



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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Nevada at San Diego State Postgame Quotes

San Diego State 69, Nevada 67

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

Jan. 9, 2021

San Diego State Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"That was a heck of a college basketball game, both teams played extremely well. Just like the first game, it went down to the final couple of possessions and that is what good teams do, they play to the final minute or two. And fortunately for us, we came up with timely plays. Jordan (Schakel)'s three (with 36 seconds left to play). He did not shoot particularly great today, but when the game [was] on the line he bounced up and made one. Terrell Gomez bounced up made a big three with the game on the line. And then, Trey Pulliam obviously went coast to coast with four seconds on the clock and hit his best shot, which was just a runner off the glass for the victory. I am so proud of their effort and the mental toughness we displayed. We hung in there and stuck together in such a close, competitive game."

On if he was looking at calling a timeout on the final play:

"To be honest with you, I was trying to take a timeout. I know sometimes people get mad (because) they do not think I take enough timeouts and then when I did not get one, we won the game. Basketball is a game of momentum and sometimes, you can draw something up and it's not as good as what you got (in the moment). I do not mind taking it out and just going up the floor. We have done that for years, dating back to DJ Gay and the Colorado State game [Feb. 2, 2011]. (With) the current state of the game, (it is about) just trusting in your players. I had no problem, they got it out. I just wanted to make sure we attacked to the basket. and Trey did. He attacked hard to the basket and he made a really a clutch game-winning shot to get us a victory tonight."

On the final moments of the game and if their defense resembled Saturday's final-minutes defense:

"We went to switch five (all five players switching who they are guarding) the last two or three minutes of the game and they (Nevada) did a much better job (handling it). They threw it inside twice to K.J. Hymes and he made baskets and had an and-one. So, they made their adjustments [to our defense] and they really took advantage of our switch five (defensive strategy). We wanted to take (Grant) Sherfield away from that play so [someone else instead] had to beat us and K.J. (Hymes) almost [did]. The last play, we like to foul up (before a player could take a three-point shot, forcing them to shoot two free throws instead of three) at the end of the game, but this is the second game in a row where Sherfield had the ball on the bounce, trying to create space, and he's such a good player that if we run out to foul him when he's on the dribble, he's probably going to get a shot up as we foul him and get three free throws (instead of two when fouling away from the ball). I thought Trey (Pulliam) did his best to content him, but he (Sherfield) hit a big time three to take the lead for them (Nevada)."

On why he wanted to take a timeout with four seconds left to play and if this game will stick in his mind:

"We worked on a couple plays that we could run with four seconds on the clock. But I have been here long enough to know that good players make great plays and dating back to DJ Gay (and the) wins he had for us against Colorado State and UNLV. They all stick in your mind. This will stick in my mind (because of the) play Trey made with four seconds coming down the floor to win the game for us. It looked like it was going to go to overtime and Trey made the plane that won it for us."

On if the inbound play he called was designed for Nathan Mensah:

"With the ball stuck in the dead corner, I thought he would be the most apt to come and get open because of his size and usually, (the) 5 men aren't denied (the inbound play). I have great faith in Nate from the foul line, we can look at what he has done this year and he has shot a high percentage and he is good under pressure. I called the play for Nate to come and get the ball, and if they didn't trap (him) right away, I wanted to go back to Matt inbounds because he is a very good free throw shooter also, so I was fine with either Matt or Nathan going to the line."

On his big men's play throughout the night:

"It just looked like old school basketball. We threw the ball inside the entire second half. So it was either (given to) Nathan (Mensah), Matt (Mitchell), or AG (Aguek Arop). We threw it inside and they (the big men) were productive, they got baskets, (and) they kicked it out for assists. It reminded me of old Big Ten basketball, where you just pound it inside. That is what we did in the second half, we pounded it inside because we were not shooting the ball very well. We had to find another way to win, and we found it by putting the ball inside to Nate, AG and Matt."

On if the team was tired playing four games in eight days:

"You would have to ask them (the team), but I think they were tired even though we gave them the day off yesterday. They gave me everything I had. I put on the board (in the locker room before the game): mental toughness and extra effort. That's been a trademark of our program. I thought we showed that tonight."

San Diego State Senior Guard Trey Pulliam

On what was going through his mind on the game-winning shot:

"I just know I had four seconds on the clock. I mean, Coach is always talking to us about how many dribbles you can have in the amount of time you have (left), so I had four seconds and four dribbles. I just tried to get it down and get it up on the rim. I knew if I missed, Nate (Mensah) or Matt (Mitchell) would come to try and clean it up, so I just tried to get a shot off."

On if he had any intention of passing on the way down the court in the last four seconds:

"If I didn't have a shot, maybe, but I was really just trying to create something. Like I said, get it up on the rim and try to have someone else come clean it up."

On if he made a game-winning basket before and if it was the same kind of shot:

"Yeah, I hit like one or two in (junior college) . . . Not a runner, a step-back, a pull-up, but a game-winner."

San Diego State Senior Forward Matt Mitchell

On the impact of increased bench production in the second half:

"A very big difference. I think they (the reserves) came in and gave us energy. That's what we talked about at halftime as a team. Just keeping that energy high in the team huddle during timeouts and staying concentrated. So I think they did a great job coming off (the bench) and giving us energy."

On the takeaways of the past two weeks of the conference schedule:

"I think the biggest takeaway for me personally is the treatment of my body. Just over the course of these four games, I've just felt a little worn down. You just find different things to be able to get your body to feel better. Now I took a couple of those measures and I feel great. I took an ice bath and I'm good."

On whether he expects other teams to take away the perimeter game like BYU and Nevada did:

"I think is a possibility. But I know that teams have all types of versatile game plans. So moving along, whether it's the same game plan or a different game plan, I've got to be the same person. (I've) got to bring my same game, be aggressive and find the open man. I'm not going to change my game, but it's definitely something that that we'll look for in the future."

Nevada Head Coach Steve Alford

On Nevada's effort the past two games:

"I'm really proud of (the team). They battled. It stinks because we had two games that kind of ended the same way. Not just the last-second shot (by Trey Pulliam), but (Jordan) Schakel's three with time running down. I thought we defended (Schakel's three-point attempt) as well as we could have defended it. We came into their building and in both games, we had more field goals and as many if not more field goal attempts. Both games we lost at the free-throw line. Game one we lost it and then tonight, we go 12-for-15 and they go 16-for-20. You go into a place where they are picked to win (the Mountain West), they have a lot of veterans and their veterans made some really big, key plays. I'm really proud of our guys. We had some guys not have very good games and some guys stepped up. I thought K.J. (Hymes) really stepped up.

"We just did some good things. We got in foul trouble for a lot of our bigs. I thought K.J. and Robby (Robinson) were terrific. I thought they had really good games for us and that was good to see. I thought our guards battled. Grant (Sherfield) obviously had another game and hit a huge shot for us to get us in that situation."

On holding Jordan Schakel well below his scoring average:

"You look what Desmond (Cambridge) did in these two games defensively against (Jordan) Schakel, who is a prolific scorer in this league. Even with that three he makes he gets eight in (Thursday's game) and seven the next."

On Trey Pulliam's last second shot:

"There's a lot of irony because being a young team it's understanding going through things. Like when there is four seconds to go you've got to make that guy turn and we never got him to turn. I thought the shot was fairly contested. That's hard to guard because you don't want to foul. You don't want to put him on the line. He hit a really good shot. It's unfortunate, but I like our guy's effort. We've developed in the last three games. Now we have to go play well at home. It's going to be crucial to do that. Hopefully our young guys can do that."

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