



## **SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS**

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**San Diego State Men's Basketball Press Conference**  
January 11, 2024

### **Head Coach Brian Dutcher**

#### **Opening Statement:**

"We're where we wanted to be after the first three games of conference, two home games, which we got and then to win a road game is always hard in this conference. Now we're going into one of the best environments in college basketball, playing at The Pit against a very good New Mexico team. New Mexico. I know they're one and two in the conference, but they're holding serve. It's hard to win a road game and they've been to UNLV and they've been to Colorado State. They're in desperate need of a home win like we all are when we come home to play, and I'm sure we'll see them at their absolute best."

#### **On Lamont's buzzer-beater at The Pit last year:**

"Lamont's buzzer-beater at The Pit I think we forgot about it because of the buzzer beater in the Final Four but that was a heck of a play. Darrion was actually the hot hand that game for most of the game at The Pit. But I just thought I wanted Lamont downhill with size and strength trying to get to the rim. Just like a coach draws it up, he decided he was going to shoot a pull-up three and won the game. Coaches draw up plays, I wanted Lamont downhill, he felt comfortable with the pull-up jump shot, and it was a heck of a shot to win the game last year at The Pit."

#### **On Jay Pal's block at the end of the San Jose State game:**

"Jay Pal has great length. He's a very good shot blocker. He blocked the pull-up jump shot earlier in the game. So he messed up a coverage, he and Lamont weren't on the same page. We were trying to switch the screen, they slipped out of it, and he recovered. That's a credit to him. He didn't quit on the play and he caught the ball at the rim and won the game for us."

#### **On the environment of playing on the road, especially at The Pit:**

"It's as good as there is. This is one legitimately where it affects coaching because they can't hear me in the game. Sometimes in timeouts, they can't hear me, that's how loud it is in a timeout. So it's going to be hostile. It's going to be loud. We have to embrace that. We played in some great environments this year, played at BYU, played at Grand Canyon, UCSD was sold out. We played in incredible environments and this may be the best of them all."

#### **On how this New Mexico team is different from last year:**

"They've done a great job. They may have the Freshman of the Year in the conference in Toppin, he's played phenomenally. Nelly Joseph, transfer, has filled in at the post position and then their guard plays dynamic. House is quick and dangerous as any guard in the country. Mashburn, great score depth, the ultimate playmaker, so they're deep and they're talented, and

they play at a frenetic pace, especially at home. So we're going to see if we can handle that kind of pace and that kind of environment."

## **Senior Guard Lamont Butler**

### **On how his buzzer beater set him up for the rest of the season:**

"It just helped confident-wise. Now I feel like at all times, I can hit shots like that and to have the opportunity to do that throughout the year."

### **On Jay Pal's block against San Jose State:**

"Jay Pal made a heck of a play. He basically saved the game. If he made that layup we probably would have gone to overtime, it'd be a different game. Jay Pal has been playing well the last couple of games and he's really important to our team. I'm really excited for him and can't wait to see the rest of the season."

## **Senior Forward Jaedon LeDee**

### **On what it means to be on the midseason watch list:**

"It's a great honor. It's a blessing for sure. It's just a testament to the work we put in here. Stay focused. At the end of the day, it's only the middle of the season so we have a lot of work to do."

### **On stealing road wins in the Mountain West:**

"It's hard to win on the road in any college basketball game, in conference, in this conference to win on the road, to steal those games is huge. If you can do that and protect home court, it can really separate teams."