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SDSU Men's Basketball vs. Nevada – Preview Quotes

Feb. 18, 2019

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening statement:

"Well, we're excited for our opportunity on Wednesday, playing the No. 6 team in the country, 24-1, and in all honesty, a team capable of making a run to the Final Four. It will be a great challenge. I'm sure we will get their full attention also, having been fortunate enough to beat them twice at the end of last year. I know that we have been circled on their schedule for a long time, and we'll look forward to our opportunity to see if we can put [forth] the kind of effort needed to come out of here with a victory."

On how to bet put pressure on Nevada to put the team in the best position possible:

"We'll just have to set a defensive game plan to try to slow them down. The pace they play at is the pace they play at; we're not going to be able to change that. We just have to make things a little more difficult, maybe contest a shot or two that they take, maybe get over there and see if we can draw a charge or block a shot at the rim. They are a downhill team. They're to the basket constantly, and that's at every position. It's a great challenge because this is not a game where you're going to come out and say, 'If we stop these two set plays, we'll have a chance to win.' They're free-flowing, they're aggressive, and they're very talented and well-coached."

On playing Nevada late in the season as opposed to having them early:

"I just think the way they play – the physical nature, the aggressiveness – I think maybe the freshmen would have not been prepared for that early in the conference season. This will be a challenge. This will be a game they haven't played yet, the nature of it. I think the games under their belt – for Nathan (Mensah) and for AG (Aguek Arop) and for Adam (Seiko), the freshmen – I think this will have them better prepared. I would say the same thing last year, for Matt (Mitchell) and Jalen (McDaniels) and my sophomores, we didn't play them until the back half of the season last year. Could we have beaten them two times earlier in the year? I don't know. But we had them late, so I think whether that means we'll beat them or not, I think it will give us a better opportunity playing them late in the year than early."

On what advantage he sees for his team heading into Wednesday's game:

"Home-court [advantage]. I think we've won 12 in a row in this building in the conference. Our crowd behind us. We're playing better basketball. We're getting better defensively and in rebounding, and that will be the key to this game. We're not going to run out there and outscore them. We have to get stops. We have to find a way to slow them down, and be efficient at the offensive end against a team that is ranked, I think No. 26 in the country defensively. Manufacturing points will be difficult, too."

On how Nevada has evolved as a zone offense team:

"They've become much better, zone-offensively. Their spacing is good. They've got set plays they run against the zone. Wyoming zone them and they were super comfortable. Boise mixed zone, they were comfortable against Boise's zone. Even Colorado State played them some zone. I don't think they're rattled [against] zone or man. They're confident. They know how to space the floor. They seem aggressive no matter what defense you're playing. They're super aggressive trying to score that ball."

Senior Guard Jeremy Hemsley

On if he has a sense of how badly Nevada wants to beat them after the Aztecs beat Nevada twice last year:

"Yeah, I'm sure if it was the other way around, as soon as that game ended and the schedule came out for the next year, I would have circled that game first. I know it's going to be an intense game. They have really good players and like Coach Dutch said, they're well-coached. It's going to be fun. I expect it to just be fast-paced and really intense. It's a fact that they'll be ready for us and we know that. We all know that."

On if there's any defensive assignment in particular that he's looking forward to:

"I want the twins. The twins, I want them. I like that matchup."

On what it would say about their team if they could beat Nevada on Wednesday:

"I think it would just say we're a tough team and we're well-coached. We listen to our coach and we want to please our coach. I think that's the biggest step we've taken as a team, just listening to the coaches and everybody being on the same page. I think if we win the game, it would say that we've come a long way from the team that you guys saw in Maui. We've worked hard and this is just another game to show the work that we've put in."

Sophomore Forward Matt Mitchell

On if there's any defensive assignment in particular that he's looking forward to:

"Every single person on the roster. I look forward to guarding everybody. I don't take one person lightly and take another person as a green light. I see them as all having a green light and all being able to go and being capable players, so I look forward to stopping everybody."

On if he thinks Nevada's team is better this year or last year:

"I think they're a little bit more deadly this year. Like Coach Dutch said, they have five fifth-year seniors in the starting lineup. They have that age and the veteran-ship just to show that they're older and they've been through it. They know the game."

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