

Paycom Wooden Legacy - USC vs. San Diego State Quotes

November 26, 2021

USC 58, San Diego State 43

San Diego State coach Brian Dutcher - "It was a defensive struggle in the first half, no question about that. The only separation we gave them was that we missed three one-on-ones in a row and they had a basket right before the half, which gave them a little lead. I tried to encourage the team, a seven-point game at halftime is nothing in college basketball. But we let them come out and get a run on us early in the second half and they built a 15-point lead. We fought, cut it back to eight, but they're a good defensive team, they played good defense on us. We had a tough time manufacturing baskets, they did a good job blocking shots and contesting our shots at the rim. They do what good teams do, they try to stop the ball two-on-two and so they don't have to help a lot of shooters. We're a good defensive team and I recognize when we play against one. You grow from winning and you grow from losing. Unfortunately, we'll have to grow from a loss this time." (On where the game was won). "They're good inside. I didn't think we got a lot of clean, open looks on the outside. I thought Keith (Dinwiddie Jr., guard) got a couple of really good looks for himself, but we got to make those shots in a game like this. I would take every shot Keith took, it's nothing against him, but in a game like this you have to make those shots. When you're behind, when it's a close game, if you get an open look, you have to score from that open look. I don't know that either team shot the ball particularly well for three. It was an inside battle and those are hard to win sometimes. Both teams are really physical around the basket and it's second-chance opportunities. We gave up 15 offensive rebounds and in a close game, you can't give that many second-chance opportunities." (On Matt Bradley's performance) "They just kept length on Matt all night. Matt had a few good opportunities to catch and shoot it that he turned down and tried to dribble to get space to shoot. They always had length around him so it was hard to do. As with any offensive player, if you see the first two go in, you just keep it going. But if you miss three or four, you never get in to a rhythm and then you're fighting yourself trying to find a way to get a basket. He just struggled today, but I don't think it's going to be anything that's going to be enduring or season-long. He can score as he showed yesterday, so it's about getting back in a rhythm and getting his confidence going again."

San Diego State guard Lamont Butler - "It was a hard-fought game, USC is a really talented team. They came out and played really well today. We tried to stop them, but they had some really good runs going on and we couldn't hit our shots. So now it's back to the drawing board and getting ready of the next game." (On the challenges of facing USC's defense) "They are always able to cover so many parts of the floor. They have good communication and their bigs are great shot-blockers in the paint and they're able to get to the shooters as well. Everything was clogged up, but I felt that we still had some good opportunities that we didn't take advantage of." (On offensive adjustments USC made after a slow start) "One key adjustment they did was that they went inside more often. (Isaiah, forward) Mobley got it doing down low and it was hard to guard that because we had to stay on their shooters as well. He was one-on-one down there and he made some big plays from there."

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USC coach Andy Enfield - "It was a great win for us against a very good basketball team. San Diego State has an outstanding program. To beat an outstanding team from an outstanding program is a big win for us. I thought our defense was great, we played really hard, we packed our toughness on the bus to play down here in Anaheim. We didn't pack our free-throw shooting, but I'll take a big win. I'm very proud of these young men." (On the low-scoring game). "San Diego State has been one of the best defensive teams in the country for the last five or ten years and in the last couple of years we've been right up there as well. We knew it would be two very good defensive teams. We have shot-blocking length, we have length in the perimeter, we had a lot of toughness in our guards and our big guys too. We knew we could defend them and that it would probably be a low-scoring game. If we had made more free throws and a couple open shots, it might have been a little bit different, but I give them credit because we had to earn everything that we got tonight. We were hoping we could pull away with our scoring and I think we made three in a row to start the second half and a couple of threes to put the game out of reach. But with four minutes to go, it was still an eight-point game." (On the team's defensive strength) "We expect this out of our players. If you don't defend, you don't play. You have to play hard and to play defense. It forgives you for missing free throws or turning the ball over or missing a couple of shots here and here. It allows our guys to play through some mistakes on the offensive end. We're right where we need to be, we need to clean up a few things, but I thought that tonight we played very well for 40 minutes." (On Isaiah Mobley) "Josh (Morgan, forward) had a couple of huge offensive rebounds and Isaiah was great in rebounding on both sides of the floor. He's got these long arms, he's got the body and he anticipates where the ball goes, so watching him these last couple of games, I think he got 11 last night and 12 tonight, it's been really impressive." (On Drew Peterson's improvement on defense) "We used to spell Drew R-E-W, there was no D. But now we call him Drew because last night he held Hall (Jordan, Saint Joseph's guard) to 1-12 and tonight he did a great job again. He's learning how to use his length, he's learning how to anticipate the drives and has been doing a great job with his body positioning. We're very proud of Drew because he certainly improved a ton."

USC forward Isaiah Mobley (Tournament MVP) - "We felt like we could beat this team, they're a good team. I know Vegas picked them to win, but we were really confident we could win. Winning this tournament was big for us, it keeps the momentum going. I'm proud of our team for beating such a good opponent, we knew it wasn't going to be an easy game." (On taking charge of scoring duties early on the match) "I just play based on the flow of the game. I felt like they had smaller defenders on me, so I knew I could score down low. My teammates also just believe in me and the coach as well, they just put me in position to score. I was 7-19, so not the prettiest, but we got it done. I'm proud of my teammates, my coach and of me as well. These are the things we've been working on collectively as a group and I hope to take this energy going forward and continue helping the team."

USC forward Drew Peterson - "You can't help but notice coming into the game as the underdogs, especially being a ranked team. It's a good down the road win for us here in the West Coast. It's a great start of the season and a confidence booster for everybody." (On defending Matt Bradley) "He's a really efficient scorer, we saw him in Cal Poly these last few years. I was just trying to not give him any space and to contest him as much as I could but not fall for his pump fakes. My teammates also helped me out, we knew their personnel really well. Give credit to our (assistant) coach (Jay) Morris, who was in their staff last year and did a great job in scouting them. Everything worked our way and we were all really loaded up and ready to play." (On his second half performance) "We're all so unselfish, I was trying to play off my teammates. I hadn't been shooting too well in these past few games, but I got some confidence, which was huge. My teammates trust me and I'm so grateful for that. I was just trying to play off guys. We're such an unselfish team and it really shows against such a good defensive team. There aren't any gaps, we really had to move the ball and being able to come out like that, I thought our team did a great job offensively tonight."