



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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### San Diego State vs. UNLV Postgame Quotes

Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif.

Jan. 24, 2022

### Brian Dutcher, San Diego State head coach

#### Opening Statement:

"Now that is a good bounce back win. It is always easier when the ball goes in the basket. You scored 37 points (against Boise), and the coach (referring to himself) doesn't sleep for two nights trying to figure out how to score 50. It was good to score 80, but we knew we had to run better. We did not have a lot of fast break opportunities against Boise. They're a good defensive team. To slug it out with them in the half court for 40 minutes wasn't the best way for us to get a victory and that was for both teams. I don't think we had a fast break basket against them. We had one free throw and probably zero put backs.

"So today we got out, we got on the break and converted on the break and then obviously that allows you to play more comfortably in the half court. I thought we were pretty efficient. We shot a high percentage in the field, we shared the ball. Matt is hard to guard when he gets going like that. We shared the ball and we played the right way. Then on the defensive end again, we only allowed them to shoot in the 31 percent for the game, we out rebounded them. It was a good defensive performance. I thought at the end we were sloppy at times. I told them I don't, 'I don't coach to the score. I coach to the standard I'm trying to hold you to'. I thought they made a few mistakes down the stretch that I told them they can't make if they want to win close games. So as much as I'm happy with the victory as a coach, you are always coaching. We got to find ways to get better and we're going to get better in a hurry to go into Logan and play a good Utah State team on Wednesday.

#### On coaching the fast break:

"I think our rhythm was better tonight. I don't know if it was a hangover not playing or not playing with each other up and down. We came off pause and we were not scrimmaging or going up and down. Boise was the first time we were really going up and down at that pace, time after time and we didn't look very good. We worked on it. We tried to get into some of our secondary actions, so we looked organized. We did not have guys just playing bad basketball and bad spacing. We put some work into it, what we could in one day, and I thought it was better. Now the test is, can we grow from there?"

We are not near what we need to be offensively. We all know that. We have to be more efficient offensively. I've said I think we're going to be a really good team, but we haven't been together so this is the first time we've been together. We're still learning how to play with each other, where we have everybody available and how to play a deep, deep bench and who to play when and how much to play them without disrupting the rhythm for the entire team. We're still going through that. I'm not surprised. We're not at our best yet, but I know we can be. I know if we keep working like we are. We have a great group of kids that want to be good and want to be coached. We will get to the level where we think we should be, hopefully sooner than later."

#### On Trey Pulliam:

"He was more aggressive. I think Coach Acker talked to him about turning his game up and his aggressiveness up. Then at the same time, I'm telling him when you fumble it don't try to do too much. It's coaching. We're trying to give him the same message and he was more aggressive. We wanted to be more aggressive, and against Boise it was uncharacteristic, he lost the handle and a lot of kind of fumbled the ball, even when he was dribbling it. That's just all timing because we know last year, we don't win the conference title without Trey playing at a high level. He's got to keep growing his game back to that level, which I think he will, and that's just playing, he's got to play more."

**On the schedule for tomorrow:**

"They're having beet juice and there's been studies on how that opens up blood vessels. I'm not a scientist, but if they believe in it, I believe in it. Tomorrow we'll just walk through what they do on the floor in their sweatsuits. We won't do anything hard on the floor. We'll have a little lunch and watch a little bit of film. Get on a plane, fly commercial to Salt Lake, get on a bus and bus from Salt Lake to Logan. It is a short prep, but I think we'll do a good job with it.

"Our coaches have been watching tape for three days and they're trying to get a head start. I haven't watched one second of them. Obviously, I watched them when they played Boise because we were playing Boise, but they more than anybody else in the conference has played games shorthanded. They've had enough guys to play but not enough guys to be the Utah State we all know they're going to be when they get to full strength. When they can get healthy, they are going to be a very dangerous team."

## **Matt Bradley, San Diego State senior guard**

**On coming out strong after Saturday:**

"We definitely struggled offensively. After the game (against Boise State) we just had to do a lot of reflection, watch a lot of film, see where we made mistakes and they were pretty obvious. They are very correctable. We did the things we needed to do this game and everybody stepped up."

**On being successful on the fast break:**

"It was just pushing the ball. Trying to early it up. Just making the right reads in transition and not give them silly turnovers.. Just playing smarter and pushing the ball."

**On a season-high 27 points:**

"I just wanted to bounce back from Boise. I always tell myself, 'you're only as good as your next game'. I know we have Utah State next and I can't really harp on this one too much. You can have one bad game, one good one. I'm really just looking forward to Utah State and hoping to get a W over there, but I'm obviously happy with my performance and our team performance for sure.

"I think the biggest thing is not letting our past game affect this one. Right after the game our mindset was strictly on to the next one. As a team, we could have let that really affect us, but I think we were really locked in going into this game and knew what we needed to do. Also, we had a ton of confidence playing this team knowing that we beat them last time. We also had Trey and Lamont coming back, which is definitely what we needed. Our defensive intensity was really high and then offensively we watched film from Boise and knew what we needed to do. I think when those two things come together, you're putting together a dangerous team."

## **Trey Pulliam, San Diego State senior guard**

**On getting into an offensive groove:**

"Coming back to the team it was rough the past few weeks just trying to get my rhythm back. I feel like when I left, they kind of got into a new rhythm. I tried to come back and just to do it with them. But like Matt (Bradley) said, after the game against Boise, just a lot of self-reflection. I just know who I am and just get back into my rhythm and just begin to believe in myself again. I am trying to stay aggressive (and) get back to where I was.

"I think we're going in the right direction. Speaking for myself, I think that's one step for me up there. I can still go take a few more. I know as a team, we're going try to build on it. Just keep going."

## **UNLV Head Coach Kevin Kruger**

**On the start of the game:**

"We were a step behind. We were a step slow. Our main focus going into the game was knowing they just lost here on Saturday, and they don't lose a lot of games here. They came out and threw the first punch. I thought we did ok in the first four minutes and then they continued to swing away and we didn't really have an answer at that point."

**On where the team goes from here:**

"Now that we have a couple of days we need to practice and watch some film. We will do the same thing we did when I played. We will still stick to our guns and our principles, get better defensively and get better and more crisp offensively. That is all we can do. That is what we did as long as I can remember, and we have

to stay true to what we know works. Because we lost this game on the road after this tough stretch we can't throw everything away start anew and think that is going to work. We have to stick to what gave this group of 10 new guys a chance to win in almost every game we have played this year and that is fighting, playing solid defense and playing for each other."

**-SDSU-**