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San Diego State vs. Boise State Postgame Quotes

No. 22 San Diego State 72, Boise State 52

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif. | February 3, 2023

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"I just want to start off first of all by saying, I took a late time out and I don't want to be misinterpreted that I'm trying to rub anything in or show up Boise. I took it to try to get my subs in. Usually, they let you take it and just go right back to play but because it was the first time out of the half, it was a full time out. So, I want to let everyone know that I only took that so I could get some guys that don't get a lot of minutes in front of the whole crowd out on the floor. With that being said, I'm extremely pleased with our performance tonight. I thought we put 40 minutes together. We've obviously played 20 minutes of great basketball most games, usually in the first half. But the second half, I thought we came out and competed at a higher level than we had. With that being said, we got outscored by two points. But we didn't see the drastic, give up 10 to 12 extra points that we've done in these other games. I was pleased in our growth. I thought the players took more ownership in the direction of the season. That's what has to happen. Player driven teams are always better than coach driven teams. I told them after the game: you'll make out of the season whatever you want to make out of it. We're here to facilitate that— to help you make it what you want it to be. If they invest in the season, invest in the team, and invest in themselves, then we're going to have a really good year. Now we've given them two days off— this was four games in 10 days, and it's taxing. As much as everyone says they're young guys, they should be able to play every day, they're student athletes. They go to class, they have homework to do, and they're working a full-time job for us on the basketball floor. I've given them Saturday and Sunday off to rest their legs, to catch up on academics, and to get a fresh mindset when we come to work on Monday. We're going to Logan, Utah and playing a really good Utah State team on the road. This is just the beginning of a long season. It seems like you're toward the end— we're a game up, but we have trips to Albuquerque, Logan, and Boise left along with Fresno and other tough places. This is as competitive as the Mountain West has ever been. A chance for five NCAA tournament teams, and we're all fighting for one of those spots. We're a leg up now but there's a lot of work to be done and we will continue to do it."

On Nathan Mensah's ability to draw 10 fouls:

"It's because he was aggressive. Some of them were because we threw it to him and they fouled him. I think two or three of them were because he was going to the offensive glass, and they had to push him to box him out. So, when he plays with that kind of energy and assertiveness, it's not only when he catches the ball, but it's when he pursues the ball. He did a great job of that today. I thought he played as good a game as he's played all year tonight."

On player's improvements throughout the season:

I think Jaedon is getting more comfortable. I thought early in the year, we could see he was trying to press too hard in some of his game. Now he's letting it come to him a little bit more and knows when his opportunities are going to come. Obviously [Adam] Seiko's dangerous from three— they can't lose him. He made three again in the first half. If they lose Adam, that's a problem. Then our point guards— I think Darrion still gets frustrated because he wants to see some of his jumpshots go in, his threes, and he's not shooting a great percentage. But he has to be able to accept that and get over it because his value to the team is more than scoring. It's setting up baskets for his teammates. We have to continue to encourage him and tell him, we know you want to make shots and we want you to make shots, but your value to the team is not only about shot making. It's defending, pressuring the ball, and then getting your teammates involved."

On Aguek Arop's late three-point attempt:

"Well, it would have been a different thought if it didn't go in. Jaedon took one too. They're out there shooting threes up 20. If that's a tighter game, I'm probably not going to be real pleased. It's one of those classic moments in coaching: no, no, no, no, yes! You know what it is. I'm glad it went in."

San Diego State Senior Guard Darrion Trammell

On how Nate drawing 10 fouls impacts the game:

"It was just effort and intensity. I mean, we had a talk as a team, and we just felt like we all have something more to give and Nate brought up a good point. He said he felt he could give more to the team and I mean he definitely showed that tonight. He was everywhere. Just outworking their bigs, crashing the glass, going out there big offensively in the post. He was just everywhere at night."

On what was worked on following a tough loss against Nevada:

"I feel like for us we always look at the little things. It's never our energy or effort really obviously we can always give more but I think we just look at the little things like just little terms that we had like meeting three and stuff like that and making our ball pressure felt for other teams. I feel like a lot of teams once they get comfortable, they're hard to stop. They run their stuff really good, they have good coaches. So, we just brought up our defensive intensity and turned up our pressure just to make teams feel us a little bit more on the defensive end."

On how the team is different when Nathan scores the way he did tonight:

"That's the Nate that we know. We actually talked in the locker room. We call him Nathan Embiid, he looked like Joel Embiid tonight, but it opens up everything I mean when he's going. It's really hard to do anything because they can't help a lot of us if he has the ball in the post. And it's very hard to stop him one on one in the post."

San Diego State Senior Forward Nathan Mensah

On drawing fouls:

"For me personally, I felt like the previous games, I would say I let the team down defensively because I felt like anytime I played good, the opposing team could sense my presence throughout the game and I noticed the past couple of games, none of the guys I was guarding was like having that threat of like 'Nathan is in the game' and during the Nevada game was like a wakeup call. After the game I believe yesterday we all sat down and we're true to ourselves, what we can do to bring the team up to the standard that San Diego State is known for. I took it personally that with being the previous Defensive Player of the

Year. If someone was to watch me play right now, he wouldn't have considered me as a defensive trade. So, I felt like this coming game was something that I should have to make a statement saying Nathan is still here."

On how good it feels to get a win against Boise State:

"It feels great. I've been here for that much of a long time. So last year's loss was a hurtful one. Because it's like Boise, anytime we go there we kind of win and it's like a regular routine. So losing last year was like a step back and losing again in the conference finals was like one of the painful moments. That's why I'm back here again to redeem this team from where we are."

On calling a players meeting:

"We had one before the season started. We brought the team over to our place, AG and I's place. We watched the documentary with Lebron James. We all assigned ourselves. We were like 'Who do you see yourself among this team' and everybody picked a role so we felt like it was time that we brought that assigned role back. We know Darrion as a scorer, myself as a defensive threat. AG is the glue guy always. Matt Bradley is like the scorer of our team. Lamont at opposing guards. So, we all just recall ourselves and assign the duties that we all agreed to."

Boise State Head Coach Leon Rice

On tonight's contest:

"Our margin for error is small. What I mean by that, we have five guys, that starting five has been clicking great together. Every guy's skill matters and you take your quarterback out, it matters a lot. There are teams playing in the Super Bowl that have good quarterbacks, that have been with them the whole time. When you take away that from the Broncos, it's hard. It unfortunate but that's the way it is."

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