



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State at UNLV Postgame Quotes

UNLV 62, San Diego State 58

Thomas & Mack Center | Las Vegas, Nev. | March 5, 2024

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"On a night when you make 11 three-pointers, you hope you get a win. We shot 28% from the field, which isn't good enough. I liked our grit and our toughness. On their senior night, they got a 14-point lead and were physically dominating the game. We withstood it and fought our way back in. We had a big steal to tie the game and then we had a good switch. We had length on [Dedan] Thomas and he hit a step back two, a tough shot. A contested two to win the game. We had a good look on the sideline out of bounds and the guy guarding Jaedon [LeDee] came off the low guy to block that shot. The guy we were screening, we caught with an elevator. To their credit, they scrambled out with length, which they have and got a piece of Micah's [Parrish] shot. I like our grit. I like our determination, but I'm disappointed we didn't come away with a win."

On losing another close road game:

"We made some plays down the stretch. We were behind the whole game and the play we made to steal and tie the game, that was a hell of a play. They made a shot. I wanted to run a play and take a chance to get an open three to try to take the lead and they blocked the shot. I can't be disappointed with the execution. We ran the play well and they made a timely play. It's disappointing, but that's life on the road in this conference and it's not easy."

On a slow start coming off a bye:

"They were spectacular defensively. They imposed their will. They were physical and guarded us super hard. We have to start better. Like I said, I'm more impressed with our resolve and our grit that we fought back and tied a game where it looked like we were going to be manhandled to start the game. I told the guys after, 'Yeah, I'm disappointed with the result. But I'm pleased with the grit and the toughness they played with. The good news is, it's not a tournament game where it's the final game and it's fatal. We have a chance to learn from it. We have another home game coming up and we've got the conference tournament. Then we have the NCAA tournament, so we have a lot of basketball left to be played.'"

On the team winning fewer road games than previous seasons:

"That's why the teams at the top are at the top. Maybe they lost a home game, but they've won a lot of road games. Utah State is a perfect example. They banked in a three. They had a five-point play on the road. They got a late technical they overcame at Boise State and so they just appear to be a team of destiny and they're making their own plays. You have to make plays like that in order to play for a title and now they've got a piece of one with a couple games to go. We haven't

gotten over the hump whether it's a late rebound in Nevada, had a shot blocked here. That's basketball. It's disappointing, but in reality, we lost to a team that's won 10 of its last 11 games. It's playing good basketball."

Sophomore Forward Elijah Saunders

On the close road losses this season:

"It was really frustrating tonight. It was their senior night, so we knew they were going to come out with some energy. Good thing it's our last road game."

On UNLV's defense:

"I would say it was a lot of their tenacity to start the game. You could tell they were ready to play. It reminded me of when we played at New Mexico. Their pressure was throwing us off. We couldn't run our offense. As the game went on, we started to settle in."

On the slow start after the bye:

"I felt like we were ready and prepared for this game. We had a great couple of practices leading up to the game. It was just their effort on defense and hitting a bunch of threes in the first half. It's fun to come all the way back but we should have never been down in the first place."

On his career-high four 3-pointers:

"It felt good. My shots have been feeling really good lately. I was in rhythm."

On if he felt that someone needed to step up and score:

"My guy was playing off me and more towards Jaedon. He's usually a double off my man. That probably had a little bit to do with it. I feel like most of my shots were open. They were probably trying to double Jaedon."

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