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Utah State at San Diego State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State 81, Utah State 67

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif. | February 3, 2024

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"Welcome to the Mountain West, where this is every game. At Colorado State, we were ahead by one with 7:30 to go and couldn't find a way to get over the top and win. We come back to Viejas, play a 19-2 Utah State team, battle our way to a win, and our award is we get to go on the road for two more games. It's like going to the dentist. We're going to Air Force next. Everybody knows you have to go but you don't want to. Then we have Nevada on the road. We put ourselves in a good position near the halfway point. We are a game behind in the Mountain West standings, but that doesn't guarantee anything. We have to keep working hard. I told the team this week, that there aren't big things we're to change. We have to focus on the small things, and then we can do big things. We have to be fundamentally better. I thought we were today, and they played hard. They played with great energy and found a way to beat a good team today."

On changing the starting lineup:

"I don't throw clipboards down very much but I threw one down at Colorado State, so I wasn't happy. That's not on them specifically. That's the whole team's performance. I don't like changing the lineup much but I thought I would shake the lineup a little bit. As much as I was happy with Darrion Trammell and Jay Pal, I was equally as happy with Elijah Saunders and Micah Parrish coming off the bench. It would have been easy for them to be upset or to be in a funk over not starting but they both came out and maybe played some of the best basketball they've played in a while. That shows that this team is focused on winning. They're not upset. They can be disappointed, and I don't blame them. I'd be disappointed if I went to the bench after starting. To their credit and character, they want to win more than anything else and they helped our team win today."

On the Viejas crowd:

"The Viejas crowd is incredible. Officiating is really hard. At Colorado State, Colorado State took 22 free throws and we took seven. Tonight, we took 28 and they took 13. The crowd gets on the officials, we get on the officials, but it's not to say that they're calling it to the crowd. Their big guy, Great Osobor, shoots a ton of free throws, and he shot one today. It's almost like the reverse of Jaedon LeDee. Jaedon takes one at Colorado State, he doesn't take any in New Mexico, then he gets home and he gets some free throws. That's what homecourt advantage is. We've taken advantage of that, got to the foul line, and converted."

Senior Forward Jay Pal

On any surprise in Coach Dutcher changing the starting lineup:

"I don't think we were surprised. We were ready for what we had in front of us. We just knew that we had to play hard and be prepared when our name is called. Coach Dutch trusts everybody on the team and we trust the decision. We know to be prepared at all times."

On his 16-point performance:

"I was playing hard. I knew when Coach made the changes, he expected something out of me and my focus was just to be all over the floor, whether it was offensively or defensively. My focus is making a big impact for my team, and I feel like I did that today."

Senior Guard Darrion Trammell

On if the team approaches ranked matchups differently:

"We take it game to game. This league is loaded. You have to approach every game like it's win or go home. That's our mindset now and we have adopted that as a team. Every team is really good. If you don't play at a high level and don't play hard, you can come out with a loss, which could pretty much ruin your whole season or your chances of making the tournament."

On any frustration with his start to the season:

"That's my journey. That's my adversity. That's how I look at it. I go out there and play hard for my teammates. I am ready when my name is called. Obviously, I trust in [Head Coach Brian] Dutcher and my teammates. It's all about giving what the team needs. I've been saying that for a while. Obviously, it was a little frustrating but it was all about going out there and giving everything to my teammates."

Utah State Head Coach Danny Sprinkle

Opening Statement:

"In this game, you have to give credit to San Diego State for their aggressiveness. They played really well. They came in with an edge. You could tell they came in off of a loss. I don't know what their record is coming off a loss, but I imagine it's pretty good. That's a San Diego State team. Obviously, [Jaedon] LeDee does what he does. He was the first down the court. He got a lot of fouls. I thought the key was [Micah] Parrish. When he got in, he came in with an edge and made his first two or three shots. He got the crowd going, and then [Jay] Pal and [Elijah] Saunders, those guys hit threes. When those guys hit threes, it's really hard to guard them, and they made a lot of shots from 15 feet. Now, even some of those pull-ups like [Darrion] Trammell on the last play, they made those shots. Those are shots we have to live with. The ones they did miss when we were trying to stay in the game or creep back in, they got the offensive rebounds if they missed it. They got almost every 50/50 play, and if you're going to beat San Diego State, you have to come up with those."

On the Aztecs not allowing Utah State to put a run together:

"It comes down to focus. You have to go get the ball. They're not going to make it easy. There's a reason they're always one of the top defensive teams in the country. We didn't play as clean as we needed to play today. A lot of it was good defense, and every time we made two shots in a row, we weren't stopping them on the other end. We could never put together a run."

Utah State Guard Darius Brown II

On what led to a Utah State loss:

"We gave up too many second-chance points. It's as simple as that. They were hitting a lot of shots that they hadn't hit in the past. They had three guys who don't really hit threes who started to hit threes tonight. We gave up too many offensive boards. That's the game right there."

On the supporting cast playing a role:

"I don't know how much LeDee finished with, but I'm pretty sure it was right around his average or right under his average. It was the guys around him, they were hitting shots. It's as simple as that ... It's the other guys who were hitting shots. We were in the paint doing what we were supposed to do. It was tough."

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