



## **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. 29, 2021**

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

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

"First of all, I'd like to congratulate Brady Hoke and Aztec football (who are) playing in the conference championship game this Saturday against Utah State. The 11-1 Aztecs. It's a big deal, and we're excited for them and wish Brady and the Aztecs all the luck in the world against Utah State on Saturday. Men's basketball, we're back on the practice floor. We have to get better, we know that. We are guarding an elite level, and we played great defense in our last game against USC. But we have to clean up our offense. We have to be more free flowing, dangerous at the offensive end and we have to rebound the basketball. So those are getting our full attention right now as we prepare for Long Beach State, a team that's more than capable of putting points on the board. I watched the first half of the UCLA game. I think it was 46-43 at halftime and they can score the basketball. So we have to slow them down and manufacture enough points to come away with the victory against them tomorrow night at Viejas Arena."

##### **On the recent play of sophomore guard Keith Dinwiddie:**

"Keith has done what all our players have done over their careers here. He's gotten really good at the defensive end. That's why he's out there, and that's why he's out there over Chad (Baker-Mazara) right now because he's been more reliable defensively. So now we need someone to step up make shots. With Adam Seiko missing the USC game, Keith had a step up and he had some good looks that I want him to take. But at some point, some of those looks have to go in so that we can manufacture enough offense to get a victory instead of a defeat in a game like that."

##### **On the possibility of seeing more of multiple sets with the bigs off the bench:**

"Josh (Tomaic) has done a good job adjusting to playing more facing the basket (in the) stretch for position. But at the same time, we've used them to backup Nate at the five. It's just a choice we make depending on who the opponent is. If we're going to go with Tahirou (Diabate) to the backup the five or Josh. Tahirou play great against Georgetown. I felt bad. We put him in the second half against USC, he gave up an offensive rebound on a missed free throw and we took him right out. That's not good for any of us. That's not good for his confidence or our handling of him in that situation and I apologize to him for that. Tahirou's very good and has provided us some really good minutes off the bench this year."

##### **On preparing for Long Beach State after playing a top-25 program like Southern California:**

"We always talk about playing into our standard, not to the opponent. So, whether we're playing USC, we have a standard we want to play to, and then we have that same standard against Long Beach. We've shown them tape where they played UCLA and they were extremely dangerous. They score the ball at a really high level. We always tell them, 'Whatever team you see

on tape is not the team you're going to play'. So I think the best version of Long Beach, even though they were a starter short against them, was against UCLA and so all our guys have to do is watch that to know how dangerous they really are."

**On what possible changes might be coming for the offense:**

"There's nothing tactical, you want to run every chance you can, because half court defenses are so good. And USC is a top 10 defense in the country. So it's not surprising we had difficulty scoring. And that's coming off the Georgetown game when we scored the ball really well. (It was) our best offensive night of the year, so sometimes the opponent dictates what success you have. But we know we want to run more than we have. We work on that every day. We want to move at a greater pace at the offensive end and that comes with being familiar with what we're trying to do. Like I've said, we have a lot of new pieces to our offense this year. We are trying to figure out where they're supposed to be first of all, and once they figure that out, if they move to those places at greater pace, our efficiency will go up."

On if making one more field goal down the stretch against Southern California could have changed the outcome of the game: "Yeah, we had to eight and could have cut it to six and that's every team in the country though. College basketball games are hard to win. We let them get enough separation in a low scoring game where 15 points was like 30 points, because both teams were taking care of the basketball. Both teams missed free throws too. We look back and say we missed three 1-and-1s in the end of the first half and we could have kept it to a one possession game at halftime. They're saying we missed a ton of free throws to create greater separation. Both teams played highly competitive games. They made more difficult shots than we did. We didn't give them open looks, but (Southern California guard Drew) Peterson made a lot of step backs. They made a lot of tough shots that we didn't make in order to win the game."

**-SDSU-**