



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State Men's Basketball Press Conference
January 26, 2024

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"Coming off the Wyoming win we have our bye week, which we're trying to take full advantage of. We gave them Wednesday off completely and came back yesterday and I thought we got better but unfortunately, it was getting better without Jaedon LeDee, Miles Heide and Reese Waters. They were all unable to practice yesterday. So even though we got better, it wasn't everybody. I'm not sure we'll have Jaedon LeDee today. The other two will be back and we will continue the process of improving our team for the stretch run. Jaedon LeDee had food poisoning. Reese Waters and Miles Heide were just a little under the weather, but both are back today. I don't know if we'll have LeDee or not, but I hope he can come and just watch."

On what is being done during the bye week:

"We're trying to get more efficient offensively, trim down the playbook and get better at the things we're having success with. With that being said, we'll add a new play that I think will help us. We added a play against Wyoming when they went 1-3-1 with a double ball screen and got Lamont Butler a layup. There's always something that can be added. If you work on it enough that can be efficient. And then we're getting ready for a very good Colorado State team. The most concerning thing is three of the next four games are on the road in the Mountain West and the home games is against arguably the best team in the league right now, Utah State. We know what's in front of us and we have to be at our best to win these games."

On the elevation at away games:

"We try to prepare for it. We try to arrive 24 to 36 hours before playing. Drink some beet juice and do some things to help the body and mentally just try to not make a big deal and just say, 'It is what it is' 'Let's do it'."

On the taking mid-range shots in addition to 3-pointers and layups:

"Some coaches metrically hate the mid-range shot. They want threes or layups and I've never been that way. A good mid-range shot, for us, is a great shot. Reese Waters or Micah Parrish or bigger guards can elevate over a guard and shoot it, I'm in favor of that shot."

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Sophomore Forward Elijah Saunders

On how they adapt and prepare for success in hostile environments at away games:

"The biggest problem we've had on the road is playing together and the games that we have lost on the road have gotten away from us. As long as we stay together and play as a team, that will put us in a position to win."

On what is being worked on during the bye:

"We're cleaning up our offense. For me, focusing more on the defensive end and the rebounding. As a team, working on stuff we haven't had a chance to work on. We've had two days off, prepping for another game like this and finally, working together as a team and building our chemistry."

On what it is like when a team leaves him open beyond the arc:

"Luckily, I made my first two 3-pointers. It's definitely different. JayDee Luster made a good point at halftime that a team plays you like that because they want to force you to shoot uncharacteristic threes. Just try to take the 3-pointers that come to you instead of just shooting because you are wide open."

On his confidence when he makes consecutive 3-pointers:

"It helps my confidence a little bit but I'm in the gym shooting. I've been shooting the most I've been shooting all year. I feel like I am a better shooter than my percentage has shown. I'm confident every time I shoot the ball."

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