



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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

GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | @AZTECSPR | #GOAZTECS

UC Irvine at San Diego State Postgame Quotes

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif.

Nov. 27, 2020

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"This was a good game for us. Irvine has always played the right way. They attack inside, they play powerful basketball, they're well-coached and they're disciplined. They're just a little younger than they've been. But I thought it was a good test for us. I was happy we played a tough team like this that showed us some things we need to work on. I thought we played the right way. Obviously, our press has been very effective in the first two games. We forced 25 turnovers again today. It definitely changed the tempo of the game in our favor, so I was very pleased with the way we played at the defensive end. Obviously, Irvine showed us some things we need to get better at the offensive end. But it's early in the year, and I've got a team that wants to learn, is hungry to learn and get better."

On if the 2-0 start has lived up to his expectations and what the team needs to improve on:

I'm happy with the way we're defending right now, and that's always been the cornerstone of this program. I liked the fact we forced 25 turnovers. We were out-rebounded, but this is a big strong team. Obviously, we have to do a better job when we play bigger people on the glass. But for a second game, to be in the form we're in right now, I'm pretty pleased. Obviously, we have to continue to get better in a lot of areas, but for only two games in the season. I'm happy with what I've seen."

On what is so special about beating teams from California:

"Obviously, there are a ton of colleges here, so a lot of our preseason schedule is against California teams. You know, we're just always trying to earn our respect every year and trying to play the right way. And like we said, we have a program here. We're not just a flash one season-type team. We built this thing since Coach (Steve) Fisher came here 22 years ago, and I've been fortunate enough to take over that. We have a good culture, we expect to win every game we play, and we respect our opponents. We don't walk around beating our chests just telling everybody we're good. We try to prove it on the floor and I think that's what we're doing. Again, this year has proven that we have a certain intensity and toughness about us that's already showing early in the year."

On Trey Pulliam's emergence after last season:

"Trey was good last year, but he was playing behind an NBA first-round draft pick (Malachi Flynn). So his minutes weren't great, but he always made the best of his minutes, and he won games for us last year. Now he's in the starting lineup and obviously he's improved because he works hard at his game. Trey has a unique ability to score mid-range on the runner or on the layup. But he also finds his teammates and gets them open looks. So Trey's off to a good start, and he has to continue to play the right way."

On the team's ball pressure and defensive effort:

"Because we're so hard on the ball, sometimes there's not space to set that screen. They almost have to run up into us because we're into the ball so hard. So some of the offenses that are trying to run, they have to run further from the basket because we're guarding the ball so hard. You run

out there and you have a tendency to set an illegal screen because their guard's under duress. So I like our ball pressure, and I thought we did a real nice job defensively against a team that knows what it wants to do is pretty disciplined in the way they do it."

On scheduling two games next week to replace the series against Colorado State:

"We didn't play Arizona State until December 10th and I didn't want that long of a stretch without any game minutes. Plus, these guys are tired of practicing anyway. When we do practice, we'll get better, but they want to play games. So it might give us a chance to continue to (play). The opponent is ourselves. I said that again today. The opponent is the standard we've set for how we want to play and how we want to do things. So we're not as concerned about who we're playing, we're concerned about our level of play. So I'm expecting that we come out and play at a very high level and continue to improve as a basketball team. It looks like the non-conference season is all scheduled but who knows. At any moment, another team could test positive and we could be without games for two weeks, so I want to play as many as we can while everybody's healthy and we get an opportunity to do it. In this COVID time, I think it's important to play games when you can play them and so I'm looking forward to, obviously, playing these next two games. We were wishing it was Colorado State in the conference openers, but that's not happening. So we're going to just get teams that are in town that are already testing that we know we'll be able to play."

-SDSU-