



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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**Syracuse 78, San Diego State 62**

**March 19, 2021**

**Hinkle Fieldhouse- NCAA Tournament First Round**

**Press Conference Quotes**

### San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

#### Opening Statement:

"There's only one team in this event that's going to win every game. I was hoping we'd have an opportunity to make a deeper run at this thing. It didn't happen. That is a credit to Syracuse and how well they played. I thought we played hard to the end. We had a tendency of maybe struggling to find an offensive flow at times, but our defense always keeps up in the game. But tonight we let them create too much separation. They played well offensively. Obviously we struggled to shoot the ball. Their zone was very good. We were trying to find ways to attack it off the dribble, off the pass, off the high post. Weren't successful at any of those things because of their high quality defense. So that's a credit to Syracuse. I like the fight and toughness of my team. I was obviously disappointed we weren't in striking distance where we could have put a little more pressure on them down the stretch but I'm proud of the season. I thank the seniors for all they've done for San Diego State University and obviously me as the head coach spending for years with me -- Jordan, Matt, Adam Seiko, a redshirt junior coming in with me as a first-time head coach. And the contributions they made to the program along with the seniors -- Gomez and Tomaic and Trey Pulliam. We have class kids that gave their all for San Diego State University. Came up a little short in the tournament."

#### On if the 40 threes the team shot were good attempts or their only option against the zone:

"They have great length. You do not realize it until you get out there on them. Some of the looks were clean. But some were a little deeper than normal. Obviously, we knew we had to make threes in order to compete in this game. And so the ones we got we didn't make. Not all of them were great but some of them were good looks. But obviously when you are missing them, the defense starts shrinking and it gets harder to drive. I thought we tried to attack more off the dribble in the second half but obviously we are too far gone in the score to seriously affect the game. This is the first 2-3 zone we have played against all season. And obviously a very good one. Coach Boeheim has had the success he's had because he plays it better than anybody."

#### On the game's turning point:

"They started making a lot of three-balls. Obviously, Buddy Boeheim was shooting well during this event, shooting the lights out. But Joseph (Girard III) came in and made some. I think they made seven threes a game. I think they had 12-plus against us today. (Kadary) Richmond, who made I think one or two threes all season made two tonight. When they started building the lead, the basket started looking bigger for all of them and they shot well against us. And we are a pretty good defensive team. So, they hit some contested ones. I do not think we gave them a lot of easy looks. But they are playing really good basketball right now at a great time of the year in March."

### San Diego State Senior Forward Matt Mitchell

#### On the game and why it rolled downhill so quickly:

"Buddy (Boeheim) got it going for himself, he had their (Syracuse's) first 16-19 points. He got on a hot streak and he never looked back. So, it was kind of tough to stop him after that, after letting him get a couple good looks and he got those to fall. The basket kind of looked like the ocean for

him, and then it kind of seemingly [started to] look like that for the entire team. It was just tough to fight back while fight[ing] back on the tough shots that did not go in for us.”

**On this game and how it will affect his outlook on his career as an Aztec:**

“Man, this one hurts, but my career as an Aztec has been amazing. I would not trade for the world. I think coming in, I chose right school, I made the right decision to come back for my senior year, and I would not change it for the world.”

## Syracuse Head Coach Jim Boehim

**Opening Statement:**

“Things went our way tonight. In the beginning, it did not look like we could stop them. Our defense was struggling early on. And then -- Buddy kept us in there. But when he went out when he got his second foul, Joe (Girard III) picked up, took over, he had 10 points. And Robert hit a 3. And our defense got better. We almost shut them out the rest of the half. And our defense was the difference in the game. I just thought Robert gave us so much, Jesse and Robert gave us so much off the bench. And Marek was good, like he has been. And Kadary and Joe. Buddy just had one of those games like he's been having lately where -- I never had one of those, so I don't know how it feels, but obviously it looks like the basket's wide. And he just made some great shots early when we really needed them. We struggled early.

“We could not crack their defense. And I think he had 16 of the first, probably, 19 points. It was a struggle for us. But once we got everybody going, then it was a really good basketball game, as good as we could have played. We've been better offensively lately. And this was a really good game against a team that's really good. Our defense was good but then they missed some open shots. And you could see at the end, they started to make shots. I think they made six out of the last seven. But we did a good job. It was a real good defensive game for us. And Buddy just, he was crazy -- it was crazy today. And they really looked for them and got him the ball in the right situations. And he made some tough shots today, too. Good win for us.”

**On why his zone is difficult in the post season:**

“Over the years a lot of teams have figured out how to score. Tonight, it was better than it has been. You do not see a zone all year, it is a little bit more difficult to play against a zone when you do not see one all year. That is one thing that has probably helped us as we get into the tournaments the last few years. Most teams do not see a zone all year.

“The teams in our league are pretty -- they know what we do and they are pretty good at attacking us. So, it is not as effective against teams that know you. But again, teams do not see a lot of zone.”

**On what he says to Buddy Boehim during timeouts when he has a hot shooting hand:**

“I never talk to Buddy, honestly, the whole game. I never really talk to him. He knows what he needs to do. And he has figured it out. He has figured out how to get in the lane and make that turnaround. We never really even talked about that. He just figured that out. He studies the game. He has always studied the game. He understands the game. And his teammates really are looking for him and helping him. And when they come on him, he is getting the ball back to guys to get their shots up. But I do not talk to Buddy. He knows what he should do, where he should be. I have talked to him all his life. I do not need to talk to him anymore.

**On Jesse Edwards entrance in the first half and what he did to keep San Diego State from scoring:**

“I thought everybody did a good job. I thought Robert was really good, Marek -- going to the bigger lineup there with Marek at forward. And I thought Kadary was really good. Joe -- I thought our defense overall was really good. Jesse walled up a couple of guys and made them take tough shots. It was the best he has been there defensively. He made a great block in the second half. He was really good and his presence was felt. And that's important for us. Again, he has been getting better. It has taken a while, but he has come a long way this year. Alan Griffin has worked hard with him. And he is a much better player than he was in the beginning, middle of the year. And I think the same thing at our guard position. I have said all year long that we need all three guards to play well for us. And tonight is the first game -- one of the few games really where all three -- we have had a couple others but all three guards were really good. And Kadary can make that jump shot if he gets time. He is perfectly capable to make that shot out there.

**On if his teams have an extra spark when seeded lower in the NCAA Tournament:**

"You know, that does not matter. I mean, it really does not. When you get in the tournament, it does not matter what you think or what you want. It is how you play. San Diego State, you know, they came in here, they want to prove themselves that they are a really good team. And they had a lot of incentive to play well. But the only incentive is you want to play, you want to win. You want to get to the next game. And once the game starts, once that clock starts, it does not matter whether you want to do something or whether you have a chip on -- none of that matters. It is how you play. I watched a lot of games today. And some teams just really came out, really played good today, really played well. And those are the teams that win.

"The psychological thing, there is nothing whatsoever to that. You just have to go out and play and play well. And that's what we did today. We just played really well on both ends of the court. They are one of the best defensive teams, I think, in the nation. I do not follow all that stuff. But I think defensively, efficiently, whatever, they are one of the better defensive teams in the country. And once -- Buddy kept us in it. We were not scoring against them. Then we gradually started to get better ball movement. Joe got going. Robert hit a couple shots. Marek made a couple of really good plays. And the whole team -- Kadary got in the lane -- the whole team picked it up then. And our offense was just really good against a very good defensive team."

**On what it means to share the NCAA tournament with his son:**

"Like I have always said, when you are watching your son play as a fan, as a father, like I watched Jimmie or used to watch Sissy, it's just a great feeling to see them play well. Sissy won three state championships. They were as good as anything I have been involved in, to watch her play that and win those. To watch Jimmy play at Cornell. And to watch Buddy play. I mean, as a father. But as a coach, I am happy that he is playing for me because we are winning games and have won games over his time here that we would not have won without him. He has really played well. There are always negative people. They are there now. They have been there for three years, that said he could not play at Syracuse. And him and Joe could not play at Syracuse. I think somebody said they are lunchtime players or something. I think that was the word this year, that they should play at the Y at lunchtime, I think. Must be a heck of a lunch game if they are playing there. But I am proud to have him as a son, but I'm really happy I have him as a player."

**-SDSU-**