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LIU at San Diego State Postgame Quotes
Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif.
Nov. 22, 2019

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening statement

"Defensively, we got outrebounded for the first time this year, which is a bit of a concern. Their one player [Flowers] leads the country in rebounding at 14.5 a game. We changed our defensive scheme at halftime. We were sending all ball screens down the baseline in the first half. In the second half, we just decided we're not sending anything baseline; we're sending everything middle where we can get some more help, and I think it threw them off rhythm a little bit. Our defense was better in the second half because of the adjustments we made, and the kids did a good job playing through that adjustment."

On playing against a zone team:

"I think sometimes we held on the ball too long instead of just getting it moving really fast. There's nothing wrong with holding the ball, but you have to have a plan — catch it and go into a gap right away or move it. Don't sit there and hold it because the zones already shifted that way. We need to keep the zone moving. That's something we can watch on film and something we can teach and I know we'll be better. I don't think a lot of teams are going to be successful zoning us this year because we're so good at it in practice."

On LIU's strategy tonight:

"They attacked downhill. They were driving us. We'd switch the four-man ball screens so that we had Yanni or Aguek on a speedy guard and they just put their head down and went by us and we weren't in position to help enough. We gave them some layups and we fouled them too much. We need to keep a body in front of a body when we do switch some of those screens."

San Diego State Junior Forward Matt Mitchell

On what Coach Dutcher said at halftime:

"We just came out of the first half with low energy. That's just what it was, and we weren't fully bought into the game. At halftime he got in to us and told us we need to pick it up, pick up our energy. We had to rebound better, to play better on the defensive end, and that our offense can't dictate our defense. So I think we did a better job going out in the second half and playing hard on both ends of the floor."

On how he as adjusted to coming off the bench:

"I just try and come in and play basketball and do my best. That's just what I try to do every night, whether I'm coming off the bench or starting, it's the game of basketball and I've just got to go play."

On the difference between starting and coming off the bench:

"Yeah it feels a little different, but you know you've always got to be ready. You've got to be as ready as possible. That's what coach preaches, 'be ready, stay ready.' You never know if you will be the first guy off the bench or the last guy off the bench, so I just try and be ready."

On if he would rather start then come off the bench:

"I feel like everybody would like to start, but at the end of the day it's coach's choice. He decides who he wants to put out there, so if I'm not in the starting five then I'm not in that five. I've got to come off that bench hard and play my best game."

San Diego State Senior Forward Yann Wetzell

On the game feeling closer than the final score (81-64):

"Yeah for sure, obviously in the first half we didn't make shots and that was the main thing, and at halftime coach Dutch said, 'It's ok, we're going to make shots eventually.' He was more frustrated about the defensive end, so we came out and started focusing more on the defensive end and knew shots were going to follow and that's why it made such a big difference in the end."

On struggling with fouls:

"They had some really quick guys and that caught us off guard a couple times. Just the matter of sliding our feet and we were caught behind a few times, which caused the fouls, but we knew that we were going to get out and all five just ran to the three-point line, so it was a very quick game, and it was kind of a matter of being in position, I think we're just slow at times for that."

LIU Head Coach Derek Kellogg

Opening Statement:

"I give San Diego State a ton of credit. I've watched them on video and am really complimentary of how good I think their team is. To me, they are an NCAA Tournament team that can advance, and I thought our guys played really hard. In the first half we were very competitive, and I thought it was a good game for our guys as a measuring stick to see where we are against what I see as a top 35-45 teams in the country."

On keeping the game close:

"I thought their depth wore us down some as far as size goes. They have a nice group of nine or ten guys that keep coming at you and then they made some shots which, with the three-point shot against our zone, can open some things up."

On playing at San Diego State:

"We really enjoyed the hospitality of the program. We enjoyed being in San Diego and I thought our guys came out and played really hard and fought."

On what he knew about SDSU coming into the game:

"I knew a ton. I've followed them very closely and for a long time. I have a lot of respect for this program and what they've done. I liken them to Memphis, where I was an assistant coach, as far as what they've been able to do in a non-BCS league of putting together NCAA Tournament appearances. This year, they are older and more mature and can advance in the NCAA Tournament."

On SDSU's three transfers:

"They give them some maturity and stability and different positions on the floor. They have some fifth-year guys that look like men out there and I think that makes a difference."