



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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### San Diego State-Texas Southern Postgame Quotes November 14, 2018

#### San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

##### **Opening Statement:**

"I was happy with our effort tonight; it's about where I thought it would be playing a tired SWAC team after four games on the road. The things we wanted to take advantage of, we could. We said we wanted to really run them. We knew they would be tired, especially their bigs. So, I thought we did a good job with the sprint post, running the ball ahead and getting some easy opportunities. We continued to guard at a pretty high level. I mean, they shot 30-something percent from the game, second opponent in a row. The tough part about that is when they miss so many shots, there's more offensive opportunities to rebound, and they had 16 offensive rebounds – 12 in the first half. So, we made a point at half time to say we wanted to cut that down drastically. I think they had two going in to the last minute and got a couple, so we did a better job on the glass. Still concerned about Jalen (McDaniels) getting in early foul trouble. He only played 10 minutes in the first half again. I think he'll be better suited when I finally put another big in the line-up, which I want to do. Maybe throw Nolan (Narain) in there soon, or Nate (Mensah), as soon as they're healthy and practicing full. I'd like to move Jalen back in his more natural position, which is a stretch forward, power forward that stretches the floor and then move Matt (Mitchell) off the power forward and put him back on the wing. I think that we'll get better when I do that. I do that a lot during the game, but not the start and it seems like Jalen always picks up a couple of fouls early in that first segment. That'll be something I have to look at. Maybe I'll help him by getting him back to his more natural position on the floor. We shared the ball pretty good. I was a little concerned at the end of the game when they pressured us. We know that's what we're going to see against Duke. We're not going to come down and be able to just run through all our stuff. Over the next two days, we'll concentrate on finding a way to get into offense in a way so we're not stagnant or afraid of the pressure, where we can use that pressure to our advantage. We have a good coaching staff and we'll have some good ideas. We'll have the last two or three days to prepare for that. Obviously, Duke is our next opponent, everybody knows that. I said I want to play Duke. I've just assumed it was in the Maui Invitational. I don't want to go over there and not have the chance to play the number one team in the country. That's why these kids come to San Diego State; we promise them we're going to play marquee games and give them the opportunity to play on the biggest stage, and we'll be on the biggest stage that day. So, we're excited for our opportunity to head to Maui and play Duke on Monday.

##### **On defensive plan against Duke:**

"We have to maybe get another defender back on a missed shot. Generally, we send three to the glass and two guys back. Against Gonzaga last year, we knew they really ran, so we sent three back on the shot instead of two to try to get a more defensive presence so they can't score quickly on the break and make it more of a half-court game if we can. With that being said, they still run it at an elite level, so they run and they quick shoot and they want to play a free game and play up in the hundreds. Obviously, we want to try and slow it down a bit and try to keep the score lower and shorten the game. We'll work the next couple of days to try and think of ways to do that."

##### **On Jalen McDaniels making a three-pointer in the beginning of the game:**

"That's one of the advantages of having him at the five to start the game. We knew the seven-foot-two player lead would not come out on that. So, we ran a play where everybody touched the ball and then ran that screen from where he could step out and shoot it. So, that was a set call and we wanted him to take it. We wanted him to have more confidence in that shot. When he spreads the floor and gets those opportunities, we want him to take the open three."

**On running Matt Mitchell up the post:**

"We ran Matt into the post late last year and we like him as a post-up player, whether it's against a power forward or against a wing. So, we're obviously going to find ways to put Matt into that low block and to score the ball when he has the opportunity, but also to create shots for other people. If he draws a second defender, much like we used to do with Lorenzo Wade when he was here, we used to run him into that short post up and used to be a nightmare for the Mountain West because if they didn't double him, he'd score, and if they doubled him, they leave five people with open shots, and that's what we want for Matt. We want him to score in there, but just as importantly, we want him create shots for other people."

**On Matt Mitchell's strength and versatility:**

"He strong. Matt is strong as a bull, so you put him in there and he starts smacking down and he's tough to guard in there. He's versatile. We need to find ways to use his versatility, whether it's shooting the three when he does or whether it's putting him in the post and letting him post up. He's not one-dimensional and we need to take advantage of all the things he does to make us successful."

**On playing the freshmen:**

"We have six veterans back and then the rest are freshmen. So, two or three of them are going to play in every game. I told the two that got in the last game, I think Joel (Mensah) got in with maybe five to go and Nate (Mensah) got in with three. I told them this is your audition, this is not a game. I told them whoever plays in these next three or four minutes, they have to build my confidence [in them] to play you more significant minutes. This may be the last three minutes in a game where we're up 30 or 40, but it's not for you. You have to show me that you can play the right way, and I thought they did. Joel had a couple really nice passes to Nate and Ed (Chang) hit the three late and we know Ed's a good shooter. They're both very good players."

**On scoring over 100 points:**

"I like the way they did it. I like the fact that Nathan (Mensah) threw a little bounce pass to Joel (Mensah) and he finished the basket, so I was happier with the way they did it. It was an assisted basket. It wasn't guys hunting their shot in the last two minutes of the game. I thought they shared the ball, and I like it when they make plays for each other."

**On Nathan Mensah's abilities:**

"Obviously, he's got a tremendous upside—Nathan does—but you watch him play the defensive end and sometimes he doesn't even know how he's supposed to stand in there defensively—if he's supposed to get the top leg on or if he's supposed to rap over the top. He's trying to figure it out because he does it a certain way in practice and he gets in the game and they call a quick foul, and he's trying to look and see what the refs are going to let him do. Whenever you're fresh to the game and new to the college game, you kind of figure it out as you play, and the refs try to talk them through some things. As he continues to learn the game and get minutes and get more comfortable, I think his production is going to go way up."

**On playing Duke's Zion Williamson:**

"I think we're excited for it. What did they say he weighs? 285? I have Matt (Mitchell) at about 230/245. We're giving up some weight, but we'll be close. I think that will be a fun matchup, and then obviously they're talented at every position. They're well-coached, but I want to get them in a close game. I'd like to find a way to get the game close down the stretch. I think Coach K [Mike Krzyzewski] would like that, too. He's not served very well by winning a lot of these games by 20 or 30—I know he enjoys it—but when he gets to the ACC, they're going to have some challenging games. I hope we're the first one."

**Sophomore Forward Matt Mitchell****On getting the score to 100:**

"It wasn't about running the score up; it was about being there for our team. Especially for the players that don't play as much, it was good for them to get out there. They're always practicing hard and working their tails off so I think it paid off."

**On Ed Chang's first college basket:**

"I think everybody in the stands, everybody on the bench, and the whole basketball program was happy for him."

**On improvements for next game:**

"Rebounding. We always talk about being an elite rebounding team and how San Diego State has been like that in the past. So far, this season we haven't been that way. We did a lot better job in the second half getting them off the boards and transitioning out. But I think we need to focus on a full 40-minute game rebounding."

**On feeling ready to play Duke:**

"I think so. We have a good feel for our team and where we are right now. I think Duke will be a good test being the number one team in the country. It'll be a test for us to see where we are."

**On approaching Duke's high scoring offense:**

"I would say it scares us. Everyone's human, but you have to take notice of what they're capable of. We'll tackle that once we get there and excel in practice."

**On going up against the 285 pound Duke freshman:**

"Like Jordan said, we'll take it one game at a time. Today it was Texas Southern and next time it'll be Duke. The game after that is whoever it is and we'll just take it one game at a time."

**On getting the ball quite a bit tonight:**

"I think everyone looks forward to getting the ball. Of course I welcome it, and I welcome being a play maker not just a scorer. It's to find people like Jordan out on the perimeter for open three's. I think shuffle isn't just a scoring play, it's a play to get out of the posts so everybody gets a touch."

**On improvement for next game:**

"For me, it's creating mismatches and just trying to make the best play when the ball is in my hands."

**On growth from previous game:**

"I would definitely say ball movement. It's coming together and we're maintaining that team chemistry. I think we moved the ball a lot better than the last game. Dutcher preaches to us to move the ball and do it against the man and I think we did that today."

**On working on mental game:**

"The game is a lot more mental than it is physical. I worked on my body movement during the summer and being the best that I can be. It's working on the mental aspect for the team and not just for myself because if I'm not there mentally, then they can't count on me."

**On changes in turnovers from previous games:**

"It was not speeding myself up as much. It was letting the game come to me and not trying to force anything. Coaches and the rest of the team have helped me with that."

**On what it says about the team when they're able to spread the ball around:**

"It says that we've grown. I feel like it's us moving the ball and not worrying about who scores the most points. One night it might be me, one night it might be Devin (Watson), another Jordan (Schakel) or Jalen (McDaniels). We're not worried about who's the highest scorer, it's about being there for our teammates."

**Sophomore Guard Jordan Schakel**

**On Ed Chang's first college basket:**

"He didn't play last year in high school so he's had a lot of time off. It was just great to see him knock down that shot. We were all really excited for him and we did a great job cheering him on."

**On his great performance tonight:**

"I like to not worry about that and just play for my teammates. I think we did a great job tonight defensively. Rebounding is something we've been trying to improve on and I think we did a better job with that in the second half."

**On the defensive plan against Duke:**

"We'll definitely go over that in practice but it's sticking to our principles and what we do. It'll be doing what we've been doing and playing as hard as possible and rebounding."

**On the next game against Duke:**

"It is a national stage but we like to take it one game at a time. It's understanding that it is a game on TV, on ESPN, but it's just a basketball game and we have to do what we do. We have to play hard and trust what we'll be doing in practice in the next coming days."

**On winning by this big of a margin:**

"It's cool but it's more about how we played. We have to evaluate how we played and the coaches will help us with that. It's about not worrying about the score and playing every possession. That's how we've been successful in the past."

**On going up against Matt Mitchell in practice:**

"It's definitely a challenge since he's a big, strong guy. I think he's improved from last year in the post, taking his time and using his strength to his advantage."

**Texas Southern Head Coach Johnny Jones****On playing against San Diego State:**

"I thought they were very good. I thought they performed like a fresh team. They lost two really key guys from last year, but I thought they did an excellent job of being patient and poised. They knocked down shots. They took advantage of us on every opportunity they had. I thought they played extremely tough and physical on both ends of the floor offensively and then defensively — not allowing us to get into things offensively, especially in the first half."

**On San Diego State's strengths:**

"I think they're really good because I think they're really potent on the offensive end of the floor and efficient. They can make plays, knock down shots and have good ball control — our guys as well. On the defensive end, I think they've got good size and strength where they can switch through the numbers and keep guys in front of them."

**On the number of fouls called the first half:**

"We may have made some tired fouls there and been overly aggressive at times, but I thought both teams got a lot of fouls called. Especially there in the second half, too. Then the game was really out of balance at that time, but those things happen and it's early on in the season. Officials are getting ready and teams are, too."

**On what they were hoping to try to establish early:**

"We were really trying to establish our inside game early on. We thought we'd be able to have a good opportunity to shoot a high field goal percentage inside and play inside out, but they did a great job of not allowing us to get comfortable with the ball inside. Our post guy got in trouble early and we had to put him on the bench."

**On F Jeremy Combs' performance tonight:**

"I thought Jeremy played hard. That's what we need from him night in and night out. Unfortunately, because of our other post guy was in foul trouble, he had to log a lot of minutes, and I thought he got tired there in the second half. I liked his performance. I thought he continued to fight against a really tough, quick line up that they were able to put out on the floor tonight."