



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

5500 CAMPANILE DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92182 | (619) 594-5547

GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | #GOAZTECS

Gonzaga at San Diego State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State 67, Gonzaga 80

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif. | November 18, 2024

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"That was a good early season basketball game for us. We wanted to win, and we're used to winning games like this. We ran into a really good Gonzaga team with a lot of experience, and that paid off for them. There are not many things they haven't seen as a team. Gonzaga's Ryan Nembhard and Graham Ike were dynamic. Ike did a good job in the paint, and Nembhard fed him. Ike should take Nembhard out to dinner every night because he makes his life easy. Nembhard was good tonight with 10 assists and three turnovers. We hung in the game and figured if we could keep them to 74 points, we'd have a chance. They got 80, which is 20 under their average right now. We had to hold them in the 70s and then make a few more plays to have a chance to win. The rebounding seemed disastrous. They had 12 offensive rebounds, and we had 10 offensive rebounds. The difference wasn't great, but it was points off the rebounds. They converted every rebound they got into baskets, where we didn't turn them into points. Rebounding is something we work on every day. It shows the importance of moving them on the rebounds. Once you box them out, you can't settle and go up with them. They made us pay for that. Turnover-wise, we did a good job. We only turned it over 11 times, which is good. There are some things we have to grow from after the way they guarded us. With screens, the more experienced team will find a way to set them up and get open ball screens. They were jumping out and hedging. We started to green light in the game, slip screens and get downhill. We grew during the game, but not enough to beat the number three team in the country. The whole key to Aztec basketball is continuing to grow, and we'll take lessons from this game and put them to use immediately. We are going to Vegas to see if we can beat a ranked Creighton team. We knew this was going to be tough. I didn't think we gave in, but I didn't think we got close enough to make them feel us. We got the score down to nine points a couple of times and got Gonzaga to miss, and then we couldn't finish with the rebound. They got an and-one and I think we could have gotten it to six points. It doesn't sound like a lot. I think they start to feel the crowd a little bit. We didn't quite get within striking distance where they felt our crowd, which was sensational tonight."

On the lessons the young players can learn from this game:

"Our young players learned to continue to grow their game. Buy into the coaching when we tell you a few things you have to do better and concentrate on those things. We place an emphasis on rebounding every day. We have to do a better job of building momentum. We did some things well. We stopped the fast break and competed at a high level offensively. Everything wasn't broken, but we didn't play well enough to beat a really good team."

On guarding a well-balanced Gonzaga team, particularly Ryan Nembhard, with younger players:

"It's a challenge to guard Gonzaga well with our young players, and Ryan Nembhard was the number one challenge. He did to us what he's done to everybody. He's averaging 10 assists a game. He had three turnovers, and he's averaging two per game. He's good with off-ball screens and makes you pay all the time. We tried a number of different things. We tried to get underneath it, try to beat him to the rim, and not help as much as we had to. We tried to switch late and adjust to try to make him make a play. He threw a lot of interior passes this game. A lot of times he kicks to the perimeter for three, but he wasn't doing that. We could have done a better job of making it look more crowded throwing that interior pass, and making him throw a few more out. That's easier said than done. He's an elite guard, and we didn't bother him enough to impact the game. He controlled the game from the point guard position and did a really good job of it."

Senior Guard Nick Boyd

On the team's defense:

"We didn't execute the game plan to the best of our abilities. That's what cost us. We're not here for moral victories or to play close games. We are here to win, and we didn't do what was asked of us today. We have to learn from that, and we have to learn fast because we have Creighton coming up."

On the value of playing a team like Gonzaga early in the season:

"Playing Gonzaga is very valuable. I love the group that I'm playing with. We just got together, but that's no excuse for not being successful. San Diego State has been doing this for a long time, winning a lot of big-time games, and we just have to get better. I love this group. I love how we compete. The sky's the limit."

On what the offense has to do to stay consistent:

"First and foremost, the offense needs to get organized. The atmosphere was electric in here. We couldn't hear the plays, so we definitely have to work on hand signals. It's a new group. In any offense, there will be highs and lows, and it is about how we respond. Our response wasn't good enough to win a game of this magnitude and level. We have to learn from it. We have a great team coming up next Tuesday against Creighton."

Sophomore Guard BJ Davis

On trying to get past the deficit:

"It's tough to keep yourself composed throughout that whole process. It's a very hard thing to do, especially with a team like Gonzaga. It feels like there are no weak links out there. They were able to come up in crucial moments and make crucial plays. That's something that we have to learn from. Down the line, we will have had this experience. We've experienced this already. Going forward, we know that it's the little things that we have to do to secure the win."

On his biggest takeaways from today's game:

"For me, the biggest takeaway from tonight is that it's the little things like the hand checks that I was getting called for. [Ryan] Nembhard is an experienced guard. It's good for me to be matched up against somebody like that. I can go back and watch it over and over and see the things that I can do, or I should have done, and apply it to the next game."

On sharing the backcourt with Nick Boyd:

"It's great sharing a court with Boyd. Having a veteran alongside me, I learn so much from him, little things about the game, and he pushes us in practice. We need that, and he's a great leader. We all look up to him, and we take admiration from him. Over time, it's going to develop, and we're going to learn more and keep growing."

Gonzaga Head Coach Mark Few

On what it looks like to be in the same conference as SDSU in 2026:

"It's great because San Diego State looks at their basketball program the same way Gonzaga does. They understand how important it is, that they are national caliber programs, that they're supported at that level, and that great things can happen for the university, communities, cities, states and everything. They're going to be a welcome partner as far as I'm concerned."

On the Viejas Arena environment challenging Gonzaga's communication:

"We did a good job of it. It wasn't easy communicating there, but I thought they did a really nice job."

On Graham Ike and the way he responded after the early two fouls:

"I told [Graham Ike] in the locker room, I thought that was huge for us, for Graham to come back, especially after the early two fouls. A) to plan for a spurt there in the first half and not pick up a third foul. B) to come in and get back to delivering on the hard physical bigs. Those bigs are tough to oppose and are tough to score on. I thought that was a huge key in the second half."

Gonzaga Senior Guard Ryan Nembhard

On how Gonzaga handled the pressure of Viejas:

"I thought we did a really good job, actually. Every time they went on a little run and the crowd got loud, we did a good job staying composed and trusting our offensive sets."

On how he envisions the rivalry when SDSU and Gonzaga join the Pac-12:

"I think the rivalry will be great. This is a great program. I played them a couple of times at Creighton, and they always gave us a tough game. They have a great fan base, a great coach over there, and they play really hard. I think it'll be a great rivalry to come."

Gonzaga Senior Forward Graham Ike

On his rivalry with SDSU dating back to his tenure at Wyoming:

"It feels good to get my first win against these guys. It's a feeling I haven't felt before."

On his mentality coming in late after foul trouble:

"I stay mentally engaged while I'm not in. Seeing everything that's going on, continuing to talk and stay positive and just trying my best to stay engaged in the game. I know that when I get back out there, I will still be out there with everything in front of me."