



SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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San Diego State Men's Basketball Press Conference Excerpts

Jan. 10, 2022

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"Well, obviously we're coming off a really nice victory at home against Colorado State. We played well at both ends of the floor. Our defense sets the tone for what we do. Matt Bradley had a breakout game offensively, was really hard to deal with, scored at all three levels, made the three, shot the mid-range and then took them into that mid-post area. He was really hard to guard. We got contributions from a lot of players. I think we had five players in double figures. We played the game the right way and I was very encouraged after that game. We're looking forward to getting Adam Seiko and Joshua Tomaic back here in the near future. Hopefully Seiko today, Josh to follow.

"We have been getting ready to play Wyoming. We didn't practice yet but have been getting ready for that game. Coaches had watched a lot of tape on Sunday getting ready for today's practice. Now that game has been postponed due to COVID concerns in the Wyoming program. So, we'll see what it is. We tested today. We're not immune to it. Hopefully we continue to stay healthy. If we're healthy, then we'll see what the Mountain West has in store for us. We know we go to New Mexico on Saturday. If there's a game between now and then, I can't answer that right now. I think a lot has to do with how we progress through testing today. But I was encouraged by the way we played and think we're making steps forward."

On what the team will do this week with no game on Wednesday:

"Today we'll just kind of try to get ourselves better. We don't have an opponent at this point. And it's too early to start getting ready for New Mexico. So, we'll get ourselves better today on the practice floor. We'll see what the results of our testing are. What bodies we have available. Obviously, we've been affected this year too, but we've always had enough players to play. So, we'll see what it is later tonight or early tomorrow morning, see where we stand and then let the conference decide what is best for everybody."

On where he feels the team is at this point:

"I think we're going to get better. I think we're just scratching (the surface of) what we're going to be and we get (Adam) Seiko back. We get Josh (Tomaic) back. We keep healthy and we get at full strength, then I think we'll have a chance to be a pretty good team. So, our best basketball still ahead of us in my opinion."

On what leads to better offensive production:

"I think it's the points that coaches don't have to manufacture. I think we have to run better, get the ball ahead and attack early, get early opportunities. And then offensive rebounding, which I think is our biggest area of growth right now. We're

playing bigger right now. So, we have AG (Aguek Arop) and Keshad (Johnson) and Nate (Mensah) out there together and Tahirou (Diabate) with those guys. I think we're dangerous on the offensive glass. Matt Bradley's getting to the offensive glass. And those are points that coaches don't draw up. You just go get the ball. You pursue the ball, and you get put back opportunities. I always say 'if you have to beat somebody strictly in the half court, it's hard to win games' and so we have to become better at running. I think we are. We have to be better on the offensive glass and I think we're getting better there. So those two areas will lead to better offensive performance."

On the importance of Aguek Arop:

"He's the unsung hero of the program. What he does is not going to get him the conference Player of the Week. It's not going to get him first-team all-conference, but it's going to win us a ton of games. So, he is incredibly important to what we do. He makes game-winning plays every time he's on the floor and we're a much better team when he's out there."

Senior Guard Matt Bradley

On what it means to him to be Mountain West Player of the Week:

"It means a lot, you know. (There are) a lot of great teams in this conference with great players. To be named the best performance amongst (everyone) that played, it's a true honor and, you know, shows I've gotta stay faithful to the grind and keep working and trust my team. So, I'm very grateful for it."

On how he stays focused with all the postponements in the last two weeks:

"Yeah, all this going on, you know, it happened last season too. But every team in the country has to deal with the uncertainty of when to play and so this is nothing new. But we remain focused. We understand that as long as our teams is feeling good, we can get in the gym and practice, we're going to lock in and do what we need to do. So, I think we're just looking forward to the next game."

On how the team has been able to overcome its injury issues:

"Coach always says regardless of who's out there, we're capable of winning games. And our defense is a big (part) to that and I think any guy can step up offensively when needed. So, I think (every) guy on the team feels comfortable stepping into a position when they need to."

On the pride the team takes in its defensive performances:

"Yeah, it's something that I haven't experienced before or seen. I was just thinking I'd hate to come and play us, whether in our home or away we play defense. We take great pride in it. We don't just give people opportunities to score and it's not just individually, it's as a team. Whether a player is really good, or they have a team full of great players, we lock in on every individual and we help each other out. It's what separates San Diego State, for sure."