



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State Men's Basketball Press Conference Quotes

Nov. 17, 2020

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening statement:

"We are a week away from college basketball. That's exciting news. We continue to make progress on a daily basis. We are getting better, but we are going to be tested. This is probably the toughest schedule that we've played in my 20 years here. UCLA and Arizona State were picked one and two in the Pac-12, UC Irvine was picked to win the Big West, Saint Mary's and BYU were picked two and three in the WCC and the list goes on. Then we play a team that is picked in the top half of the Mountain West early when we play Colorado State twice in the second week of the season. We will be challenged right away, and I told the team, 'We have to be at our best early in the season.' We have a veteran team and that should be within our capabilities, but time will tell. We are excited to get tested here in a week against UCLA."

On the new Mountain West schedule format:

"I think the Mountain West did a good job trying to look at the top teams in the league and make sure none of them had to have all those hard games on the road. We go to UNLV and Utah State, but Boise State has to come to us. They divided them up the best they could, so I thought the Mountain West did the best with what they had to work with. I don't know if anyone feels slighted, we don't. I think the schedule is fair and balanced and we look forward to playing it."

On 2021 signee Demarshay Johnson Jr.:

"Demarshay is a dynamic athlete. He's got length and athleticism that Aztec fans are accustomed to seeing on the floor. He's a young senior, so he's got age on his side. So many of these seniors now are held back or double hold backs so even though you get a freshman some of them are 20 years old. Demarshay's young, his best basketball is ahead of him and we look forward to developing him and making him a special Aztec down the line."

On finally seeing the schedule on paper:

"It's good to see it on paper, but I don't know if it's comforting to see it on paper. It's a pretty challenging schedule. That's what we promise these kids when we recruit them. That we are going to play the best teams we can play every year and I think we've accomplished that this year. It's just disappointing that the Aztec fans aren't going to be in Viejas to enjoy those games because that's such a big part of what we do as a program. Our home winning percentage goes hand-in-hand with the attendance we've had over the years. Sellout crowds and a tough environment for the road team and we'll see if we can play well at Viejas minus all those great Aztec fans."

On Nathan Mensah returning:

"The most important thing to all of us is Nathan's health so we wanted to be extremely cautious with him and make sure the doctors did their evaluation and made their recommendations and with that done, it's great having Nathan back on the floor. In our scrimmage last Saturday, I saw something out of Nathan I hadn't seen yet which is him stepping out of the offense and play his game within it. Most guys go A to B to C and they do a good job of that and Nathan went A to C finally. He saw opportunities to attack that we didn't draw up for him and he made those plays. If he continues to do that he's going to have a great junior season."

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