



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"Two good prep days obviously last day today getting ready for a good Colorado State team. I know that's hard for people to believe. But sometimes you just can't find a way to win close games and that's been Colorado State this year. Although they did get Fresno State at the end, they came from five down with under a minute to go to get that win. They lost the game before that, had a three to beat Boise so they're dangerous. They're well coached, they're talented and they will present major problems for us tomorrow night here. But hopefully we have a full house and we're playing at the top of our game, put ourselves in position to win and stay in first place in the Mountain West. Four games to go."

On if the bye week came at a good time in the season:

"Yeah, I think so. We gave them two days off. Obviously one day was a travel day. We traveled back from Fresno, took that day off, took the next day off. And then we've gone three straight days prepping for Colorado State. So this is the stretch run. We're as healthy as we're going to be at this time of the year. We feel pretty good about our chances and excited to play again."

On Colorado State's field goal percentage:

"They've got dangerous players. Obviously, they made 11 threes against us in their place and we're fortunate to win in overtime. So, we have to do what we always do. We have to deal with Stevens, who's one of the best point guards in the country. Obviously Tonje has hurt us in here before, hit a game winner against us in the corner not so many years ago, so they got dangerous pieces back from a good team and hopefully we don't let them catch rhythm against us."

On his mentality and the teams:

"Just tell them every time we play it's from first place. So, we've got a game lead with four to go. We know the schedule ahead of us is tough starting with Colorado State and then road games at New Mexico, at Boise and then finish with Wyoming. So, the nice thing is we control our own destiny. We don't need help from anybody else. So, find a way to win out, we'll assure ourselves and it's easier said than done. But we'll hopefully be up for that to happen."

On the reason for the teams improved offensive efficiency:

"Just experience a lot of guys have played a lot of games. We have a lot of seniors and fifth year seniors in the lineup. They know how to play; they know how to play with each other because they've done it for a number of years now. And the pieces are just coming together so we work hard, and Coach Chris Acker does a great job with our offense. You never take anything for granted. We know we have to get better and so we've worked all week on improving our pace of how we play, and our spacing and there's always room to grow and we're trying to grow this week."

On building off of last year's March Madness:

"Well, we want to make sure we put ourselves into the field. And also, I've had some prognosticators that have put us in that. But I always feel like I never take anything for granted. So, we have to win games. We have to continue to win games. By winning games, if we do get in we'll be playing at a high level when we go. So, we're trying to play at our best right now at the end of the season."

On keeping the players focused on the ultimate goal:

"Just maturity, they have to be mature. We have to put ownership on the team. There are two kinds of teams: coach driven, and player driven and player driven teams are always better. So, they seem invested. They want to have a good close to the year and that's a great way to start these final four games."

On the atmosphere tomorrow night and going forward:

"Well excited, home court advantage is for a reason because you have a great crowd that supports you. And this is as good a crowd here as there is on the west coast. And when they're here, and when it's full, we're hard to beat and so we need them all here. We need them here early and we need them excited for their assets."

San Diego State Senior Guard Adam Seiko

On if the bye week came at a good time for the team:

"Yeah, for sure. We got a couple days off. Thursday, Friday, got some recovery so it was good. Going into this game, four games left of the season, we're still in first place. You know we're not complacent with it. We still have some work to do. So, it's good to be back in the gym."

On the biggest challenge of playing against Colorado State:

"The biggest challenge is they have a good offense. They run at a very good pace. Stevens is one of the best point guards in the conference, if not the best. So, we just got to focus on defense. High hands, they're not going to get open passes because their offense is so fast paced that several guys on their team average three assists, so you got to have high hands."

On doing your best every day because records mean nothing in the conference:

"Absolutely, especially this year. The conference is crazy this year from top to bottom. San Jose, Colorado State, these guys are the bottom part of the conference. They are still competing. Every team is still competing. Colorado State might be in the bottom part, but they've lost every close game, none of the games have been blowouts. Every team plays hard and our record, like you said, doesn't matter. You know we've got four tough games coming up. We got to lock in on all these games one game at a time and we'll be alright."

On balancing closing out the season with March Madness coming ahead:

"Yeah, in the back of our heads, you know, we want to make the tournament. We're in a pretty good position for that right now. But we try not to talk about it as much. You got to focus on winning the regular season conference, winning the championship, although we might have a bid in the tournament, this program is based off winning, winning rings. So right now, we're just focused on one game at a time and when the tournament comes, we'll see what seed we are."

On how much the team is paying attention to teams right below them in the standings:

"Oh, yeah, for sure. We watched Nevada-Utah State, a crazy game the other night. Nevada had a chance, just got in foul trouble. Boise State-UNLV yesterday, UNLV had a chance to win as well. So, all these games are close. All these teams play each other tough. It's exciting to see because we love the challenge to compete. It challenges us every game to be better."

On the last few games as a senior:

"I feel great personally. Putting numbers on the board against Fresno. A win is a win; however it goes. I'm glad I'm having a pretty solid year so far. I just want to do what I can to help my team win in every way possible. Not just offense but in defense too. So, it's been a good year."

On the importance of the scout team:

"I can't even explain how important the scout team is to every program. To this program, I cherish these guys so much. I think we all do as players. After every drill we do with them, giving them high fives or encouraging them, telling them good job, it's so important what they do. They have to learn plays on the fly within two or three days. They're coachable guys, they all do well. So, without them you know we wouldn't be who we are."

On the level of the scout players:

"Oh, they're good players. You've been here, you see guys like Jared, Cade, the twins hit ridiculous shots on us. And it's good to have players like that, especially on the scout team because they could not be challenging you, they could go through the motions and just kind of let us score here and there. But they play super hard so that's what's really good for every single guy."

On thoughts about senior night and what it means:

"Yeah, I've had thoughts about it. Starting to get closure that everything's about to come to an end. Few more home games left of the season. So, I'm looking forward to just winning and taking each game one game at a time. When the time comes, I'll be there and embrace the moment."

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