



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

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

**Nov. 8, 2021**

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

##### **Opening Statement**

"We're ready to open the season. We've had enough time to get ready. I think we're ready to step onto our home floor in front of a great Viejas Arena crowd and start off the season. We're healthy we're battling along and we're ready to play."

##### **On UC Riverside and the offense they run:**

"Well, I told the team yesterday, I may have over scheduled for the first game. Obviously, they had a great team last year and they lost a couple pieces. But they're running a Princeton offense. They're running a scissors look and opposite look, and so they have an ability to spread the floor, play multiple sides be patient if they want. They're well coached and they execute at a high level. Usually, given a choice, I don't want to play against a Princeton team until I play Air Force. They're not 100 percent Princeton, but they have enough of those aspects in their game and will be a challenge."

##### **On how special last year's team was:**

"Incredible team, and especially I've said this for a long time, Matt (Mitchell) and Jordan (Schakel) we're here for my first four years as a head coach. What to better players to have by my side, then those two. Obviously Terrell (Gomez) coming in last year filled a need for us and had a great year, so we'll miss all three of those guys. All thousand-point scorers. All character kids and all players that have hung banners as Aztecs."

##### **On if he has a handle on this year's team yet:**

"We always talk to the team and you have a standard you want to play to. So we always try to just play to our standard no matter who we're going against. I thought our defense against Saint Katherine was pretty good, but obviously when you miss as many shots as we missed scoring is sometimes an issue. But we've had teams in the past that have struggled to score at times. We find ways to win because our defense and rebounding usually makes up for a lot of those moments. And so, hopefully we get off and rolling offensively. But if we don't, we play the kind of defense that will keep us in a game and gives us opportunities to win those games."

##### **On if the play of the bench vs. Saint Katherine concerns him:**

"That's the beauty of the bench. If they perform then I'll have a deep bench. If they continue not to produce, then the bench will be shorter, and that will be on them that won't be on me. I will continue to get players opportunities to show what they're capable of doing, and if they make the most of those minutes they'll continue to play. If they prove they're ineffective and

aren't quite ready at this point in their careers to get it done, then we'll continue to work hard in practice to develop their skill set develop their basketball IQ and then find a way to get them back out there."

### **Senior guard Trey Pulliam**

#### **On what he worked on in the offseason:**

"I've been working on my game... shooting and watching a lot of film. I've been learning more about the offense, learning about the flaws I have in my own game and just working on things that will take my game to the next level and to put myself in the best position to help his team."

#### **On filling the leadership void left by Matt Mitchell and Jordan Schakel and how he has fit into that role:**

"I picked up on stuff that Matt and Jordan did leadership wise, like talking to guys. Matt was big on talking to guys and getting guys going. That's something I've been trying to work on. Just being more vocal, leading these guys by example and just doing those type of things to keep what they started going."

#### **On if being picked to finish second in the Mountain West gives the team more motivation:**

"Definitely. We all feel like we are the best team in the conference, but at the same time we are not too worried about it, because at the end of the day we're going to have to play everybody, and everybody is going to have to play us. We will definitely be able to showcase what we can do when the time comes."

#### **On after six weeks of practice what are two things the team does well and two that need work:**

"We guard at a very high level. We have guys that will step up and score the ball. Sometimes its hard (to see the offensive effectiveness) because of how we play defense. With the new guys, things we need to still work on are chemistry, but that will come as we move into the season. We just need to learn how to play with each other."

#### **On what the team needs to do to defeat UC Riverside:**

"Just stay on the same page defensively. We're going to go into a lot of (their) actions with the scout. They run some difficult stuff and Coach has been on us heavy. They play an Air Force/Princeton style offense, so you have to be locked in for the whole shot clock."

#### **On what it was like getting back in front of fans in the exhibition game:**

"It felt good, especially after last season, being in empty gyms. It definitely felt good having the support, having the fans there, playing in front of The Show. We got to see our old grandma back in the gym, so it was good to see everyone."

### **Senior guard Matt Bradley**

#### **On being included on the Naismith Award Watch List:**

"You know, these past three years I've put in a lot of work up at Cal. It didn't necessarily show from a team standpoint, but individually, you know I had decent success when it came to scoring or doing whatever. That attracts this type of recognition, but I'm really looking forward to this year, not just getting better as a player, but being on a team where we are going to be really successful."

**On what he has learned about himself and the team in the UCLA scrimmage and last week's exhibition game:**

"I definitely learned that going against each other in practice is way different than when it comes to a natural game day. Competing against Trey (Pulliam), Keshad (Johnson), Adam (Seiko) you know, everybody on the team has been really tough when it comes to the scoring and just playing.

"It felt a lot easier going against UCLA, from an offensive standpoint, and especially Saint Katherine. Our defense is special especially since I never really faced it prior to coming here to San Diego State. So, I think if we just keep pushing each other in practice, that's how we should all feel when it comes game day. It should be a lot easier."

**On if taking himself out early against Saint Katherine was a sign he needs to get in better shape:**

"Yeah, I think just throughout the season I'm going to get in better shape. It's early in the season, and I've put in a lot of work but, I think as it wears on, I'll get into better shape. But also, you know (it was) just my adrenaline pumping, too. I was very excited for that first game; you know just seeing the crowd and just wearing the Aztec jersey for the first time.

"I was really anxious to get out there, you know sweating and going up and down for four minutes really felt like 16 due to the circumstances. So, I think getting the first game jitters out the way will also help show I'm in better shape than what I showed."

**On what he thinks the potential of the team is this season:**

"I'm not sure what it is going to look like, but I know at the end of the season, when we look back on the year we have, we're going to be very pleased with the results. You know something you can't teach is experience. You got a lot of guys in here that are older. It's my fourth year and we've got some fifth-year guys and we've got some people that have been in the program for multiple years. So, when you've got that type of age and leadership, I think we'll be able to combat conflict very well and continue to get better."

**-SDSU-**