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5500 CAMPANILE DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92182 | (619) 594-5547

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San Diego State Men's Basketball Press Conference Nov. 4, 2022

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"The season is here. I think we have prepped well. The key thing to this is that we have stayed healthy. Through all of summer and the fall, and through the closed scrimmage and the exhibition we remained healthy. When you look around the Mountain West, that is not the case. Isaiah Stevens from Colorado State is out for an extended amount of time. I saw Graham Ike from Wyoming is out for an extended period of time. The best ability in basketball is availability, and we have everyone available, and we are ready to take the floor against Cal State Fullerton next week and get our season kicked off."

On welcoming being ranked in the preseason:

"We like being ranked. It's this year's team, but it's a cumulative effect of everything we have done here at San Diego State, and that's the most gratifying thing. When people see San Diego State, they know we are a good basketball program. All those teams that weren't ranked and played their way up into a ranking have set the table for this team. When we say we are going to be good, people understand that we are going to be good. How good we are going to be, that remains to be seen. Now we have to go out and be really good out of the blocks. Like they said Cal State Fullerton was an NCAA tournament team, then it's BYU, then Stanford, then it's Ohio State and then it's either Arizona or Cincinnati. We're jumping right into the fire, and that's intentional. We scheduled that way because we feel like we have an older team, a veteran team, and a good team, and now we will see if we are good or not. The beauty of San Diego State is we always get better as the year goes on. Maybe this year there is more urgency to be better early, and we will see if that happens or not."

On Cal State Fullerton:

"They are well coach. Dedrique Taylor has done a great job. He's going to have a good team. He's like anybody else, he has a lot of transfers, so he's replacing starters with transfers, not freshman. You're not looking up and saying well these four freshmen aren't going to come in and give us a challenge. He's got enough players returning, and then he has good pieces from either the division two level or other division one schools who have played a lot of basketball. We really don't know what we are getting into until we step on the floor. That's the great challenge of an opener, you don't know what you are going to see until you step out on the floor."

On the team's depth:

"We have 12 guys that legitimately could play and contribute, and I wouldn't worry about any of the 12. All 12 scholarship players are good enough to play major minutes. But that's not going to happen. If you're ninth or 10th then you're probably not going to as much as you want, and if you're 11th and 12th you're going to be very frustrated. But, you have to believe

that we are getting you better every day and that if you're an underclassmen maybe there's a fifth or sixth year senior ahead of you, and they aren't always going to be here. So sometimes patience is a virtue, and if you're good and you believe in the program, you believe in our system, then you are going to ride it out. As far as division one schools, we probably have the fewest transfers out of anybody, because we message, we believe in the kids, we invest in the kids, and we believe they are all going to be good when given the opportunity."

Senior Guard Darrion Trammell

On his personal expectations:

"I definitely feel like that's what makes it special. Everyone has their personal goals, and their personal goals is ultimately winning. I think that's what's going to make us really special this year."

On the depth of the team:

"Us being so deep, I think that helps. I feel like each five understands that you never know when you're going to come out, so you have to leave it on the floor. I think that just makes us play harder. There's no let up, each five is going to impose their will on our opponents."

On the atmosphere the fans provide and what it was like playing in Viejas Arena on Tuesday night against San Diego Christian:

"It was amazing. That was probably one of the best atmospheres I've ever played in. It's probably the most people I've ever played around. The atmosphere was great, it's very different for me coming from a smaller school. I can just feel the school spirit in there, and all the love from the Aztec fans and the show. So, it was a great atmosphere and I loved it."

Senior Forward Keshad Johnson:

On the pressure they feel entering the season:

"I would say it's all the same to me. If there's any pressures within ourselves, we have to be able to fight against ourselves each and every day and be a better team, because our only competition is between us. I just feel like we'd go each and every day practicing against each other trying to be the best individual people we can be as a team to make each other better."

On the expectations the team has for themselves this season:

"Take it one game at a time. Hopefully that will lead to us making a great run in March. We of course want to get the tournament championship and the league championship, but also take that on to another level, and making it past the first round of march."

On his personal expectations:

"Each and each and every one of us hold ourselves accountable. We all bring something different to the table. And we come in day in and day out and try to do our best at what we do. We don't try to go too far and doing things that we're not used to do, we just be our best selves, and together that's going to make us be great in the long run."

On how deep and experienced the team is:

"We are about 10 or 11 deep, and that's very rare in college basketball team. For us, the personnel that we have everybody, we're all selfless. So we know once the first five go out, the second five are going to come out and take that energy to another level, and we're all aware of that. We are just trying to give it our best each and every day and feed off each other."