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## **NEWS RELEASE**

# **San Diego State Postgame Quotes**

## **Head Coach Steve Fisher**

*(from the postgame press conference)*

### **On the game:**

"This was a tough, physical and sweet victory for us. You can look at the numbers and think it was an ugly game, but this was a tough, hard fought, highly competitive, very aggressive and great victory for San Diego State. It was a game that we had to win against a team that beat us at their place. I thought that our half-court defense was maybe the best it's been against an Air Force team. They hurt us in transition with some stuff, but once we got them in front of us, I thought we did a really good job defending. I feel good for our seniors. We talked about it in the locker room before the game. We brought all six of them up in front and talked briefly on each one and did the same thing after the game. I told them how much I respected, appreciated and cared for them. I told them we have a lot of work to do because I want this season to go on longer. It's nice to end the regular home season with a win. I also felt very great for the fans. We had a terrific crowd for an 8:30 start. I had Randy Holcomb, who was one of my first recruits, call me and we talked about this being the last game and he said he was coming. So Holcomb showed up tonight. I think when you have kids that come and go that have appreciation and respect for this place, they do what Randy did and come back. I told our team about that. That's what they will do when they leave. It's a nice legacy and a nice win for us."

*(from the postgame radio show)*

### **Opening Statement:**

"I think if you've been in this business as long as I have been in it, you're on both sides of the game like this. We really did compete hard and I think that's indicative with the 18 offensive rebounds that we had. Air Force had 14 turnovers so when we combine those two things, I thought we really did a good job defensively. Against us, they made 3-point shots, 9-for-21 from the 3-point range. This is a team that everybody has a hard time guarding and I thought we guarded them terrific. I'm proud of our effort. I'm very appreciative of our seniors and I told them that in the locker room. I went to them one-on-one in terms of what they have meant to me in this program including the three guys that are often times forgotten. We talked about the importance of being a team. Narbeh (Ebrahimian), Aaron (Douglas), and Jeremy (Castleberry) have been so instrumental in the scout team. I thought DeShawn (Stephens) and James (Rahon) were sensational. Rahon got two or three offensive rebounds off of missed free throws. Chase has now won 101 games at San Diego State as a four-year starter. We hopefully will be a team for four years in a row that goes to the NCAA tournament with him as a key guard. I'm thankful that we had such a wonderful crowd. I think that's a tribute and a salute to our seniors in particular and to this team."

### **On DeShawn Stephens and his efforts with offensive rebounds:**

"He battled but he's done that from the moment he walked in the door. It was nice to see him get rewarded with six offensive rebounds for us and as you say, important offensive rebounds."

### **On the shots coming out of the basket:**

"As a rule, you better shoot better than 14-for-27 from the free-throw line and 34 percent in the field. But, at the end of the day, especially at this stage of the season, the one and only thing you have to do is win. You have to find a way to win. This was very physical, competitive and hard fought game and I did more complaining than I should. I did more yelling at the officials and I know they were hearing the same thing at the other end. This was a hard game to ref and a game that not many easy baskets were granted. Both teams were pushing, shoving, bumping and holding to try to make it difficult for the other. It led to a statistically not pretty game but a very hard fought game."

**On J.J. O'Brien's efforts:**

"I thought in particularly the second half, like you said, with J.J. He had some of those shots in and around the rim but came out in the first half. He's our best offensive rebounder and has a nose to the ball. He knows how to play. He wiggles and worms and finds a way to get a hand on it and next thing you know, he's got another one. He's a wonderful addition to this program no question."

**On Boise State:**

"It won't be easy but none of them are. We've had some wonderful, hard fought games and fortunately for us, we won them. Boise (State) will remember Chase knocking in the three with us down two with two seconds to go in a game that they thought they had and maybe fans thought they had. I watched them when they played Vegas last night and I think they led most of the game. Boise has already sold out their last home game against San Diego State. We've been accustomed to that also and we'll have to ensure we silence them with our play."

**Senior guard Chase Tapley****On the win:**

"It was a very important win. It was important because we lost (against Air Force) last time and towards the end of the season we have to have all the wins we can. I think it was very important for both teams

**On mindset going into the game:**

"I feel like our overall effort this game was way better than last game. That is what you have to have each and every game. You can't have a good game here and a bad one there."

**On playing his final game at home:**

"It has not hit me yet. It has been the norm for so long."

**On emotions of playing his final game:**

"I am not really an emotional guy. I get excited at times, but I have to say I got a little emotional in the beginning watching my mom. My mom almost shed a little tear for me. It was just a good exciting time and everybody gets recognized. We got the win, so we will leave Viejas with a 'W.'

**On the stakes of this game pertaining to the upcoming MW tournament:**

"Myself, I really wasn't nervous. I knew what I was coming into this game for. I gave it my all and played with 110 percent. I knew that if we played hard everything would take care of itself. I didn't have a nervous bone in my body when we came out and started hitting threes. I knew we were going to make plays and we have to give it to DeShawn (Stephens). Our offensive glass grabbing every loose ball and every offensive board in the second half, that's what wins it for us. So if we keep playing like that I don't think we have to be nervous about anything."

**On the alley-oop dunk:**

"My teammates don't think I have those (hops). We were talking about how last game it was open on the back side. In film we were watching it and I was talking to Jamaal (Franklin) about it. We ran it in practice one time and we were successful. From there on we always said in the game it was going to happen and it just happened. It was exciting for it to be my first two points in the last game to be an alley-oop dunk."

**Senior forward DeShawn Stephens****On the teams overall defense tonight:**

"There was a lot of switching and defending the back cuts, communicating and stuff like that. We were pretty much just talking to each other, playing together and staying engaged in what we had to do."

**On the reality of tonight being the last home game:**

"The reality of it is there but I haven't really acknowledged it yet. I'm pretty sure I'll realize it when we actually stop playing but we still have more games to play and I'm still focused on them."

**On the emotions of Senior Night:**

"I was more excited than anything. It was great seeing the fans and just soaking in all the excitement and how proud everyone was of us. I'm just glad that I got the chance to come here and contribute as much as I did. I hope to continue the contribution. I am glad to leave Viejas with another win."

# Air Force Postgame Quotes

## Head Coach Dave Pilipovich

### **Opening statement:**

"Great effort from our guys. They played their tails off, played hard. It's a very, very good atmosphere here and a very good San Diego State team. We were minus-one rebounding margin at halftime, and we felt good about that. But then we get outrebounded in the second half. They had 18 offensive rebounds and led us in second-chance points 13-7, and we lost by seven.

### **On getting outrebounded:**

"We work on (rebounding). We're not going to grow them any bigger, we've just got to get a little bit more aggressive and eliminate those things. The disappointing thing is we gave up four (offensive rebounds) on free-throw situations, and we worked on that the past two days. Those are difference-makers in a game."

### **On their defensive performance:**

"If you would have told us that (SDSU shot just 33 percent) I'd be saying, 'Wow, we've got a chance here.' Second-chance points really hurt us and (Jamaal) Franklin was good tonight with a double-double. But we just gave up too many second-chance points."

### **On the pace of the game:**

"It was a good (pace) for us. (SDSU) took us out of some things. They got back in transition so we didn't get early scores. And they're very good defensively, long and athletic, so we weren't able to drive by and get to the rim."

**-SDSU-**