



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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### **San Diego State Women's Basketball Press Conference November 7, 2017**

#### **San Diego State senior guard McKynzie Fort**

##### **On how the team is different from last year:**

"For the most part, I would say this team is more versatile all around. We're guard heavy which I think helps us pick up the pace, our forwards have slimmed down and run the floor better and everybody in the guard position and post position is good at what they do. We have scorers and passers so I think all around each person fills a position in the correct way and we have a bench, which I think is a power for our team."

##### **On how hard it has been to rebuild the program after a coaching change and veterans leaving:**

"For us coming in, our freshman year was (head) Coach Stacie's (Terry) second year with the program. It was different because we came in to an upper class who had had the previous coach so that was a big transition point, just buying into everything new. Now I think that with our senior class being here with her since her second year, we understand the way that she coaches and she understands us as players. I think that that helps us trust in everything she's building for us and I think everybody's attitude is in the right direction. It's positive. We know what to expect. We're still learning and growing together but we've had a couple years with her under our belt so we're pretty much like extensions of her on the floor and she's trusting in us more as players to just get up and down and play free."

##### **On the coaching staff's message to players:**

"Discipline. Being disciplined with our actions and everything that we do. We have a lot more punishment runs, not just for punishment but to help us on the court. Things like not meeting goals, we run for goals. Defense is a huge factor that we have to improve on. We're just trying to stay positive with each other when we hit tough points. Coach Stacie always mentions we have 17 players, which is a lot so there's pressure around the board but how are we going to overcome that and use that to our advantage. I think that showed in the exhibition game. It was 71-50 and I think our turning point was in the second quarter, just working out the kinks. We had a bench come in and that helped, and we were able to mix in players."

##### **On expectations for the season:**

"We're focused on taking each game one step at a time. I think that's the whole discipline piece, like I said, just offensively and defensively meeting goals. I think our expectation is staying consistent with what we're doing. We do expect to finish high in the conference. We were ranked eighth (in the Mountain West Preseason Poll), which is something that you have to humble yourself and not get too far ahead, so we're not trying to jump the gun. For our team, we do believe that we can go far."

#### **San Diego State senior guard Geena Gomez**

**On how the team is different from last year:**

"I would say, to add on to what [McKynzie] said, we have five important freshman and we don't lose anything when they come into the game. It's like guarding McKynzie still or me still with Te'a (Adams), Jenay (Bojorquez), Najé (Murray) who comes in for Lexy (Thorderson). We have sharp shooters which is hard to guard offensively, and defensively the same thing, we don't lose anything. They bring the pressure and they have this chip on their shoulder so that helps."

**On how the freshmen will mix into the team:**

"I think they are going to make an important impact. In the exhibition game we saw some of them play big minutes. For instance, Jenay – she's really good, especially as she grows her game and her IQ. All of them are pretty much ready to come in and make an impact. Adams and Najé, those three for sure are going to be an important part of our team coming off the bench. We have Kiara (Edwards) who once she gets a little bit healthier, she's going to be scary down there. She's very versatile. She plays four and five for us and she shoots threes and can handle the ball. Kennedi (Villa) is a lockdown defender; It's hard to get past her in practice."

**On the coaching staff's message to players:**

"Holding each other accountable for sure. We didn't necessarily do that in the past but the discipline that we're implementing [is helping]. Say offensive rebounds like during Cal State LA, we gave up too many offensive rebounds so we had to run for that practice. You can get that off by taking a charge."

**On expectations for the season:**

"We personally expect big things from our team. We think we're going to finish really high in conference. But right now is the improvement piece in preseason that we're focused on getting better so that when conference comes, we're ready to roll and hopefully get a championship."