



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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

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San Diego State vs. UC San Diego Postgame Quotes

San Diego State 78, UC San Diego 57

Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif.

Dec. 22, 2021

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"I'm a coach, and they pay me to worry, so I was worried about tonight. Most concerned about the illness that's run through the team. They call me this morning, I read the text and (it) said Trey Pulliam won't be available today. And I was like, hold on, hold on, hold on. Let's see what we can do to get him available. You know, I don't want to play anybody sick. We work our magic to try to get him feeling as good as we can. Trey's tonsils were really swollen. He took two IVs before the game. Whatever meds he was on, they increased the strength of them. The ones he was on weren't having the effect we wanted. So he mustered enough energy to come out and play. It's a whole different story if I have Lamont (Butler) available. What if I'm down Lamont and Trey? Then I'm worried and that would mean Adam (Seiko) would be the sole point guard, his minutes would be really elevated. So Trey found a way to get out of the floor. (Athletic trainer) Sergio (Ibarra), our medical staff did a great job to get him to the point where he could come out and play safely. And I thought that was important. So even though he was 1-for-6 from the field, his seven assists, his defense, his presence helped us today. We shot the ball very well. I think it's the third or fourth game in a row where we really shot the three well. And when we do that, we're a lot more dangerous offensively. It opens everything up. Nathan Mensah was good around the basket today. He had the same looks against Saint Mary's and couldn't get them to fall. But to his credit, he kept his confidence up. We kept the confidence up in him. We went to him early and often and he found a way to put (the ball) in the basket and be dangerous around there. We got contributions from everybody. Seiko shot it well again. I think his streak ended at 10 threes in a row over three games. Keshad Johnson was dangerous around the basket; he made a three. Matt Bradley again played well. (We moved) the ball. I think we had 23 assists, which had to be a season high for us. So we're playing better offensively. The only concern I had I think there was a stretch in the second half. We had five straight turnovers. We only had nine for the game, but I was counting, and they seemed like a thousand. So we have to take better care of the ball. We have to concentrate for longer periods of time. But that's just growing the team. Overall, I was very happy with the performance, happy with the way our sick guys found a way to get back on the floor and help us win."

On how Trey Pulliam's presence changed in his preparation for tonight's game:

"Well, I was concerned. Even in walk-through, we ran Jared Barnett at the backup point (guard) a little bit. But he's been on the scout team, so he's really running the other team's offense. I don't know if he knows our offense, so we put him through some reps on our offense. He knew what he was doing. We run certain plays with Adam in there versus Trey, versus Lamont, so the playbook changes a little bit. But when we get Trey, then we can run everything, and that's what we were able to do. Then when Adam comes in and plays backup point, we have a different set of plays. We run with him at the point, and so obviously it's always best to be at full strength when we have two point guards on the floor at the same time, Trey and Lamont. All of a sudden, we play Adam out there as a third guard, and we got three really good playmaking guards out there. So we'll have a better idea of what kind of team we are when we get Lamont back hopefully for UNLV and we'll start piecing together what we look like in the conference."

On the ability to limit the Tritons' leading scorer Toni Rocak to 10 points on 4-of-15 shooting:

"They have shooters and they have drivers. And Rocak is a driver. You know, he's not a shooter, and we try to stay attached to the shooters and not give them threes. I don't want to give them nine threes. That's our average on the year, and they made 11 (per) game last year. So I definitely didn't want to give them over nine, but I think in the wins they've had this year, they've had 10, 11, 12 threes, so I didn't want to give them that many. But to their credit, they had guys running off screens and made hard ones. But we knew who the drivers were and we knew who the shooters were. Then obviously (Bryce) Pope has an ability to do both, to drive and shoot, which makes him extra dangerous on the floor."

On his concern with his players going home for the holidays with the pandemic still prevalent:

"Yeah, I'm concerned. You know, we didn't let them go home last year. That's a long year. They couldn't go home even during the year we had a break, no leaving campus or 10-day quarantine. And now it's just giving them simple advice and warnings. Listen, go home, spend Christmas with your family. This is not a time to get together with friends. It's not time to be social. Get together with your family. If someone in your family doesn't feel well, as much as you love them, put a mask on, stay distanced, see if they can get tested. We have to take every precaution we can. But at the same time, I didn't want them to miss two Christmases in a row at home. I mean, we all know what it (means) to be home for Christmas with family and we all crave that, we love that. And so now we have to do it, but with great caution and that's what we're going to try to do. We'll test as soon as we get back on the 26th. We'll get them back on the 26th, and then we'll start getting ready for UNLV. Happy holidays, everybody."

San Diego State Senior Guard Adam Seiko

On the team's mentality going into the game:

"UCSD they're just coming from being a Division 2 team and they're new to Division 1 but we knew that we treat this game the same as every other game. We prepared the same, our coaches were on edge making sure that we're locked in and on top of our game. We were player driven as well. We knew that we had to come in here to handle business today. They hit a lot of threes which was kind of disappointing, but we were able to help hold them down for the most part and come up with a victory."

On hitting 10 straight 3-pointers over three games:

"I knew I was at seven straight (coming into the game). I wasn't thinking about that during the game, but then one of the managers had told me that was my 10th straight three and then when I missed he's like, "Damn you, you mess up your record." All right, but you know it was a good little streak. It feels good to see the shots going in."

On being able to go home for Christmas after not being able to last year:

"We're all excited to go back and see our families for the holidays. We know that COVID is ramping up right now. We talked about it in the locker room. Be careful who you hang around. Make sure you hang around most of your family and just be safe and aware. Because we don't want to be the team that sits out. So we're all aware and we're all safe, and we'll be back ready to play on the 26th."

San Diego State Junior Forward Keshad Johnson

On the team scoring a season-high 78 points:

"We knew they were going to zone us and we were fortunate to hit our open shots. So we prepared and were well prepared for that."

On the hopeful return of Lamont Butler and how the team has played without him:

"I wouldn't say it is a blessing, not having him, but we got to look at the good about it. (His being out allowed) other people to get their confidence up. He's one of the greatest human beings to get to know so he's been a great sport and we are looking forward to having him back."

UC San Diego Head Coach Eric Olen

"I thought we were able to get some clean looks from three over the course of the game. They do such a great job of protecting the rim and not fouling around the basket that they were able to make us pretty one-dimensional offensively and they did a good job of making shots on their end so that was a tough combination for us."

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