

AZTEC BASKETBALL

FIVE CONSECUTIVE POSTSEASON APPEARANCES, FIVE STRAIGHT 20-WIN SEASONS



San Diego State Daily

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Daily tidbits and updated clips for San Diego State.

THE LONG ROAD

San Diego State made the long journey from San Diego State to Providence, R.I., on Tuesday. According to the NCAA itinerary, the official distance is 2,962 miles. San Diego State left campus at approximately 10:55 a.m. PT, following a public send off in front of the Aztecs' on-campus home Viejas Arena. The team plane touched down in Providence at 7:59 p.m. ET, with arrival at the team hotel at 8:35 ET.

BEST FIRST ROUND GAME?

One could make a case that the Tennessee-San Diego State is one of the feature games of the NCAA Tournament. The teams have identical 25-8 records and each team posted an 11-5 conference record. In addition, it is the only first-round game that features two teams with RPIs among the top 20 nationally. In fact, the game has the lowest combined RPI by a fairly wide distance. Below is a look at the five lowest combined RPI games of the first round.

First Round Games, Lowest Combined RPI

1. Tennessee (14) vs. San Diego State (18)	32
2. Texas A&M (13) vs. Utah State (30)	43
3. Purdue (16) vs. Siena (31)	47
4. Butler (12) vs. UTEP (38)	50
5. Temple (8) vs. Cornell (46)	54

San Diego State's RPI of 18, is better than one No. 2 seed (Ohio State 22) and three No. 4 seeds (Wisconsin 21, Maryland 24, Vanderbilt 26).

POLLING DATA

San Diego State's run to the MWC tournament championship impressed both the Associated Press and the coaches that participate in the weekly top 25 polls. San Diego State went from not receiving a vote in week 17, to having enough support to rank 30th in the Associated Press poll and 28th in the ESPN/USA Today poll. It was the highest ranking in both polls this season and the highest in either poll since the third week of the 2006-07 season when the Aztecs were 27th in the coaches poll.

RETURN TO THE DUNKIN' DONUTS CENTER

Although San Diego State does not play a lot of games on the East Coast, this is not the first time the Aztecs have visited the Dunkin' Donuts Center. The Aztecs played a home-and-home series with Providence College during the 2004-05 and 2005-06 seasons. The second game of that series, played on Dec. 27, 2005, brought the Aztecs out east to face the Friars at the venue. Providence won the game 80-65. No current San Diego State player was on that team, although head coach Steve Fisher and assistant head coach Brian Dutcher remain in their same position. Current SDSU director basketball operations Matt Soria, served as the director of player development during that season. The game didn't turn out well, but the season did, as SDSU posted a 24-9 record won the outright MWC regular-season championship, the MWC tournament and advanced to the NCAA Tournament.

A FIRST AGAINST THE VOLUNTEERS

Steve Fisher, who has opposed 141 teams during his coaching career, will face Tennessee for the first

'09-10 Teams with 25+ Wins, 3+ Wins Over AP Top 25 Teams, 11+ Road/Neutral Wins, Road or Neutral win over AP Top 10 Team

Purdue
San Diego State
Syracuse
West Virginia

'09-10 Teams with 25+ Wins, 3+ Wins Over AP Top 25 Teams, 11+ Road/Neutral Wins (8)

Duke
Kansas
Kentucky
New Mexico
Purdue
San Diego State
Syracuse
West Virginia

Schools in Both Men's and Women's NCAA Tournaments (24)

Baylor	Ohio State
Duke	Oklahoma State
E. Tenn. State	San Diego St.
Florida State	Temple
Georgetown	Tennessee
Georgia Tech	Texas
Gonzaga	Texas A&M
Kentucky	Vanderbilt
Lehigh	Vermont
Michigan State	West Virginia
Northern Iowa	Wisconsin
Notre Dame	Xavier

time on Thursday. He went 4-0 against first-time opponents this season, defeating Santa Clara, Northern Arizona, Drake, Pomona-Pitzer. This is the fourth different team Fisher has faced from the Volunteer State. He is 2-0 against UT-Chattanooga, 1-0 against East Tennessee State (102-90 win in the second round of the 1992 NCAA Tournament) and 0-1 vs. Memphis.

FISHER, THE SEC, AND THE BIG DANCE

Despite coaching 28 NCAA Tournament games, this will mark just the third game the 11th-year San Diego State head coach has met an SEC team in the NCAA Tournament. In 1993, Fisher guided Michigan to an 81-78 victory over Kentucky in the national semifinal game. That was the second of two consecutive national title game appearances for Fisher. Michigan dropped the title game that year to North Carolina, 77-71. The next season (1994), Fisher and the Wolverines met up with Arkansas in the Midwest Regional final. The Razorbacks were a 76-68 winners that day.

KELVIN CLOSE TO HOME

San Diego State's lone scholarship senior Kelvin Davis is getting a trip close to home. A native of Waterbury, Conn. (approximately one hour away), Davis prepped at Sacred Heart before signing with UTEP out of high school. Following a stop at the College of Southern Idaho, Davis joined the San Diego State program in 2007. Prior to the season, Davis received a sixth-year of eligibility from the NCAA after missing a majority of the 2008-09 campaign as he received chemotherapy and radiation treatment for Hodgkin's lymphoma. With cancer in remission, Davis has played in 32 games this season, averaging 6.5 points per game. He has started the last five games and scored nine points in SDSU's 55-45 victory at UNLV in the Mountain West Conference championship game. Davis' parents, Doris and Clinton, and his older brother Glenn, are expected to be in attendance Thursday. Davis is the lone Aztec player who has played in the Dunkin' Donuts Center, having played AAU contests growing up. His lasting memory of the facility, "it has soft rims." Davis is a big fan of the city Providence, having visited their many times while growing up.

Most Active Seasons with at Least 20 Wins	
1. Kansas	21
2. Duke	14
3. Gonzaga	13
Syracuse	13
5. Florida	12
6. Texas	11
Utah State	11
8. Memphis	10
9. Pittsburgh	9
10. Louisville	8
11. Nevada	7
12. Michigan State	6
Ohio State	6
Texas A&M	6
Villanova	6
West Virginia	6
Western Kentucky	6
18. San Diego State	5
Akron	5
Butler	5
Brigham Young	5
Marquette	5
Tennessee	5
Xavier	5

MALCOLM & MELVIN

San Diego State junior forward Malcolm Thomas and Tennessee guard Melvin Goins are acquaintances from their days growing up in San Diego and the two became friends this past summer. Gaines grew up in San Diego, moving to Texas prior to his junior year of high school. He called the area home while attending Mt. San Jacinto College last season and that is when Thomas and Goins became friends. In fact the two teams squared off in the state junior college quarterfinal game last season, with Thomas' San Diego City College getting the upper hand. Goins frequently plays pickup games with members of the Aztec team during the summer. Thomas and Goins have exchanged friendly text messages this week.

MALCOLM & TYRONE IN TENNESSEE

San Diego State newcomers Tyrone Shelley and Malcolm Thomas visited the state of Tennessee when their former school, Pepperdine, played at Memphis on Jan. 5, 2008. Both were freshmen, and both played significant minutes. Thomas played 28 minutes, scoring 10 points and adding seven rebounds, while Shelley had 17 points and 11 rebounds in 35 minutes of action. The Tigers won the game, 90-53.

OTHER CONNECTIONS

San Diego State assistant athletic director for business Chuck Lang, who is serving as the NCAA contact for the men's basketball team on the trip, was at Wisconsin-Milwaukee when current Tennessee coach Bruce Pearl was coaching the Panthers from 2002-05... Malcolm Thomas and Tyrone Shelley have met Tennessee's Renaldo Woolridge... The Aztec duo were involved in the recruitment of Woolridge, while they were attending Pepperdine... Aztec guard D.J. Gay played against Woolridge in high school... Gay attended Poly High, while Woolridge attended Westlake High... As a seventh grader, freshman guard Chase Tapley placed at the national AAU tournament held in Memphis... Tapley and Tennessee women's basketball player Vicki Baugh share the same high school, Sacramento (Calif.) High... Senior Ben Kneller lived in New Jersey until he was 13-years-old, but has never visited Rhode Island.

FROM ALL SIDES

San Diego State director of basketball operations Matt Soria returns to the NCAA Tournament with San Diego State for the third time in three different capacities. Soria was a student-manager when the Aztecs went in 2002 and was the director of player development the last time SDSU went to the big dance in 2006.