



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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

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San Diego State vs. Utah State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State 85, Utah State 75

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif. | January 25, 2023

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"There are no easy games in the Mountain West. That's obvious. And Utah state averages 80 a game and 72 in conference and so we played a great defensive first half, holding them to 27. Obviously, they made some adjustments. They decided to attack a little bit more. They took 20 threes in the first half, that's a lot of threes. That's what they usually take a game. They took 20 in the first half. So, I thought our defense was pretty good. Then they took less in the second half, but they made more. They took 13, shot a better percentage, and played a lot more aggressively. It's a game of run, so we knew they had a run in them, they're too good offensively. But the thing I like about our team is we answered the run. We ran good offense, we moved the ball, we had assisted baskets. 18 assists on our basket tonight. We only had nine turnovers. Offensively we played a really good game, but defensively they got hot and they're capable of doing it. You look at their numbers early in the year, they put 90 on teams. They're super dangerous. I thought we did a great job on Ashworth, who's maybe their best player. Funk, we knew as a three-point shooter, we tried to take everyone away, and I don't think he got an open one. He made contested threes and like good shooters do, when we're out there taking them away, he started curling to the basket and getting some layups because we were working so hard to take the three away. Credit to Utah State. We knew they weren't going to go away quietly, and we know what's in store for us in a couple of weeks when we go back and play at their place. This conference is unforgiving. And I'm grateful that we came away with a win. Adam Seiko. I told the team in the locker room after the game, I'm not sure if Seiko was sick or if he was in club med for three days getting his legs fresh. He looked healthy and fresh. And I said, well, man, practice must be overrated, rest is more important. So, I told the team, we'll go tomorrow but we'll go light. We have to have fresh legs when we take the floor against San Jose later in the week."

On having 4 games in 10 days:

"I mean, we have a deep bench which is the thing you need when you're playing a lot of games in a hurry. And you look at the first half, Jaedon LeDee was four-for-four and Adam Seiko was six-for-six off the bench. Their production was incredibly important to give us that lead. We can survive nights where Matt has an off night, and Darrion can't get it to go in. Adam stepped up, Keshad goes double-double. If you look at Jaedon and Nate's production together, they backed each other up. That's like 19 points out of that position. We got a lot of production out of our center position because the two split the minutes there. I was happy with our offense. I mean 85 points is a lot of points to score in a mountain west game and we did that. Then we made just enough plays to win the game."

On Adam taking time to practice on his own:

"He always does extra shooting, whether it's in our facility or wherever he does it, Adam always gets shots up, and our guys do that. That's why we only practice about 90 minutes when we get the whole team out there, because we know that they're getting shots up on their own. They're going wherever they have to do a half hour to 45-minute individual work, just to work on their game, they're shooting, they're driving, their skill work. That's like when Keshad had a bad free throw night, we didn't sit and practice and say we're going to spend time in our 90 minutes to get you extra free throws. He's a player. He knows how to get extra free throws. I think he said that in the press, that he got in the gym and spent time on his free throws. So that's what all our guys do. They spend extra time and that's why they're the players they are, because they're committed to getting better."

San Diego State Senior Forward Keshad Johnson**On defending Utah State from the 3-point range:**

"We know what Utah State is about. They play similar to the Warriors and sometimes you just got to live with a contested three-point shot. They shot 33 threes. That's kind of crazy. So of course, someone's going to fall so we just had to do our best job of defending Funk and Ashworth and even other guys got hot like Bairstow. He hit some so we just got to just do our best job of contesting. Shooters are going to shoot. Shooters are going to make shots. And we just got to do our best to try to contain them."

On having back-to-back double doubles:

"I just tried to do my best to give my teammates my all and rebound and come with effort, and I just give my teammates as much effort as possible. Like I said, last game the more rebounds I get for my team, the more extra possessions we can have. And the more extra possessions will lead to us having a better chance at winning each game. So, I just try to be that hustle guy, that energetic guy, everybody needs that person. I just want to be that person to help. You can't go wrong with that."

On his thoughts leading up to the block in the first half:

"Pretty much, I was just there for my brother, the switch happened. The player was rolling, and I was there a little late, but like I said, with effort anything can happen, so I gave my max effort. I went up to contest and thankfully, I was on the winning side of it. I saw it in his eyes, but you can't have no fear with this. I'm a fearless, fearless guy. So, I went up and made the play. I caught it with one hand, and it was just mine. It was mine. At that point, I was falling out of bounds, just trying to try to keep the play alive. And once that play was still alive, we got it going from there and that set the tone for the rest of the game. It's all types of aspects, you could get hurt. You're sacrificing your body for one, you can end up on the wrong side of a highlight. It's just a test you got to take and that's what I'm trying to be that guy. I just always take that chance and go out here and give it to all and that's why I was on the winning side of the play."

San Diego State Senior Guard Adam Seiko**On the importance of winning against Utah State:**

"We have so many battles with them, championships like the past five years, four years and we know what it is with them. It's going to be a dogfight whether it's here or there. And shout out to the crowd they came out, showed out tonight, gave us a lot of energy and every time we play them, we know we got to play hard, but like Keshad said, we always have one game in front of us. You got to focus on that no matter who we're playing. Just come on in and play hard and try to win."

On the feeling of hitting his shots tonight:

"I'm just trying to find a way to get open. They're still playing me tight no matter what. But it's my job to try and find space on the floor, I can get open whether it's in transition or a broken play or offensive rebound kick out. My guys did a good job of finding me and I just feel high energy. I just felt like, every time I touched it, I wanted to shoot it and it's going to go in and that's just being confident and putting hard work in."

On reaching a new career high:

"I wasn't expecting to have a career night or anything like that. But just like I said, I was just finding these spots on the floor, weak spots in the floor where they can't find me. I know that they're going to guard me, be close to me every possession but just credit to my teammates for finding me and I felt hot. After the first two went in, I was just running around the court trying to find another open shot. They weren't off play calls for myself and Dutch hangs his head over that. You don't have to have a play call for yourself to get a bucket, so just player movement, just feeling good. Just feeling confident, muscle memory, and it felt great to have a night like this especially against Utah State."

Utah State Head Coach Ryan Odom

On tonight's contest and Adam Seiko's performance:

"Yeah, we lost him like three or four times. He had six threes at half and clearly, as you go through your preparation for a very good San Diego State team, it doesn't take rocket science to figure out that he's a really good shooter. We just didn't get out on him; he gets free over there for a three and it kind of got him going initially. We just didn't do a very good job."

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