESPN



"Steve Fisher is in the process of coaching SDSU during its Golden Era. Someday people will look back to these days as the best in the history of the basketball program. The job he has done is nothing short of amazing. Every year he establishes some new accomplishment for the program."

— Steve Lappas, CBS Sports Network

UPPER ECHELON

San Diego State enters the 2016-17 campaign as one of the elite programs in America.

5

San Diego State is tied for fifth nationally for longest active seasons with at least one victory in an NCAA-sponsored postseason event (NCAA or NIT).

6

San Diego State is one of six schools nationally to win at least 23 games in eight straight seasons (27.5 wins per year).

7

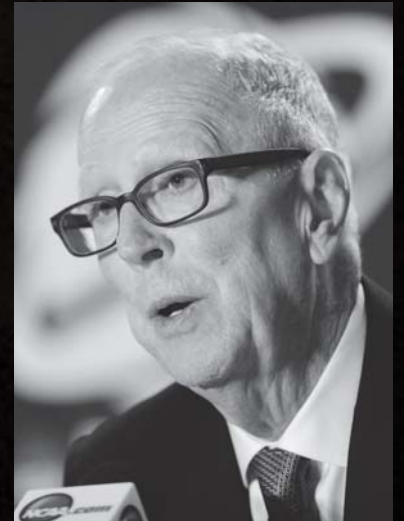
San Diego State owns the seventh-best winning percentage nationally since the beginning of the 2010-11 campaign.

8

San Diego State is tied for eighth nationally for longest active postseason appearances in an NCAA-sponsored event (NCAA or NIT).



"Some people may forget what an incredible job of rebuilding Steve Fisher did when he first got to San Diego State. The best evidence of that is now. When you think of Aztec basketball, you think of a winning program with quality players and postseason appearances."
 – Fran Fraschilla, ESPN



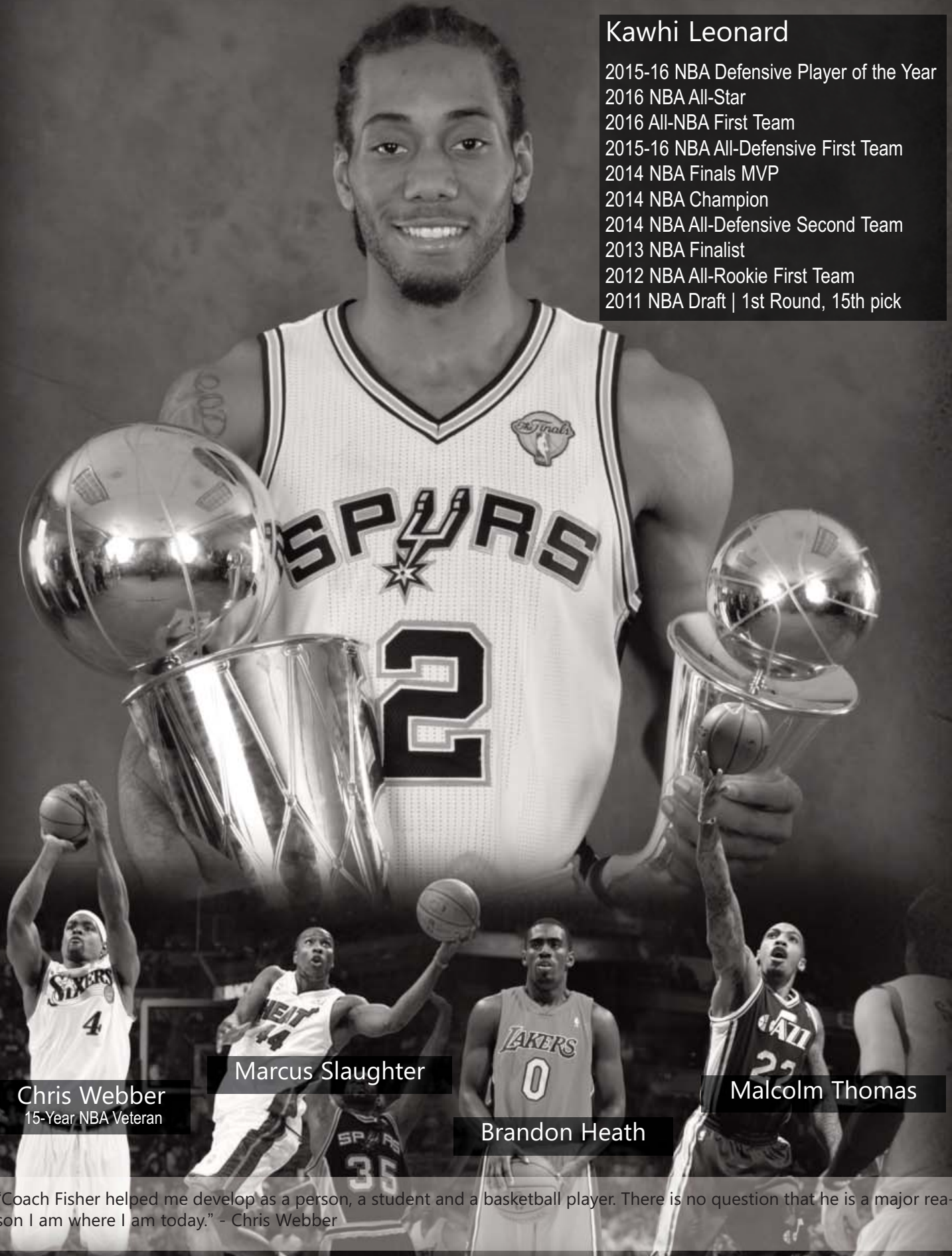
NUMBER OF HEAD COACHES SINCE 1999-2000 (MW SCHOOLS)

San Diego State.....	1
Utah State.....	2
Boise State.....	3
Colorado State.....	4
Fresno State.....	4
Nevada.....	4
New Mexico.....	4
San Jose State.....	4
Wyoming.....	4
Air Force.....	6
UNLV.....	8

FISHER'S MEN IN THE PROS

Kawhi Leonard

2015-16 NBA Defensive Player of the Year
2016 NBA All-Star
2016 All-NBA First Team
2015-16 NBA All-Defensive First Team
2014 NBA Finals MVP
2014 NBA Champion
2014 NBA All-Defensive Second Team
2013 NBA Finalist
2012 NBA All-Rookie First Team
2011 NBA Draft | 1st Round, 15th pick



Chris Webber
15-Year NBA Veteran

Marcus Slaughter

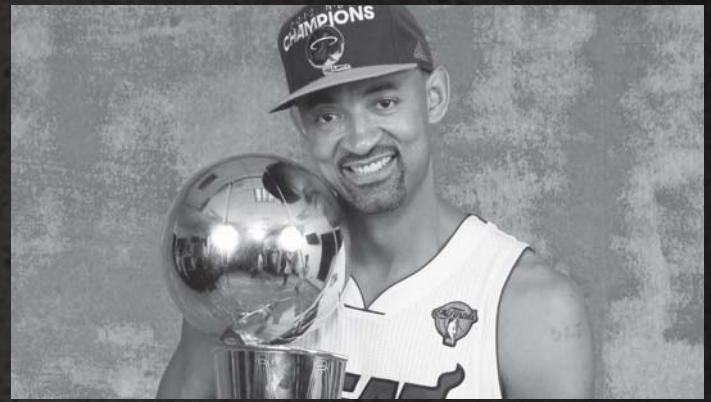
Brandon Heath

Malcolm Thomas

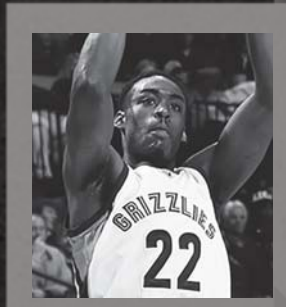
"Coach Fisher helped me develop as a person, a student and a basketball player. There is no question that he is a major reason I am where I am today." - Chris Webber

Fisher's Aztecs in the Professional Ranks

Player	Last Organization/Country
David Abramowitz	Mexico
Mohamed Abukar	Greece
Ryan Amoroso	Italy
Tony Bland	Lebanon
Evan Burns	D-League – Sioux Falls
Mohamed Camara	IBL – Las Vegas
Brian Carlwell	Japan
Mehdi Cheriet	France
Angelo Chol	Portugal
Marcelo Correa	Uruguay
Josh Davis	Philippines
Kelvin Davis	ABA – Connecticut
Jason Deutchman	Philippines
Myron Epps	ABA – South Valley
Al Faux	Austria
Jamaal Franklin	China
D.J. Gay	Ukraine
Garrett Green	Hungary
Jerome Habel	Mexico
Brandon Heath	Bulgaria
Randy Holcomb	Japan
Michael Holper	Philippines
Kawhi Leonard	NBA – San Antonio Spurs
Mike Mackell	PBL – Rochester
Chris Manker	Iceland
Deandre Moore	Mexico
JJ O'Brien	NBA – Milwaukee Bucks
Dwayne Polee	D-League – Long Island Nets
James Rahon	Japan
Aerick Sanders	Portugal
John Sharper	Macedonia
Winston Shepard	Hungary
Marcus Slaughter	Turkey
Brandon Smith	Finland
Kyle Spain	France
DeShawn Stephens	Japan
Chase Tapley	D-League – Tulsa
Xavier Thames	Macedonia
Malcolm Thomas	China
Lorenzo Wade	Puerto Rico
Billy White	Israel
Richie Williams	Germany



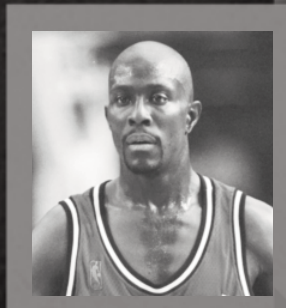
Juwan Howard
2012 and 2013 NBA Champion | 19-Year NBA Veteran



Jamaal Franklin
2013 NBA Draft Pick - Memphis



Xavier Thames
2014 NBA Draft Pick - Toronto



Gary Grant
13-Year NBA Veteran



Glen Rice
15-Year NBA Veteran



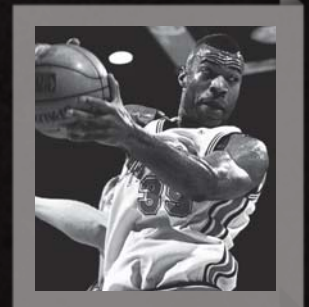
Jalen Rose
13-Year NBA Veteran



Maurice Taylor
9-Year NBA Veteran



Robert Traylor
7-Year NBA Veteran



Loy Vaught
11-Year NBA Veteran

Fisher's NBA Draft Picks

Includes players selected while an assistant coach

Year	Player	Year	Player
1982	Thad Gardner	1990	Loy Vaught
1984	Dan Pelekoudas	1993	Eric Riley
	Tim McCormick		Chris Webber
	Eric Turner	1994	Juwan Howard
1986	Robert Henderson		Jalen Rose
	Richard Rellford	1995	Jimmy King
	Roy Tarpley	1997	Maurice Taylor
	Butch Wade	1998	Robert Traylor
1987	Antoine Joubert		Maceo Baston
1988	Gary Grant	2002	Randy Holcomb
1989	Glen Rice	2011	Kawhi Leonard
1990	Sean Higgins	2013	Jamaal Franklin
	Terry Mills	2014	Xavier Thames
	Rumeal Robinson		

VIEJAS ARENA

TOP-5 COLLEGE BASKETBALL ATMOSPHERES

BY MIKE DECOURCY, SPORTING NEWS (JUNE 2013)

Rk.	School	Venue
1.	Kansas	Allen Fieldhouse
2.	Duke	Cameron Indoor Stadium
3.	Kentucky	Rupp Arena
4.	Wisconsin	Kohl Center
5.	San Diego State	Viejas Arena

"Viejas Arena is one tough place to play as a visitor. You feel like you are surrounded from above when that place rocks."

- Steve Lappas, CBS Sports Network



"Welcome to The Show, the nonsensical, whimsical, illogical student section at San Diego State, where no costume is deemed too strange. Tickets to The Show are harder to come by than those for a red-carpet Hollywood premiere."

- Dana O'Neil, ESPN.com

"I've done college basketball telecasts for over 30 years. The atmosphere at Viejas was as exciting as any I've ever experienced. Certainly, the enthusiasm of the student section was fervent in a way that I'll never forget"

- Verne Lundquist, CBS Sports



"The atmosphere at Viejas Arena for a big game screams through the television, and when in person is quite a sight to see. You have to appreciate Viejas Arena, one of the best environments in the country."

Andy Katz, ESPN.com

NUMBERS TO KNOW

- 109-11 SDSU's record in its last 120 home games
- 72 Consecutive regular-season home sellouts, including the entire 2016-17 campaign
- 1 Ranked first in average home attendance in California for six straight seasons



"The most creative student section in the MW is the foundation of a great atmosphere at Viejas Arena. Bananas, gorillas, little bananas - they all lose their mind when the Aztecs start to run and jump out of the building."

- Tom Hart, ESPN

JEFF JACOBS JAM CENTER



"This has been a priority for some time and will help both basketball programs immensely. This will be another showcase facility for the athletic department as well as the University as a whole."

- Steve Fisher, SDSU Men's Basketball Head Coach



AZTECS
BASKETBALL

San Diego State held a grand-opening ceremony for the 23,500-square foot Jeff Jacobs JAM Center on Sunday, Aug. 23, 2015. The event marked the official opening of the Aztecs' on-campus basketball performance center, which broke ground on Aug. 27, 2014.

Speaking before the ceremonial ribbon cutting was SDSU president Elliot Hirshman, men's basketball head coach Steve Fisher and women's hoops senior guard Ahjalee Harvey.

Preliminary site work started in July 2014, just south of the Fowler Athletics Center and east of the football practice fields. The facility, which will support the continued growth and development of the SDSU men's and women's basketball teams, includes two full-length courts, eight baskets, locker rooms, film room, team lounges, athletic training room and coaches locker rooms.

Hundreds of supporters contributed to the effort to make the Jeff Jacobs JAM Center a reality. In addition to the naming gift from Jeff Jacobs, Hal and Debby Jacobs, Steve and Lisa Altman and Jim Morris, creating the name "JAM" Center, sizeable donations were made from the Manna Charitable Foundation and the Walter and Betty Zable Foundation. The total cost of the project was \$15 million.

The project was designed by JCI Architecture and was built by The Hunt Construction Group.



JEFF JACOBS JAM CENTER FEATURES

23,500 square feet

Two full-length courts

Eight baskets

Two scoreboards

Keiser strength equipment

Locker rooms

Film room

Team lounges

Athletic training room



"This is more than just a building, it is our classroom. This will provide an opportunity for our student-athletes to enhance their individual games, which will in turn benefit our programs. This also keeps SDSU competing at the highest level not only in basketball, but in recruiting as well."

- Stacie Terry, SDSU Women's Basketball Head Coach





Mountain West

10807 New Allegiance Drive
Suite 250
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Phone: (719) 488-4040
Fax: (719) 487-7241

This is the Mountain West

From its inception in 1999, the Mountain West has been committed to excellence in intercollegiate athletics, while promoting the academic missions of its member institutions. Progressive in its approach, the MW continues to cultivate opportunities for student-athletes to compete at the highest level, while fostering academic achievement and sportsmanship. Now in its 18th year, the MW has been assertive in its involvement with the NCAA governance structure and has taken a leadership role in the overall administration of intercollegiate athletics.

The Mountain West has marked several achievements during its first 17 years, most notably becoming the first to establish a sports television network dedicated solely to an intercollegiate athletic conference (The Mtn.). The Mountain West also was the first to experiment with the coaches' challenge in the college football instant replay system, and was the first non-automatic-qualifying BCS conference to participate in four BCS bowl games, winning three. In the inaugural year of the new College Football Playoff system, Boise State earned the automatic slot into a New Year's Six bowl game as the highest-ranked champion from the Group of Five 5 conferences. The Broncos defeated then 10th-ranked Arizona 38-30 in the VIZIO Fiesta Bowl. In 2011-12, the Mountain West was among the first conferences to implement a league-wide state-of-the-art basketball instant replay system.

Changes in the NCAA governance structure set the table for another Conference first, when two members of the MW Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC) were included in the June 2014 meeting of the Mountain West Board of Directors. New Mexico track and field athlete Kendall Spencer, the national chair of the 2014-15 NCAA Division I Student-Athlete Advisory Committee, and Air Force Academy volleyball player Emma Dridge joined the BOD members in this historic meeting to advance the discussion on student-athlete involvement in the NCAA and MW governance structure. During the last two academic years, MW student-athletes participated on monthly membership calls and have joined MW administrators in the annual Joint Council Spring Meetings in Arizona.

The Mountain West is well-represented within the new NCAA governance structure, including individuals who were appointed to serve on committees tasked with managing the day-to-day business of Division I athletics. San Diego State President Elliot Hirshman currently sits on the DI Board of Directors, while MW Commissioner Craig Thompson and New Mexico Director of Athletics Paul Krebs are members of the DI Council. Kendall Spencer, the former chair of the DI Student-Athlete Advisory Committee and UNM track & field athlete, was the first student-athlete in the history of the organization to serve on the Division I Board.

Additionally, the Mountain West was the first conference to have a member institution with No. 1 overall picks in both the NFL and NBA drafts in the same year (Utah's Alex Smith and Andrew Bogut, respectively in 2005). With UNLV's Anthony Bennett claiming the No. 1 pick in the 2013 NBA Draft, the Mountain West is one of three conferences to have multiple No. 1 NBA draft selections since 2000. Also, with San Diego State's Stephen Strasburg earning the No. 1 pick in the 2009 MLB Draft, the Mountain West is one of two conferences to have the No. 1 selection in each of the NFL, NBA and MLB drafts since the MW was founded in 1999.

The Mountain West is noted for its geographic diversity. Some of the most beautiful terrain and landscapes in the nation can be found within Mountain West boundaries, including the majestic Rocky Mountain range, which borders five MW institutions (Air Force, Boise State, Colorado State, New Mexico and Utah State). The high plains of Wyoming (elevation 7,220 feet – the highest Division I campus in the nation) contrast with the desert cities of Las Vegas and Reno, home to UNLV and Nevada, respectively, while Fresno State, San Diego State and San Jose State add a West Coast influence with their locations in Central, Southern and Northern California. The inclusion of the Hawai'i football program extends the Mountain West footprint to the beautiful islands in the Pacific Ocean, while the addition of the women's soccer program at Colorado College gives the MW an additional presence in the Rocky Mountains.

History

The Mountain West was conceived on May 26, 1998, when the presidents of eight institutions — Air Force, BYU, Colorado State, New Mexico, San Diego State, UNLV, Utah and Wyoming — decided to form a new NCAA Division I-A intercollegiate athletic conference. The split from a former 16-team conference re-established continuity and stability among the membership within the new league and signaled the continuation of its tradition-rich, long-standing athletic rivalries. Three of the MW's eight original members have been conference rivals since the 1960s (New Mexico, Wyoming and Colorado State), while San Diego State (1978) and Air Force (1980) were longtime members as well. UNLV and TCU entered the fold in 1996 and the Rebels continued as one of the original eight institutions that formed the MW in 1999. TCU re-joined the group with its first year of competition in the Mountain West in 2005-06. With conference realignment sweeping the nation in recent years, the MW has been proactive in addressing membership changes. Boise State joined the Mountain West in 2011-12, followed by Fresno State and Nevada on July 1, 2012. Also on July 1, 2012, Hawai'i became a football-only member of the Conference. On July 1, 2013, the Mountain West further expanded when San José State and Utah State joined the Conference, bringing to 11 the number of full-time member institutions and 12 football-playing members. On July 1, 2014, the Colorado College women's soccer program became the first non-football affiliate member of the Mountain West, expanding that sport to 12 Conference participants.

Opportunity

The Mountain West provides a first-class athletic and academic experience for more than 5,100 student-athletes each year. Over the past 17 years, 42 Mountain West student-athletes have earned NCAA Postgraduate Scholarships, and since the league's inception in 1999, an additional 32 student-athletes have been named MW Scholar-Athlete of the Year and awarded league-sponsored postgraduate scholarships. Four Mountain West student-athletes have earned distinction as Rhodes Scholars (Jessica Mellinger, Wyoming and Delavane Diaz, Brittany Morreale and Rebecca Esselstein, Air Force).

Conference student-athletes are also given a voice regarding pertinent issues within the MW and NCAA governance structure through representation on the Student-Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC). The Mountain West SAAC consists of 23 representatives; two student-athletes from each full member institution and one faculty athletics representative. The committee reviews and reacts to legislation and to other topics referred by the Conference constituent groups or committees related to the student-athlete experience. With the inclusion of two SAAC members at the June 2014 meeting of the MW Board of Directors, the Conference reaffirmed its commitment to the participation of student-athletes in its governance structure, consistent with the Mountain's West focus on enhancing the student-athlete experience.