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5500 CAMPANILE DRIVE, SAN DIEGO, CA 92182 | (619) 594-5547

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Brigham Young at San Diego State Postgame Quotes

Brigham Young 72, San Diego State 62

Steve Fisher Court at Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif.

Dec. 18, 2020

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"We knew this was going to be a very good game (because) it's a rivalry game and we made that clear to our kids. The one thing we put on the board that would be the key to (winning) the game is who won the rebound battle. Last year, we won the rebound battle and Provo and tonight they won the rebound battle, 40-26. That was a huge part of the game. I like the grit of my team. It is an early season game. We are going to learn from it. (Throughout the game) We did not fragment, we did not point fingers; we just kept fighting. We did not play a perfect game but we fought our way to a tie late in the second half and credit to BYU, they made winning plays in the last two minutes to give themselves a win. I am proud of my team's effort. We fought back, which is hard to do sometimes, and credit to BYU (because) they played a good game and were deserving of the win."

On the team's slow start in the first half and the second-half offensive and defensive changes:

"(Early in the game) we had some opportunities (that) we did not take advantage of. We had some shots (early on that were missed): AG (Aguek Arop) had a layup he missed; Keshad Johnson had an offensive rebound he missed; Terrell Gomez, one of our best three-point shooters, had two wide open threes (he missed). The offense can only create the shots, then we have to make them. To our credit, we hung in there, even though we were down 15 (points). We finally got some offensive rhythm. We went low post to Matt (Mitchell) in early in the second half to let him post up and either create shots for himself or others. (When) we went inside with a low-post presence, it kind of helped us. When they went big, and we went small, that's where we went to Matt (Mitchell) on the perimeter and he had a couple of threes. (When) he isolated their bigs, we started rolling (on offense) because we played that mismatch. I must do a better job getting us in a better rhythm. We (the team) need to do a better job in the first half (because) we didn't execute like we could have on some of our play calls. We got discouraged and tried to create some of our own shots and did not (instead) work within the offense. They (the team) are a good group of kids that want to play the right way and they will (learn from this loss)."

On Matt Mitchell's performance and if he has seen similar types of play from his student-athletes throughout his career:

"I have seen quite a few (great performances by players) but Matt's (Mitchell's) performance was right up there. We can take no celebration in Matt's performance because we lost the game. It was fun to watch Matt put us on his shoulders, but we did not get a win and (his performance) went for not. Down the stretch (of today's game) I told Matt 'you are the go-to guy right now, so you have to create shots for your teammates too. If you draw a double (team) you have got to get someone else a shot,' and that part of his game is where he is getting better at and growing. I am proud of Matt's effort but we did not get a win, so it is kind of all for not."

On the team's difficult early opponents and how his team is progressing:

"Every game we are playing is challenging, and now (coming up) we are playing a team that was picked ahead of them (BYU) in the WCC standings this year or right behind them in St Mary's on Tuesday. We scheduled tough games and so we knew there was a chance we were going to take some

lumps. Six games in (to the season), we are nowhere near what we need to be (to be great this season) and this is good for us. I told the team at halftime 'I don't want to learn from a loss, I would rather learn as we win, but (either way) we are going to have to fight our way back in the second half.' I told the team after the game that I am proud of all of them (for fighting back from their 15-point deficit). (For the rest of the season) if you are productive, your minutes will stay high and if you are not productive, they will drop. (That sentiment carriers) game-to-game and so when they are out there, they have to be more productive. We did not shoot the ball well (today). Jordan (Schakel) was 1-for-9 shooting, Trey (Pulliam) was 1-for-9, Terrell (Gomez) was 1-for-5, and AG (Aguék Arop) was 1-for-5. So, credit to BYU defense (for holding the team to low shooting percentages), but we must shoot the ball better. We cannot rely solely on our defense (even though) our defense was good in the second half."

San Diego State Senior Forward Matt Mitchell

On what he saw from the Brigham Young defense that led him to having a big night:

"Their defense was fanning out a little bit and giving me space to work, get to the basket and hit my shots. It seemed like there was a lid on the basket for some of my teammates, so I thought I needed to get more aggressive and shots started falling. Everyone on this team is capable to having a night like tonight."

On if he feels he can play better with the offense flowing through him at the post:

"Yes. I feel that I have a mismatch every night. It seems that there is some sort of mismatch that (can be turned to our advantage). Tonight, they went big and we went small and it worked out for us.

Brigham Young Head Coach Mark Pope

Opening statement:

San Diego State is really good. I was having these nightmares of us having zero points for the first 19 minutes of the game or something because they've only let one team score over 60 points all season long and they played a really tough schedule. They're really good, I do think there's a very, very legitimate chance they don't lose another game this season till the postseason. They're that good. So, to come in here and get out with the win, is just a tribute to our guys.

On the key to tonight's win:

Let me start with the long list of people who deserve credit. Coach Burgess' unbelievable game plan so they went to a rifle it's, it's like our hands. It's an action where they actually flash and we are supposed to get a hand up and instead of using a ball screen, they go hand off and kind of get downhill with a bunch of actions out of it. Burgess came to the table and said, 'Hey let's just chase over the top on everyone.

Matt Haarms had 10 and eight tonight, but his impact was like 50 with his rim protection. Trey Pulliam, this little point guard reminds me a lot of RayJ [Dennis] from Boise State, but when we watch them on film his mid-range game is so good, and he's so good at the rim, but these guys kept getting downhill and then Matt is just there and he's so long and it was just like nobody wanted any piece of it. Like his rim protection from 12 feet was unbelievable and I thought our guards did a great job as well as Rich Harward had a huge charge.

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