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NEWS RELEASE

San Diego State-UNLV Postgame Quotes

San Diego State head coach Steve Fisher

(from the postgame radio interview)

On the Aztec crowd:

"That crowd was absolutely sensational. From start to finish they were sensational. They helped us get this victory without a doubt."

On SDSU's choice to only use seven players in today's game:

"Well, it is a game that only takes five (players). The thing that we tried to say is that if you are tired and still in and you are not asking to go out, it is mandatory that you don't. Slow your pace down on offense but you have to get back and guard. You have to maintain the same thought process that you started the game with. We lost it a little bit, but over a whole 40 minutes we did well."

On SDSU's tired athletes, the possibility of trouble with overtime:

"I don't think so. We were every bit as fresh and ready to go as they were. Personally I don't think that is a factor. It would have been, from our perspective, just a crushing loss. We had the lead at 19 minutes of the game and we hung on to get a win. Everybody played a role."

On coming into the game today:

"Everybody said what are you going to do, and I say we are eighth out of eight in free throws in the league and that is the only absolute. Today we were 16 out of 20 and they were 11-for-21. We did what we had to do to win. We stepped up and made plays."

On Jamaal Franklin's defense on UNLV's Mike Moser:

"It was a team effort. He wasn't on him the whole time, we were switching ball screens. Jamaal will never ever back away from a challenge. He will compete. He doesn't 100 percent of the time do it with thoughtfulness but he is getting better and better in that end also. He made a lot of big plays for us."

On the SDSU players:

"I thought James Rahon stepped up and made some huge shots for us when we needed baskets. Chase (Tapley) did a great job when they come over to the huddle, especially when he was not in. He was me; he was in the huddle saying, 'You have to guard!'"

(from the postgame press conference)

Opening statement:

"I told our players after the game that I watched the BCS National Championship game and that I am going to watch the Super Bowl. Most people, if they are honest, would say that the BCS game and probably the Super Bowl hails in comparison to the atmosphere, to the fight from both teams, and the excitement in a college event. This was a wonderful college game. Obviously we are the team smiling today. We have had so many games just like this with UNLV. We have been on the good side as of late. UNLV is a really exceptional team. We talked about them being either Baylor or UNLV. Those are the teams we have played as of late. We were tough minded today. I would like to single out (associate head coach/head coach in waiting) Brian Dutcher, (assistant coach) Mark Fisher, and (assistant coach) Tony Bland. They

watched going backwards the last eight games UNLV played. I thought what they said we should do defensively was effective”.

On substitutions during the game:

“We have nine players and I only played seven today. I was worried at halftime when I looked up and almost everyone played 17, 18 minutes in the first hal. I was concerned. I told Mark to keep an eye on who we need to get out and give thought right now to who we want to have go in. You can play on adrenaline in a game like this. I think that’s what some of them did. Jamaal Franklin in particular.”

On Jamaal Franklin going down in the second half:

“I didn’t know who it was initially. Normally I am the first guy to run over there. I didn’t see Tom (Abdenour), our trainer, go over there. I was hoping maybe he was going to be all right and we wouldn’t have to sub him. Then one of the officials said if I were to take a timeout I would have to sub. I said I want a timeout and they told me if the trainer comes out you have to substitute that injured player. Jamaal twisted his ankle but he is OK, he is fine. I was glad he was able to go back in for the last 50 seconds or whatever the amount of time was.”

San Diego State sophomore guard Jamaal Franklin

On his ankle:

“It was a big tweak, but it didn’t really hurt. Chase (Tapley) was the first person there, James (Rahon) and my other teammates were there pushing me and telling me to get up. So when you have words of encouragement there, you have to get up.”

On the satisfaction of the win today:

“It’s satisfying when you’re on the upper hand; if we lost, it wouldn’t be so satisfying. It’s fun to win and we’re just glad that we got the win. It doesn’t even come down to that last shot though. There were other things happening other than me making that last shot. James Rahon shot the ball really well, Chase did as well, Garrett (Green) with rebounds and Tim (Shelton) took charges as he always does. It’s more than that last shot.”

San Diego State junior guard James Rahon

On the excitement of the game today:

“It was an extremely exciting game. Just as exciting to play in it as you were watching it. You probably won’t see a more exciting game today in college basketball as we just played. Adrenaline was pumping, the crowd was amazing and it just really helped us out to get this win.”

San Diego State junior guard Chase Tapley

On the game:

“It’s one of the top wins of my career. Two great teams were going at it. They were competitive and like Jamaal (Franklin) said, we just got the upper hand today. It felt good, it still feels good. We have to take this win and enjoy today, but we’ll be back in the lab on Monday to get focused on New Mexico.”

On the physicality of the game:

“It’s very physical. Since freshman year, they (UNLV) really crowd you offensively and try to be physical. They wanted to hit us in the mouth first, but we’re not a team that’s going to back down. Like I said, it’s just two competitive teams and we just happened to play better today.”

On what a win like this says about the Aztecs:

“The Aztecs are not a team who thought we were going to be here, but we are going to be one of the top teams in the nation. We showed that today. Everybody stepped their game up. Jamaal, James (Rahon), DeShawn (Stephens), Garrett (Green), Xavier (Thames), Tim (Shelton); we just always wanted it. We knew coming in that we weren’t the favorites, but we knew we were. All we can do is just play hard and believe in one another. Like our student section said ‘I believe’, we believed today and we came out with a big win.”

UNLV head coach Dave Rice

On the game:

“First of all, a lot of credit goes to Steve Fisher and his staff. They had their team very well prepared. San Diego State is a very good basketball team. It was a great college basketball game. Certainly mistakes on both sides, but our guys battled. There were numerous times during the course of the game that the game could have gotten away, but we showed a lot of

character. In the end, San Diego State made one more play than we did and to their credit, they found a way to win a very hard fought game.”

On whether he thought the team hurried too much in the first 20 minutes:

“We probably did, that’s how we play. One thing in the second half, we put more of an emphasis on was throwing the ball in the post. We felt like we had an advantage in the post. They seemed to be a little bit tentative in the first half and a lot of that credit goes to San Diego State in terms of their defensive preparation.”

On the last play of the game:

“It was a 1-4 ball screen and I think the first thing is to give a lot of credit to Jamaal Franklin. That’s a heck of a hard shot and so he deserves a lot of credit for making that play. We were just a little bit late on the exchange and he made a hard shot.”

On the crowd:

“It’s a great atmosphere, similar to coming in here the last several years with BYU. It speaks to what a good job Coach Fisher has done in building this program. Again, a great atmosphere and very similar to many of the other atmospheres in our league. There is great basketball in the Mountain West Conference and I’m sure that San Diego State will find just as good, if not better atmosphere when they come to the Thomas & Mack on February 11.”

On losing nine of 10 to San Diego State:

“The way we look at it is we’re 0-1 in the league and they’ve beaten us one time. It’s different players, it’s just a situation where they have a good basketball team and they held serve on their home floor. And that’s to their credit.”

UNLV junior guard Anthony Marshall

On the first half:

“I think we came out rushing things. In a game like this, your blood’s flowing and you get a little excited so I thought we rushed things. In the second half, we slowed down and they attacked us. San Diego State is a good basketball team so our hats off to them. They made some runs, we made some runs, and it just came down to one possession like it always does and having the ball went their way.”

On his play in the second half:

“I was thinking about trying to help my team out whether it was rebounding, trying to pass, or score. It’s a team game, one player is not going to win the game. Like I said, it came down to one possession and they made the play to win.”

On SDSU’s consistency:

“We’re two competitive teams. You’re excited, you’ve been waiting for a game like this. As a basketball player, these are the games you live for. You see San Diego State on the schedule and you get a little excited. We made some adjustments at halftime and came up better in the second half.”

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