



## **SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS**

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

**GOAZTECS.COM | @GOAZTECS | #GOAZTECS**

### **San Diego State Men's Basketball Press Conference**

**Nov. 8, 2021**

#### **Head Coach Brian Dutcher**

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

"Ah, back to work today. Big game against Arizona State on Thursday. Obviously, we know how talented they are. Bobby Hurley has done a good job developing his team. They have a game tonight that we will pay attention to. They've had guys out with COVID protocol, and a potential starter in (Jalen) Graham back. So I'm interested to see what they look like with him back on the roster tonight and able to play. But (they are) very dangerous offensively. They play at a fast pace, get up and down the floor, and shoot the ball. Every game is different. This one will be a lot more fast paced than the first two games we played. And we will prepare to play at that pace and get back to the friendly confines of Viejas Arena Thursday night."

##### **On the difficulty of putting together a team with so many new pieces:**

"I said as of a couple weeks ago, three or four weeks ago, I know this is going to be a good team; how soon we're good remains to be seen. We have some work to do offensively to get our players in a rhythm. Matt Bradley, Chad Baker-Mazara, some of the new pieces we have, to try to get them comfortable offensively and in positions where they can be most effective. So that's on me to find that chemistry, to find that mix between a low post game, a ball screen game, or perimeter shooting game, to put that mix together into a game plan where we're functioning at a high level and comfortable on the floor."

##### **On the team's struggles shooting from 3-point range through two games:**

"I think (it's) a (combination of several factors); taking the right ones, taking them in rhythm, having confidence to make them. I don't want to start second guessing guy's shot attempts because then they start second guessing themselves. I want (them) to shoot it with confidence. And if we can't start making a few, I might bring (SDSU football's kicker) Matt Araiza out to drop kick one in. We've got to make one, so we'll find a way to get the ball in there. Some way or another."

##### **On the play of Aguek Arop at Brigham Young:**

"Oh, he's just energy. I mean, he got in the game, and was on the floor 10 seconds into his first (shift). He fell on the hip, you know, so I couldn't play him down the stretch. I'd have had him in down the stretch (if he was available). So, I think he's doing okay. But like I've said, that's a yearlong thing with AG. If he's healthy and feeling good, we'll have him out there. But we may have to rest him again to see how he's responding to that fall took late in the second half at BYU."

**-more-**

**On the defensive play of Keith Dinwiddie Jr.:**

"Keith has become a reliable defender and that's what you would expect in our program. He's grown that part of his game, and now he's just got to get his confidence up with his jump shot and know when to take it. I think Keith will have a good year for us and hopefully, that first three will get him going a little bit here as we head into Arizona State."

**On having to prepare for different playing styles in such a short amount of time:**

"That's the key to any year. We played a slowdown game (vs. UC Riverside). Then we played at BYU who likes to run multiple sides of the floor. Now we go against Arizona State who's going to pick up (full court), look to attack on the fast break, will take open threes if they get them, and can be very dangerous. So, I'm glad we have three days to get ready for a change of pace, and a different style of play. And the one thing we've done over the years is we prepare well. So, our assistant coaches have been on it. Yesterday, I watched both games they played to get myself up to speed and we'll have three productive days of practice heading into that game."

**On the success of the program against Pac-12 teams in recent years:**

"I just think it speaks to the culture of our program. We think we can play and beat anybody we put on the schedule, and that has to be our mindset. You know, we're not putting those games on the schedule just to entertain the fans and lose. We want to win every game we play. And we're scheduling up. We're playing anybody that will play us. And I like that kind of challenge. There's great parity in basketball. You can look at any of these games around the country and if you just get caught up in the name game... 'how does this team lose to this team?' Well, if you look at their rosters and they've got returning players, and they've got talented players, they've added a great transfer, you have to dig deeper. So I'm not really surprised. Sometimes I'm like the rest of the public, (and ask) how did that happen? Then I look at the roster and well shoot, they've got players back from a really good team. So I don't think you worry about the conference or the name on the (front of the) jersey. Most people thought (when) we played UC Riverside it would be a walkover and they're a very good team. They lose to us and two nights later, they win in Tempe. So the name on the front of the jersey doesn't mean as much as getting your team ready to play no matter who you play."

**-SDSU-**