

Maui Jim Maui Invitational

Tuesday, November 20, 2018

Brian Dutcher

Jordan Schakel

Devin Watson

Jalen McDaniels

San Diego State Aztecs

SDSU - 79, Xavier - 74

MEGAN GODFREY: Start with an opening comment from coach and take questions for the players.

BRIAN DUTCHER: Well, I had the team prepared for a 9:45 start, unfortunately the game started at 9:30. So they got out on us so fast, they made every three, and even as a guy that sat through a lot of games I sat there and wondered what in the world are we going to do to come back in this thing. But I told the team before the game, I love my team. They play with great grit and great determination and they got down 19 and they didn't panic and they didn't point fingers and they just kept playing hard. Of and then we started stringing some stops together and I think I told them at the 7:30 media timeout let's get it down to 10 by halftime and we got it even closer than that. I think it was a two or three point game at halftime. So we fought back and then we continued our momentum into the second half, anybody that's heard me talk about my team knows that I always love assisted baskets, I think we had 26 baskets, 24 baskets, 17 of them assisted. So I thought once we settled in and quit trying to drive the ball where it shouldn't go and just shared the ball, we played much better offensively and I'm proud of the comeback and the grit this team has.

MEGAN GODFREY: Take questions for the players, please.

Q. Jalen, when you get it going like that and knowing that you were down and you had to carry it, what's that feeling on the floor?

JALEN MCDANIELS: Man, it feels great. It just all started on defense picking up full court playing with a lot of energy and just keeping it up. I feel like when we did that the tone we just set the tone from that point on.

Q. Jalen, there's that key three you shot right at the end of the shot clock, you know what I'm talking about, late in the game?

JALEN MCDANIELS: Yeah.



Q. Talk us through what you saw there and did you know these rims were really, really loose and the ball would pop over like that.

JALEN MCDANIELS: I remember we first got here and we had a shoot around I said these are the softest rims I ever played on. But he passed me the ball and it was like three seconds and I had no other choice and I was confident shooting it, so that's something I've been working on, so I'm glad I hit it.

Q. What happened there? I mean what were you guys thinking down 19 and what do you think the key was to be able to turn that around?

JORDAN SCHAKEL: I was thinking we just need to get our energy up and start a little something because we had nothing going at all and Jalen started picking up full court, Jeremy gave us a lot of energy and I think we all fed off of that and it was really the energy that got us going and the shots just fell later, but the energy really started it and I think the coaches really told us we need to pick it up and that's what we did.

DEVIN WATSON: Basketball is a game of runs, and then when you're just out there not thinking just flowing and living in the moment and playing freely that definitely helps us out.

Q. Devin and Jordan, Nathan comes in, he subbed in, he was a disrupter for you guys. Talk about his ability to kind of get you guys on that run and to kind of seemed like once he came in he was disruptive and was able to get you guys on those pushes to kind of start cutting the lead down.

JORDAN SCHAKEL: Nate played really big minutes for us tonight. I'm really happy for him. He's been playing the same way in practice, it's really nice to see him play that way in the game. He gave us great energy and his length and athleticism gave us the different aspect that we needed in this game.

JALEN MCDANIELS: I agree with Jordan, when Nate gets in he's going to play with energy, he's going to be energetic on the defensive end, block shots, yeah. He played well tonight.

Q. They make five of seven threes to open the game and yesterday it was six of eight. What's going through your mind? Do you just start

thinking oh they're eventually going to miss or did you have to change something defensively to -- I mean they missed 13 straight after that.

JALEN MCDANIELS: I feel like it was just ball pressure, pressuring the ball, not giving them no room to shoot the ball and just keeping the hover hand. I feel like when they hit them first threes I feel like we were late, and they were kind of open, so in the second half and later in the first half we fixed that.

MEGAN GODFREY: We'll take questions now for coach.

Q. I think there was a point there in the first half where you actually played zone for the first time this season. Did you figure we had nothing to lose and did that kind of help flip the momentum a little bit?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, our man defense was doing so well I thought we better try some zone. So we played a couple possessions of zone. I thought it was fine. They brought Welage back in and so we got right out of it, because he's such a dynamic sure. But once he came back in we got out of the zone and it just gave us maybe a little different look, a different feel. Sometimes a zone doesn't have to get stops, sometimes it just changes the momentum of the game, so I'll have to go back and watch the tape and see if the momentum changed at all. Sometimes they get the same baskets but the feel for the game is different and sometimes a team will say they will get out of rhythm as to what they were doing and then they have to re-invent themselves sometimes. But I don't know that for a fact until I watch the game but we are definitely going to zone more this year and more so when Nathan is in -- Nathan had a great first half, sensational -- and then he made a couple freshman-type mistakes early in the second half and I went with Nolan and Nolan played a great second half defensively. So I finally had a true five man in the game for most of the game and I think it helped us out defensively.

Q. After a tough struggle yesterday and beginning of this first half these are the kind of games you learn something about your team. What did you learn about them today?

BRIAN DUTCHER: That they're not pointing fingers at one another. That they come and they pay attention in the huddles they want to be coached, they want to be told what they have to do to help turn the tide of the game. We're not a blue blood, but our crowd travels like one. I thought the crowd was great for us today. Once we started some momentum, we had great Aztec support, they were loud, they were into the game and I think they really helped our energy level too. You're talking back-to-back games, I looked at the minutes and Devin played 39, Jalen played 36 or something,

Jordan 30 some, and that's back-to-back games and to try to put that kind of energy and effort out there at the defensive end was really attribute to the kids and then attribute to the Aztec fans to keep that momentum going for us the way they cheered us on.

Q. What happened to the mentality of a team you lose by 26 yesterday I think it was your worst loss in 10 years, most lopsided, you're down 19, you know, 10 minutes into the game today. What happens with the mentality of players, they just decide that's enough or what goes on there?

BRIAN DUTCHER: That's where you find out about your team. You don't know until it happens. I thought we played a pretty good first half against Duke. We had it hovering around 10 or 11 and they hit back-to-back threes to end the game and it's 17. That's like every game I watched them play. You think you're playing pretty good and you lose a segment by five points, well that was a pretty good segment. Well, the next one you're down 10 and the by halftime you're down 20 and you've been playing pretty good basketball. That's how good they are. And so to get 19 today, at the start of the game when both teams go out to mid court to jump, jump ball, the coaches are like, well that looks more normal and that's the size kids we normally play and that's a very good team and they got big kids but Duke is just so much bigger than everybody else. So it shows, you come here to learn about your team and we learned that I have attempt that doesn't give up when they get down, that they play hard all the way to the end and I'm proud of them for that.

Q. There is a lot of focus obviously put on playing the No. 1 team in the country but in a tournament like this you have a chance to get out of here with two wins, just talk about the importance of that possibility.

BRIAN DUTCHER: Out of the last seven, eight years I think every event we played in we come out with a minimum of two wins. I think we won the Diamondhead a couple years ago and last time we played in this event we lost to Arizona in the championship. So I wish we were on the championship end of the thing, but this is the bracket we're in, and we will go home and prep like crazy and try to come out of here with two wins tomorrow against very good Illinois and Iowa State teams.

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Travis Steele

Zach Hankins

Quentin Goodin

Xavier Musketeers

SDSU - 79, Xavier - 74

MEGAN GODFREY: Coach give us an opening thought on tonight's, this morning's game.

TRAVIS STEELE: I thought we started off the game really well, obviously, got out to an early lead. We have to be able to put 40 minutes together and not turn it on and off. Give San Diego all the credit in the world though, they got a couple tremendous players in Jalen McDaniels and Devin Watson who are tremendous players. They fought back, they, the Mike Tyson old saying, you find out what your plan is once you get punched and their plan was they punched right back and we didn't have a response. I thought to start the second half it was a little bit better, but again it's kind of, the game wore on they pulled away. But again give San Diego all the credit in the world, they deserved to win that game, they outplayed us of the.

MEGAN GODFREY: Questions for the players, please.

Q. Quentin, you had a career high 20 points, but the team was ahead by 19 and lost that lead. Are you discouraged at all by the fact that you guys have struggled to play with a lead and be consistent?

QUENTIN GOODIN: I wouldn't say discouraged is the word. I feel like we're still trying to figure it out. I feel like this tournament's really good for us, get away from home, find out our team chemistry, we're still trying to figure out our roles and take care of the missing pieces from last year. I feel like San Diego State, they're a good team, they gave us their best shot and I feel like we just keep that lead we win the game. I feel like our minds drifted during the game and we didn't stay focused throughout the game and that's what caused us to lose.

Q. Zach, everything kind of seemed to go right for the first 10 minutes. What went wrong after that?

ZACH HANKINS: Kind of the same thing as what Q said. Just our minds started wand erring and that's kind of been an issue for us, we just need to work on staying focused, but we still have a lot of time to grow



and a lot of time to peak at the end of the season.

Q. Zach, does that surprise you, having three grad transfers and a couple guys that have been in the program that you would, even though you have new pieces, that focus would be a problem?

ZACH HANKINS: It is a lot of new pieces and we still have a lot of chemistry to gain but we're getting closer every day and we're learning each other's games every day more and more. So I fully believe as the season progresses we'll just continue to get better and better and better.

Q. For both players, it seemed like last year you had some guys who in that situation could settle everybody down, kind of stabilize things. Is this team still looking for that guy or those guys to be able to kind of steady the ship in those moments?

QUENTIN GOODIN: I wouldn't -- not really. I feel like if we didn't drift our mind we wouldn't have put ourself in that situation. We would have kept that lead. I feel like at this point of the season I just feel like we got to lock in because it happens in practice too and I feel like we just got to focus even more. I feel like as a captain it is my job to keep those guys in check. So I guess I'll figure that out.

ZACH HANKINS: I would say our captains are continuing to break out into those roles and doing that a lot better.

Q. For both players, just what changed for San Diego State? What did they start doing differently? When they were down 19, how were they able to get back into that?

ZACH HANKINS: I think that we lost focus defensively. We started playing out of our own system and so we would help in too much and just give them wide open rhythm threes and they started hitting those. So that's really been the main thing we got to do is just stay focused, stay locked in on D even when we're up that much.

QUENTIN GOODIN: Just go off of that, they stuck to their system I feel like. They smelled blood and they got more aggressive, whereas to us we kind of faded away when the crucial moment kind of hit and adversity hit. They just got more aggressive and were kind of trusting each other. I feel like we hurt ourself more this

game than they hurt us.

MEGAN GODFREY: We'll take questions for coach.

Q. I heard the same thing from both coaching staffs after yesterday's loss and today's, hey, that's a really good team and they're going to get better. Even in a loss like this can you see some of that progress and see this team improving going forward?

TRAVIS STEELE: Yeah, I think it's obviously a long season. We're going to look a lot different in December and January because the games like this. San Diego State's a good team, they're a well coached team. We got a lot of room for growth on both ends of the floor, that's for sure. But I do think we're getting better. Give San Diego State all the credit in the world for the win today.

Q. If there were probably one or two things you want to see improved with this team over the next game, what are those things you want to focus on?

TRAVIS STEELE: I would say two things. I would say number one when our guys drive the ball it's not my turn, you know, it's like -- I feel like we keep on pressing the repeat button on a song, a bad song, and it keeps happening over and over and over and over and over again and at some point it's got to change to get a different result. And again I feel like a lot of times like we're not competing against Auburn, we weren't competing against San Diego State, we're competing against ourselves. We have to be smarter and we have to be able to make great decisions once we get there because we're getting the ball to the paint a lot, but we're taking a lot of bad shots once we get there. When you have three guys on you, it's not a good shot. Somebody is wide open. The game's got to be played slow and again I think we're asking more out of our guys that are returning, they weren't put in those roles last year. Quentin wasn't, Naji wasn't, Paul wasn't and those are three of our primary playmakers off the bounce and I think those guys have to continue to grow in that area for us to be a good team. And I think defensively I think it's staying at home on shooters, again it happened over and over again today against San Diego State, where I think that like the Devin Watson kid would drive the ball all of a sudden we would help off the ball side corner, we leave a wide open for a three, a rhythm three for a guy that could really shoot the ball. Again staying locked in, especially in the second half when the defense is away from us has been an issue with our team so far.

Q. You opened the game five of seven on threes and a few of those are pretty contested. Was this just a case of you made some really, really hard shots and you just missed them or what, you went

from that to missing 13 straight.

TRAVIS STEELE: No, I thought we had some pretty good looks early on to be honest. I think Elias took one tough one after he had had a couple wide open ones. But I thought we had some really good looks early on. I think that obviously their defense tightened up as the game went on, but again I think it goes back to when we play the game the right way, when we drive the ball and we make the right reads, again, it has nothing to do with San Diego State, it has nothing to do with Auburn, nothing to do with our opponent tomorrow, if we do what we work on every single day in practice, like I told our guys, then I'll live with the results, we'll live with it, win or lose. But when we don't it's a problem and we got to get those fixed we got to stop being our own worst enemy, because I really feel like we're competing against ourselves. Part of it is new guys, new roles, there's no question about it, but you can't get board with the simplicity. You have to -- I always I'm a big baseball fan, like home run hitters strike out a lot, guys that get on base those are the guys that get paid a lots of money in baseball and we want guys that are getting on base, hit singles, trust each other, move the ball, make the right plays. And again it's a work in progress, obviously, but you can't get board with the simple plays.

Q. Same question that I asked your players, how difficult is that transition when you have guys last year who seemed to just be able to steady the ship in those moments and having new guys who are trying to step into those roles this year?

TRAVIS STEELE: It's difficult but at the same time there's no excuses no explanations with our program. There's no moral victories, we expect to win. We have to figure it out. Sooner rather than later. We got to get guys that are going to mature, grow, and in those areas, last year we relied on at the end of games we had a lot of close games last year we had a closer, Travon, and he made all the big plays or JP made several big plays as well and I don't think, sometimes I think the media's made a big narrative of it it's like, well, hey, like all these new guys getting thrust in the same role that Travon and JP were. No, they're different players. They have to be them, be really good at what they do. And then I'm good with that. It's like I said, like I think again we our guys got to learn how to play with one another, how to share the basketball, make the right plays, not force it, which I thought we took a lot of forced shots in the second half and even later on in the end of the first half when they went on their run. I thought we were taking some forced shots and our guys don't mean to, they're not selfish guys they got to learn though it's our job as a coaching staff to teach those guys and help guide them to where they can learn and continue to get better in that area.

Q. Ryan Welage played really well in the first two games and was one of your top scorers. Today he was pretty quiet, didn't take a shot until the second half. Was there any reason behind that or just the way the game was going?

TRAVIS STEELE: I think it was the way the game was going I think San Diego State again give them credit, he played in their league the last few years, so they knew who he was pretty well. They did a good job making sure that they were on the catch every single time for Ryan. I thought Ryan got frustrated a little bit, you could probably tell. So again I think it's kind of game to game. There's going to be games where he's going to be good like against scoring, I know Zach had whatever it was, 15 off the bench or whatever, Ryan didn't have as good of a game offensively as he would like to have, but again he had a couple good looks, I thought he had the one really good look there in the second half, just missed it and that's okay. We'll live with that shot.