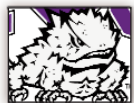


# AZTEC BASKETBALL

DEFENDING MOUNTAIN WEST CONFERENCE CHAMPIONS | FIVE STRAIGHT POSTSEASON APPEARANCES | FIVE CONSECUTIVE 20-WIN SEASONS



## Postgame Quotes

TCU at No. 7/6 San Diego State ▶ Feb. 5, 2011

### San Diego State Head Coach Steve Fisher

*(from the postgame radio interview with AM 600 KOGO)*

#### **On tonight's win:**

"It was a hard fought game without question. (TCU head coach) Jim Christian is one whale of a coach and his team distortedly competes like crazy, and I told our team that they were going to do that tonight. Sometimes you can rise and play a level above and I don't know that they did that, but they really, really competed hard and stayed with it for 40 minutes. So I'm going to say that as poorly as we shot the ball at times, some of that credit should go to TCU, who defended us with their physicality and their technique."

#### **On the injuries to Shelton and Tapley tonight:**

"I have not talked to the doctor yet. Dr. Chris Behr is here, our orthopedic surgeon, and looked at both players and I really won't know until I get a chance to talk to him. Obviously, neither of them played after they got hurt so it's more of a minor or how significant. I don't know."

#### **On the play right before halftime:**

"I gave us a little bit of feel good right before going into the locker room at halftime. I watched the officials and the one, Jimmy Casas, on the far right side, signaled that they had deflected the ball. He made that signal that they hit the ball so our kids were walking up, thinking we're going to have the ball which is why they had an opportunity to score. Sometimes you can argue a little bit and get it turned around. To the ref's credit, he stood up and said, 'You're exactly right, I did say he tipped the ball and I should of given him the ball, and now we're going to give it to you.' We had enough time to say, 'Okay, you go here, you go here, throw it up and somebody tip it in.'"

*(from the postgame press conference interview in the Mezzanine Level)*

#### **Opening Statement:**

"I had ten people, all of them friends, say 'Any win is a good win.' But some wins you feel a little better about. This was one that I want to first of all talk about how hard our opponent played. We talked before the game that this is a mark of a Jim Christian coached team, that they don't care if they only have three guys on the team; they are going to compete. Without Ronnie Moss, Hank Thorns has become the star of the team, and he's a very hard guard. The last three games he has taken 13, 17, 15 shots and tonight he took 21. He's a hard guy to keep under control. He has had 25 assists in the last three games and he had eight more tonight. So, sometimes there is addition by subtraction. You wouldn't think it when they lose arguably their best player, but this is a team that is starving for a win, and if they play that hard they will get a win. The flip of that is that I thought we had a little bit lacking in terms of an edge about us that is sometimes hard to pinpoint, but it shows just enough. Balls bounce off our hands, we had opportunities where we didn't quite finish and we have to be better."

#### **On the play of Billy White:**

"We never run plays for (Billy), we finally said 'Let's go to Billy,' and then we went to him about seven times in a row, and he delivered. He was very good. He was a hard guard for them in the second half and he was a pivotal offensive piece for us in this ball game. He did a really good job."

#### **On if the close game against TCU will be good for the team in the long run:**

"It's a good teaching point if you are accepting, if you say, 'You're right, you're right.' (It's not) if you say, 'Well, it's everybody but me,' and I think we have a group of guys that will say, 'Yeah, we all have to do a little more.' We are not the lone ranger when it comes to this. You look across the country and everybody has games where people say, 'They only won by six at Wyoming?' So it's no different. It's called human nature, it's called a long season and it's called (playing) teams that compete."

#### **On what area the Aztecs need to get better in the most:**

"We have to get a little bit better in everything. You name it, we want to get better at it. I thought we did a good job tonight. We put four or five keys on the board and one of them was get to the free-throw line. We shot 24 free-throws to their nine, I like that. That's pretty good. I had somebody tell me that in somebody's rating system we are like 317th out of all the Division I schools in terms of percentage of points we score at the free-throw line, so we did a nice job tonight getting the freebies and then making them."

### San Diego State Senior Guard D.J. Gay

#### **On halftime adjustments:**

"Something definitely felt off in the first half and we couldn't figure out what it was. There were some things we wanted to do out there that we just didn't do. At halftime we talked as a team and the coaches got on our case. We tried to pick up the tempo in the second half."

#### **On team injuries:**

"We definitely didn't play our best basketball tonight, but we do have depth. Jamaal (Franklin) and James (Rahon) came in and did a good job. It's still hard to come in and replace guys like Chase Tapley. We do have players that can fill and do great things for this team. This is just adversity."

## **San Diego State Senior Forward Malcolm Thomas**

### **On his performance:**

"It feels good to do well. Everybody wants to help their team. I've been struggling the past few games. I told my team I wouldn't let it happen again, so I've been working on finishing better and stronger."

### **On missing free-throws:**

"I can't let that stuff affect me. Like the team told me, I just have to keep playing hard."

## **San Diego State Senior Forward Billy White**

### **On the physical nature of the game:**

"TCU plays hard and physical. We knew that coming into the game. We wanted to match their effort, and we did a pretty good job at doing that. We came out slow tonight, and if you want to win in this league you can't do that."

## **TCU Head Coach Jim Christian**

### **On the game:**

"I thought it was the best defensive game we've played all year. I was proud of our kids. We gave effort today. We battled. We stayed together. We've had all week to practice hard. Our goal is that we want to be the most improved team in the league in the second half. We took a huge step tonight in that direction."

### **On holding SDSU:**

"We wanted to dictate the tempo and that was the only chance that we had. I think we did that for the most part. They are an excellent basketball team. I give them credit. They made the plays down the stretch. They made huge one-on-one individual plays by Kawhi (Leonard) and (Malcolm) Thomas down low. But again, I'm proud of our effort today and we fought. I'm proud of the way we came out and played. Hank Thorns gives you 40 minutes and you can't ask a whole lot more from your point guard than that. He's great. Obviously, he left some points on the table that he would like to have back - some finishes around the rim and some open threes. Those plays are going to be made. As I told them after the game, if it's just making shots, I'm okay. If the effort is there, the attitude is there, the preparation and attention to detail is all there, then we're going to be moving in the right direction and that's all I need to see."

## **TCU Junior Guard Hank Thorns**

### **On the game:**

"We came out and played tonight. I'm proud of the young guys and some of the older guys. I'm proud of our effort. We played really good. I think we should have come out with a victory, but we're showing progression and that's all we needed at the moment."

### **On SDSU:**

"They're a pretty good team. They play hard and play together. They're big men. There are probably three or four pros over there. But how we played them, I can't ask for anything better."