

AZTEC BASKETBALL

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



Postgame Quotes

Air Force at No. 6 San Diego State ► Jan. 19, 2011

San Diego State Head Coach Steve Fisher

(Postgame press conference)

Opening statement:

"This was a lot like I thought it would be. This was a tough, hard-fought game against a team that plays very, very hard and is precise with what they do. When they are making shots, especially perimeter shots, they can play with anybody. They deserved to be ahead at halftime. We did what we have done a lot of times. We closed with a 9-0 run to give ourselves a little ability to take a deep breath. I thought in that stretch we made some defensive plays that got us some baskets. We have done that all year. We were aware of what we needed to do, we just didn't do it well enough in the first half. We knew Tom Fow could shoot the ball. We helped him. We fouled him as he shot a three. (We) went under a flair screen, let him step back and make an open three. He gets their first six points and says 'I'm going to get 50.' Billy (White) did a much better job on him in the second half and made it hard for him to get looks. I think that was part of the difference of what he got in the first and second halves. We have done what we needed to do. This was a nice victory for us against a team that beat Utah, led UNLV for most of the game, came from behind against BYU. They don't quit playing and this is the best Air Force team they have had since I was there when they beat us and cut the nets down. They are a very good team that can beat any team in our league"

On the team's frustration:

"I think the frustration was self-imposed as much by things that we did. You are not going to play a perfect game. Too often (we) were thinking about the last play when (we) were in the next play, and you can't do that. We were able to finally work our way through that, although not as smoothly as you would like. Finally we settled in and played like we should play."

On the run that put San Diego State ahead:

"Our spurts are usually created by our defense. Chase Tapley is becoming a really good reader about when to go when (the opponent) loses sight. Chase does a great job of knowing exactly when to run and got his hands on a lot of balls for us. If we can continue to do that without fouling, without giving up lay-ups or easy stuff than you are money ahead being able to do it. We have been able to do it. It is one of the good things good athletes, together, can be effective at."

On the pressure of being 19-0 and playing in front of a sellout crowd:

"I think that basketball in today's world, even when you have better athletes and say you should win, it doesn't always work that way and that is all over the country. We had our two best practices of the year on Monday and Tuesday. We were electric with our effort, energy and enthusiasm. I don't think it was that we were not ready to give our best shot. You have to play within yourself. I think we got a little frustrated when things didn't go our way. We missed some easy ones. We missed some free-throws and we got to thinking about that and that caused some concern for me. We were ready to play. We were excited to play. We have great respect for Air Force and what they could do. I don't think 19-0 and a big crowd had a lot to do with it. I think Air Force did. They are a good team."

On the week off prior to playing Brigham Young:

"We started school today so we are back in a different routine. This is not a bad time for us to have a bye. Tomorrow all we are going to do is lift. We will come back ready to go on Friday and put all of our energies and efforts into getting ready for a really, really good BYU team on Wednesday."

(Interview with AM 600 KOGO)

Opening statement:

"They outplayed us in the first half, but we did what we've done in a lot of games. All of a sudden we're five points behind and we get the last nine points of the half to go in up four. If you go on who played better, they probably should have been up four. We found a way to get that little spurt at the end. One thing I'm really proud of is how we worked hard on the out of bounds play where we knew they were going to step out. The one that D.J. (Gay) stole right towards the end, our kids got really excited when we got that steal. They said, 'Yeah, they told us we could do it and we did it to get us the last four points.' Nothing is easy in this league. Home or away, you have play. Air Force played and they played very, very hard."

On Billy White:

"When Billy plays unaffected by the flow of the game and just plays, he is really good. When he allows other things to get to him, then he becomes the guy just thinking about what just happened rather than playing in the moment. He made two huge three-pointers for us. In that second half, he did a great job guarding (Tom) Fow and not letting him get good, clean looks. He used his length and athleticism to make it difficult for him."

On making adjustments at halftime:

"We worked hard on how we wanted to defend dthings. We tried to tweak a little bit at halftime and how we wanted to guard those screens. I think we were a little more certain to when and why we would switch or stay. I thought that helped us a little bit in the second half."

On playing BYU:

"I think it will have as much attention nationally as any game we've ever played. We're playing a great team in BYU. They're really, really good. You think Air Force makes threes, this team that we're going to play on Wednesday, they have a lot of guys that can make threes."

On the SDSU fans:

"I know for our fans, they are fun to come in and be apart of the event we have in here. Our fans have been sensational. They were again (tonight)."

We would appreciate that they give us a little throw on the TV when we go up to Provo. They will have 22,000 strong in that building. We're excited with where we are and determined to go up there and find a way to get a win."

San Diego State Senior Guard D.J. Gay

On the slow tempo of Air Force's offense:

"That's what Air Force is known for; they are going to run the shot clock until there is about eight seconds left and if they miss and get the rebound they run it for another 30 seconds. They are a frustrating team but they are very well coached and they run their offense to a 'T'."

On the run at the end of the first half that gave the Aztecs the lead going into half time:

"We broke loose a little bit towards the end of the first half and we had a great run to end the half. It sparked a high energy for the team and just carried over into the second half."

On the importance of the San Diego home crowd:

"The crowd's the extra boost. They could be the difference between winning by 15 or winning by three. When they are cheering for us and the crowd erupts, that's just an extra boost for the team. We appreciate them and it's true that we wouldn't be where we are without them."

San Diego State Sophomore Forward Kawhi Leonard

On San Diego State's slow start against Air Force:

"We came out with a slow start on defense, but Air Force is a good team. They ran their set very well. They are going to score the basketball and we just didn't do a good enough job communicating, but we talked about it at half time and came out a little bit better in the second half."

On rebounding against a team with Air Force's style of play:

"They were in a zone, so that always makes it hard to get a rebound on the offensive end. When we are on defense, they run their offense so (sometimes) they are running the whole 35 seconds off; that's just less possessions and less misses where you are going to get a chance to get the ball."

San Diego State Senior Forward Billy White

On his clutch three-point shooting in the second half:

"In the first half we were just battling. At halftime Coach Fisher just told us we needed to step it up and in the locker room he told me 'The second half is going to be your half, you need to shoot a little bit more.' The three's were wide open and I just took them."

On the significance of the Aztecs' 20-0 start:

"Honestly, I still can't believe it. We want to keep building on our wins; we don't want to be satisfied with just 20-0. We want to keep getting our wins and playing together."

Air Force Head Coach Jeff Reynolds

On the shooting of San Diego State:

"SDSU really didn't shoot the three that much last year until the last game of the season when they played New Mexico. Tonight they demonstrated that they have more than just an inside presence. When D.J. shoots the ball like that, and the rest of the guys get going, they are hard to guard."

On how the game changed in the second half:

"We could not handle the pressure in the second half. Our guards were not able to get the ball across the court, and we let them get too many points off of second shots. That's the difference in the game."