



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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### San Diego State-UNLV Postgame Quotes January 26, 2019

#### San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

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

"Well it's good to be back in Viejas. The crowd was outstanding. They're behind this team when we're here and it's great to have that kind of energy in the building and we're grateful for that. We're grateful for the greatest fans on the west coast. I put three keys for the game on the board. One was if we outrebound them, if we get 15 assists and commit only 11 turnovers, then we have a chance to win this game. We ended up with 15 assists, we outrebounded them, but turnovers were on me. We had 14 turnovers but I think a large part of that was because we weren't very aggressive, and I think if I had run offense, I would've been better off, but I wanted to shorten the game and hold the ball. I think our guys got passive but those turnovers were more on me than them at that point. But overall a good performance for the Aztecs. We shot 56 percent for the game, around 70 percent for the second half, and our defense is continuing to get better. Every game is a different game plan, though. We open the game trying to send ball screens down the baseline, and then we went switch five or we switch every ball screen. So, these young guys know they're catching on. When the game plan changes, they don't get confused as much anymore and they're doing a good job adapting to whatever changes we make in timeouts. Like I said, it'd be an easy game if we did the same thing every time, but we play different opponents who have different strengths and we have to change it up. The kids have done a good job finally getting comfortable with game plans changing on the fly and game plans changing for every game. I'm proud of the guys today."

##### **On changing the game plan:**

"Jalen (McDaniels) was rolling today so we went to Jalen. He hit two threes and is a great mid-range player, so we ran everything through Jalen. We put the ball in his hands and he produced. The three-point shot is double-edged. I don't know how much better Vegas could've shot the ball, but I think the difference in the game was from the foul line. We took the ball to the basket and we got to the foul line and whatever we didn't get from three-point range, we made up for on the free throw line. We did that by being aggressive, throwing the ball inside and playing a little inside out. Obviously our three-point shooting is not the same without Jordan (Schakel) on the floor, but with that being said, we made a couple of timely ones that kept the momentum going in the second half."

##### **On a style of play that allows the team to play better:**

"We're still trying to find an identity offensively. We're trying to put them in the best positions to be successful and what plays work best. I've said this all year, you go into the season saying this is what we're going to be, but once you're into the season this is what we are. So we're trying to take advantage of what they are. We're all trying to find our identity and I think we're getting closer to that. We're nowhere near we need to be yet, but we continue to move in the right direction."

##### **On how much of rebounding is technique:**

"With rebounders, there's always a fine line. You know, coaches say you have to recruit a rebounder. You can't teach it. Now, you can teach technique and box out, but rebounders, usually you don't have to say a word to them, they just go get it. They don't box out, maybe they get it, and so Jalen is as close to what we have to an instinctual rebounder, but he's so light he gets moved a lot, but he still ends up with 10 rebounds. Nathan (Mensah) is form and technique, Nolan (Narain)'s form and technique, so the form and technique guys are getting better. A couple games ago, all they were doing was hitting their man but they weren't turning and finding the ball. So it's work every day and so now they're hitting,

they're trying to find the ball and with that being said, we won the rebound battle, but we still gave up 13 offensive rebounds and I'm thinking maybe 11 in the second half. I don't know what they had at halftime, but we did not do a great job at finishing on the offensive glass. As a coach, I told them we'd outrebound them and if we did, we would win, but there's always work to be done."

#### **On correlation between threes and wins:**

"When you make a higher percentage, you've got a better chance to win. You have to shoot the three-point shot in college basketball, pro basketball, high school basketball. If you're going to be good you have to take some and you have to make some. If you're going to be really good, you have to take some and you have to make a lot of them. I don't like the ones where we're stepping back off the dribble and late shot clock. Those aren't going to go in very often. That's why I was trying to encourage assists because I know if we're passing the ball, we'll get the step-in threes. It's funny, the ones that go in are the ones that are pretty wide open, where Adam (Seiko) stepped in late or Devin (Watson) had one on the break or Jalen threw it and there wasn't anybody within six feet of him. So occasionally you're going to have to make a tough one, but we have to create more where we're just stepping in wide open and the ones we've made have been against zone. Those are the easier ones to get. We haven't found a rhythm getting them against man yet, and we have to do that. That's more driving and kicking instead of driving and shooting. That's something that we continue to work on, spacing the floor and driving for other players."

#### **On Jordan Schakel's ankle:**

"The ankle is stable, it's just swollen. There's nothing structurally with it. The timeline is when the swelling goes down and the pain subsides enough to where he can play. It could be by Air Force. I hope it's no later than San José (State), but Air Force is a possibility and San José would probably be realistic."

#### **On defense against UNLV's threes:**

"They've been shooting it, the last three games they played before us was 14, 15, and 14 threes. I think they had 13 against us, so we did a great job. We held them to one under what they've been scoring. I put on the board eight or under and they made 13 so we didn't come close to that goal. I think they had eight by halftime, but that's what they're doing now. They're shooting a high percentage, they're shooting 40-something percent from the three in the games leading up to ours, so I don't know what their percentage against us was, but they are shooting lights out from the three right now. Forty-three percent from the three against us—that's incredible. Usually a team that shoots that good from the three, you're not going to win. But we found a way to still win with a comfortable margin. I think the free throw line was the difference."

#### **San Diego State Forward Matt Mitchell**

#### **On if success is measured by how many 3-point attempts there are in a game:**

"No, not necessarily. When our shots fall from behind the arc, we just need to do something different and get a few more paint touches."

#### **On if they were surprised to have the starting line-up play with a big lead:**

"No, not at all. We just want to keep the flow of the game going and make sure we're doing the right things."

#### **On how they can build momentum off the win:**

"Stick to our game plans and stick to what we do best and keep competing. That's what we preach every day in practice to compete."

#### **On if there is a style of play that they prefer:**

"I don't think I prefer a style of play, I just like to play the game of basketball. It's always fun to see different game plans and how they play out against us. We can pretty much adapt to any game plan with the diversity of our team."

#### **San Diego State Guard Jeremy Hemsley**

#### **On how playing UNLV was different from other games:**

"Yeah, [with] UNLV, they pressure a lot so they kind of force you to go towards the rim. They were face-guarding Devin (Watson), so we really had to attack the rim and I think we did a good job of that. It really just depends on the other team's game plan. Sometimes we have to shoot the three, like Air Force—they collapse in the paint all the time and leave that three-pointer open—so it just depends on the match up with the other team."

### **On playing UNLV:**

"Those games are usually more fun and a lot more face-paced, so we already knew what to expect coming into this game. Especially me being a senior too, I already know [which] teams are going to do [which] game plans. It was definitely a more fast-paced game."

### **On McDaniel's contribution to the team:**

"You don't expect anything less from Jalen to be honest, it's just what he does. He has a nose for the ball. When the shot goes up, he usually knows where it's going to land and he plays with a lot of energy and it shows. It's no surprise to us as a team to see his recent success at all."

### **San Diego State Forward Jalen McDaniels**

### **On being the only player in the country this year with 30 points, 13 rebounds, 5 steals and 4 assists in a single game this year:**

"Speechless. You know, I was just going out there and playing but things happen. So we were just playing hard and flying around and that's what happens. I'm glad to be the only person [with that stat line]."

### **On how his strong performance has come about over his last several games:**

"Just grinding all the time, no days off. We've been doing it every day. Night, morning, it doesn't matter, it's the only thing I do. So, if you want to play this well, you have to keep working in the gym and that's what I'm doing. Every day, (we) have to be consistent and that's just my mindset."

### **On the development of the younger players in the second half of the season:**

"In practice, they always go hard. Even if they don't get it right, at least they're going hard. I feel like they're coming along just at the perfect time. AG (Aguek Arop) is a great offensive rebounder and plays hard. Adam (Seiko) [defenses] up all the time. They're just coming in at the perfect time, really."

### **On the potential of having a second half of the season similar to last season:**

"I feel like we have the talent. It's going to come down to playing 40 minutes hard each game and defensively locking up the other opponent. It starts at practice and paying attention to what the coaches are saying, and executing."

### **UNLV Head Coach Marvin Menzies**

### **On struggling to stop SDSU:**

"Today was one of those days they struggled with. You have to tip your hat to Dutch [Brian Dutcher] and the staff. They did a great job — we tried to take [Devin] Watson out of the game and face-guard him a little bit, and they drew up a lot of [isolations] for their NBA prospect [Jalen McDaniels]. He was the NBA player today. He had 17 in the first half — just made a lot of tough shots. We tried to put a smaller guy on him, but we just didn't really have the match up for him that we like. At the end of the day, it's just one of those games where you go out, you put a game plan together and sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. At the end of the day, they just beat us, and we need to understand the subtle nuances of what occurred so that we can make our adjustments going into the next game when we play them."

### **On losing despite playing hard:**

"I told them that. I said, 'Listen. Mama said there's going to be days like this. You just have to keep working and get to the next possession and the next game.' Again, you just have to give San Diego State a lot of credit. They're just really tough to beat here at home. We didn't know which San Diego State team was showing up, but unfortunately for us their A team showed up. Just thinking about the big picture with our guys — they're pretty down. They felt like they played hard, and I told them that they did play hard. The problem was that we didn't play smart at times. We let a good team get going. Unfortunately, that's going to be the outcome if you don't get enough stops. They shot 70 percent the second half. Some of that was us, and some of that was them. That's not going to happen on a regular basis, so it's unfortunate it happened tonight. We got word that our plane is disabled, so we're going to have to bus it on back. Sometimes it's like that. You can only laugh after hearing that news after kind of getting it handed to you a little bit, but you know what, tomorrow's another day. We have a quick turnaround. We have a dynamic Reno

team coming in that's top 10 in the country. It's another opportunity to grow and get better and get one in the win column. That's what we have to do. We have to go home and try to protect the house and take care of business there."

**On how to get the young guys to bounce back after a loss:**

"I think we've proven that – we've done that a couple times, and the following result was a win, but it was also done in a way this group – character usually has a resiliency attached to it, and these guys are pretty resilient. They're down. I'm not going to kid you. They're down, but they're young men that will follow my lead. They'll be ready to roll on Tuesday."

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