

# GEICO Players Era Men's Championship

Wednesday, November 26, 2025

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

MGM Grand Garden Arena

**San Diego State Aztecs**  
**Coach Brian Dutcher**  
**Elzie Harrington**  
**Sean Newman**

Postgame Press Conference



**Q. Elzie, you got the start tonight. When did you find out, and what are your thoughts on that, starting a college basketball game so soon in your college basketball career?**

ELZIE HARRINGTON: I found out pretty much before the game. What are my thoughts on it? Extremely grateful for the opportunity and the fact that the coaches trust me. I'm just upset that we didn't get the win, so that's all I'm thinking right now.

**Q. Coach, what was the thinking behind making that switch?**

BRIAN DUTCHER: I just thought Elzie played well enough to deserve an opportunity to step in there and get a chance to start. He played very good. He made some mistakes, freshman mistakes. He got back cut a couple times, which he'll learn from. This is all a learning process.

Then even though he shot it great from the field, I thought he left some points on the board. He had a little floater that he normally makes. He had a lay-up that he wanted, a dunk that kind of slipped through his hands.

He could have turned a good game into a great game, and it didn't happen. Three assists, no turnovers, so Elzie is a very good player.

**Q. Sean, you had your best game since you've been at San Diego State. Talk about getting comfortable and how you felt out there.**

SEAN NEWMAN: Yeah, I felt comfortable out there. I'm pretty experienced, so there was really nothing new for me.

**Q. What's the adjustment been like for you coming to a new team and a new level?**

SEAN NEWMAN: Yeah, it's been really difficult, honestly. It's a lot of days where I'm in my head a lot. Also used to where I was, and I kind of have to change everything.

But what's just been helping me is just relying on my faith and just looking forward to a new day and just putting forth my best effort every day.

Baylor 91, San Diego State 81.

BRIAN DUTCHER: Obviously disappointed in the loss, but it's a hard tournament to play in, three games in three nights. The typical thing with us is our offense is better than our defense, and that's not typically San Diego State basketball. We shot 42 percent from three, damn near 50 percent for the game, had 20 assists on 28 baskets.

So we're a pretty good offensive team, but defensively we keep lapsing.

We knew what they were going to try to do. They were going to try to pull Heide out. They're basically playing four guards and a power forward in their starting lineup and we knew they were going to try to pull Heide and Goon away from the basket and drive them and try to get them in foul trouble and that's what happened.

We weren't able to prevent it, one-day prep. Looking back, I probably should have just switched all those screens as they went out, but I think they would have still tried to find a way to get Goon and Heide on guards and try to drive to the basket.

When they did drive, we didn't do a good job of helping them when they got out there and got beat on the dribble. We didn't provide any help.

So our defense has to get better or I have to find better ways to defend, and that's a little on them and a little on me. We have to find better schemes to what we do, and they have to execute game plans to perfection if we're going to have a chance to be the defensive team we want to be.



**Q. I know you've been banged up a little bit with your foot. What's its status now, and how close are you to being close to 100 percent where you can be more explosive?**

SEAN NEWMAN: I'm fine. I'm fine.

**Q. For both players, Coach just mentioned that the defense, this is a program that's prides itself on defense and rebounding. What in your eyes is going wrong? You've given up 89, 94, 97, and 99, 89 in regulation against Troy and 94, 97, 91 points in four games, which I don't think has ever happened, at least in the last 25 years.**

SEAN NEWMAN: I think we're just not making it tough enough for our opponents right now. They're shooting 50 percent from the field, almost 40 from three, and then we're putting them on the line too much.

We have to be more disciplined, be more solid, and then we have to execute our game plan better because that's not winning basketball on the defensive end.

ELZIE HARRINGTON: Pretty much the same thing. I'd say in practice, we guard really well, so it's just translating it to games, just taking pride in it.

**Q. In terms of just a little bit more on the defense, how shocking is it to you -- I just read those numbers off. This is a program that gives up 50s, 60s, and all of a sudden you're in the 90s. What do you think is going on?**

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah. I mean, I liked what Calvin said today about winning and losing. You get wisdom from winning and you can learn lessons from losing. We're playing a lot of different styles of basketball as we go along, and if we played the same style against us every game, we say, okay, here's what we have to do.

But you play a game, and then you play Michigan and they play different than Oregon and then they play different than Baylor, and Troy plays different than all of them. So you're learning these lessons along the way, and you have to actually learn how to win and how to play better defense.

So hopefully we're filing these lessons away, and I know we have good kids that want to learn, so now we have to put those lessons to use.

Every team plays us different from an offensive standpoint, and with some of the new pieces, some of the guys in different roles, we haven't been able to make the adjustment to a game plan. And it's hard when you're

playing three games in three nights. You're just talking about what you do.

And I honestly thought having walk-throughs, showing film, that Magoon could chase those guys around and play off and far enough, give them enough space where they couldn't get to the basket on him.

But Baylor did a good job on him, too. When he ran out there to try to get to his guy, they stepped in front of him and fell down, almost like faking a charge, like he pushed him down. And if he got one foul in the second half, I watched him run out there and I watched the guy jump in front of him and fall again trying to draw fouls on him.

These are smart players that this is their system and they played it better than we guarded it.

I have to find ways to change up our defense where I'm not putting my players in positions where they're not comfortable guarding. So a lot of that's on me, too, learning from it.

**Q. Did you consider zone?**

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, we're playing the switching man, the hybrid. We didn't use it here, but we've worked on it. I want to have a day or two running against the other team's offense where I know exactly what I'm going to see.

I'll use it more when I have time to do a scout and actually practice it against what the other team is doing. We don't do it enough where I just want to throw it out there and just hope it works.

I did it against Troy because there were three minutes left and we were 11 down, so desperation-wise, I tried it. But we're working at it, and I think it could be good for us. À la what Michigan does, try to leave size at the rim and try to make them finish over us. Magoon can do that, and hopefully Heide has some ability to protect the rim for us. So it's something we're looking at moving forward.

**Q. You mentioned Magoon; he just seemed out of it tonight. Do you think it's just too many games in too many days? What do you think was going on there?**

BRIAN DUTCHER: I think when you play two minutes in the first half and you're on the bench the rest of the half in foul trouble, and then the first play of the second half you get your third foul and Dave asks me, do you want to take him out, no, leave him in. He had no rhythm at all at that point. What would be the sense in taking him out.

It was hard for him to get in a rhythm. Two fouls, play two

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

minutes, come in, get a foul first play of the second half, try to play without fouling, they're falling down when you're running. It was hard for him to get back into a rhythm, I think more than anything that hurt his game tonight.

**Q. You have a rotation that's 11, 12 deep in this tournament, and because you had two lopsided games your first two you really didn't play guys heavy minutes. They have seven guys, seven-man rotation, they've been pressing and running. Scott just said he was really worried that they were just going to run out of gas. Turned out you were the team that ran out of gas right in the middle of the second half. Why do you think that was, and was that surprising to you?**

BRIAN DUTCHER: I don't know if we ran out of gas. I think we got impatient. They built a 10, 12 point lead and there was a play or two that could have gone either way that would have energized us. You saw at the end when we were pressing, they were exhausted, we had fresh legs on the floor, but we didn't do it early enough and didn't have time to do it.

I thought it was more frustration as to how we were playing that caused us not to play at our maximum efficiency on both ends of the floor. So we have to play through frustration. That's always a player's greatest enemy is himself.

**Q. One more thing about Elzie. Is this in your mind a semi-permanent decision, at least he'll get a few games as a starter?**

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, I think he played well enough to deserve another opportunity to play there. I like Elzie as a player, and like I said, that's nothing against the guys that played the position before him.

Obviously you saw Sean, he was a starter his whole last year, and now he's getting bit minutes so that adds to his frustration.

I told him after the game I gave B.J. credit, he was the perfect example because he went through two weeks of frustration and came out the other side, and he's playing with such great energy and motivation and that you can be sad for a little while but you have to fight your way out of it and find joy in playing.

So these guys are frustrated. Whatever their opportunity is, they have to find joy in it, and that will give them the best chance of success.

**Q. In terms of just going forward, you have a week now before the next game, so you basically have a lot**

**of practice. What are the primary things you've got to focus on to get this team back on track?**

BRIAN DUTCHER: Offensively it's playing against physicality. These teams that play us real physical, we have to function better against that. You look at some of the early threes we took today. They weren't going in and it was frustrating, and I just think, well, just think 24 hours ago. Everything we threw up was going in and we ended up shooting 42 percent from three, so that's pretty good.

That's as good as you're going to do from three-point range. So you walk the line. But we have to function offensively where we get into our stuff in better rhythm. I don't think we had that many turnovers. 10 for the game.

**Q. But you had five in six possessions.**

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, so we had that one stretch. B.J. hit a big basket and we came down and ran the same play the next two times and turned it over because we couldn't get into the play. That's a credit to Baylor, and that just shows us we have to function at a higher level and get through our plays in order to have success.

When we did get into our plays we had great success, but they did a good job of bullying us over some stuff.

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