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Pepperdine at San Diego State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State 65, Pepperdine 60

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

Dec. 6, 2020

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"That was a good college basketball game. It was ugly in the first half and that is a credit to Pepperdine. They were physical, they denied (us shots), they bullied us over stuff and they did a great job defensively. They kept us out of any kind of rhythm-- we had 11 turnovers (in the first half). That is a credit to (Pepperdine head coach) Coach (Lorenzo) Romar, his team and his coaching staff. The older I get, the less I overreact (to his team being in a deficit heading into the locker room) — I came in at halftime told the team that 'we are still in the game. You (the team) have to do some things and I have to do some things to get you in a more comfortable offensive rhythm. I have to help you guys play better.' To their (his team's) credit, they did (play better). Our team was composed. We guarded at an extremely high level in the second half. We turned the ball over four times in the second half as opposed to 11 in the first half. It was a hard-fought win against a very good Pepperdine team and I am very happy with our efforts."

On winning today's game when struggling offensively:

"I said it from the start and I have told the team this and they (his student-athletes) will probably echo it — (no matter what) we are going to win (games) with our defense. When we are not making shots, when nothing is going right offensively, our defense will keep us in the game until we hit some kind of offensive rhythm. That is what happened tonight, we could not do anything offensively, but our defense kept us in the game. When we finally hit a little offensive rhythm, we were able to stay close enough to strike back and win the game."

On Jordan Schakel's efforts today and how his game has grown since coming to SDSU:

"Jordan (Schakel) would not have been able to do that (recover from shooting poorly from three and shift to an inside game) two years ago, but it is part of growing his game in the program. Jordan knows I give them (Schakel and his teammates) great freedom (on offense) and there were times he would drive in and turn it over early in his career, but right now, he is strong with the ball and he is getting in there and finishing with strength and balance. The next part for Jordan is to do that, get into the paint and score, and then be able to spray it out and get some of the threes (he likes to shoot) as well. He is getting to put that (growth) on display this year."

On the resilience of his team (coming back from a 16-point deficit):

Well until you come back (from a large deficit), you do not know if you can. (Today), this team, like last year's team (against Iowa) showed some determination (when behind). It is a new cast. (This team) showed that they are resilient, that they do not panic when things are not going well, (but instead) they stay together. There is no bickering and finger pointing. They (his team) know (when they are losing that) they have to play better individually and that I need to do a better job getting them in a more comfortable position where they can function (offensively). (When the team is down) it is on all of us, and this team showed some resilience and grit today and I was proud of it."

On Joshua Tomaic's game:

"Josh(ua Tomaic) does what all good bigs do-- if they (the defense) do not double team him, he is going to back out and score. He is also good enough once he feels a double (team coming to defend him) to spray it out and get us open looks. He is not a guy when you throw it in there (the deep post) that he is only trying to score. He has his head up and he is playing on balance, and he is finding his when he draws a second defender. I am proud of how Josh and his growth as a player and he is got more to show. He is a capable three-point shooter and as he gets comfortable and we play with each other more, you will find he has more opportunities to do that (shoot the three) also."

San Diego State Senior Forward Joshua Tomaic**On his comfort level and if he can put a percentage on it:**

"I just thank my coaches and my teammates, because they have a huge impact in that they make me feel comfortable. It's a process. I talk to the coaches, and we all know it's going to be a process. Every day, I feel better. I feel better in practice. I'm just trying to be ready mentally, and watch film and bring to the table what I can. The only thing I will tell you right now is I'm not 100% That's for sure. But I'll get there."

On the energy he brings to the court:

"I think that's just who I am. When it's time to go, I will try to bring the energy. We all try to get the guys to (elevate their games) a little bit more. I will try to always bring the energy element to the game if I can and, energy is contagious. So once one guy has it it's pretty easy for the rest of the guys to catch on. I just try to do my best and I'm just glad that we came up with the team win."

San Diego State Senior Guard Jordan Schakel**On what it took to get the team going in the second half:**

"I think it was just about maintaining our poise. We were down 14, but we were playing good defense. We need to get better looks on offense. And then at the end of the day, just be a basketball player, step up and make plays, play with confidence, be aggressive and just leave it all out on the floor. That's what I told the team at the half"

On his ability to score other than from the three-point line:

"I've been trying to get more confident putting the ball on the ground and every coach here has done a great job helping me grow my game. I think that now in this role, people run at me and I'm able to drive to the basket. The conditioning I did during this quarantine break has helped me finish around the rim. It's more of a mental aspect than physical."

Pepperdine Head Coach Lorenzo Romar**On Sunday's loss to San Diego State:**

"We played against a really good basketball team, a veteran team with a winning culture that plays a very physical brand of basketball. When they got down, they turned it up and physically they may have wore down in the second half."

On if he saw anything different from SDSU today since the teams played common opponents UCLA and UC Irvine:

"No. I have a lot of respect for coach Dutcher and even back when coach Fisher was here and what they've done with this program over the last 20 years. I've watched San Diego State play many times and have coached against San Diego State numerous times. So nothing that they did was a surprise. They're good. It wasn't a surprise."

On the keys to San Diego State's comeback:

"I thought they did a really good job defensively, turning up the screws and forcing us into turnovers. You know, maybe a couple of highly contested shots. I just thought defensively, they just did a really good job in the second half."

On the takeaways from today's game that he can use to build on for the rest of the year:

"It's very similar to (the UCLA game) in that I think we have a good team, but you got to be able to win these games. It's just that simple. Now this is the second one (after losing to) UCLA in triple overtime and this one where we were up 14 at the half. We weren't able to get it done. We certainly are capable, but you don't want to say that the entire year. We were capable last year; we just didn't get it done. We've got to pull these out."

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