



## SAN DIEGO STATE AZTECS MEDIA RELATIONS

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### San Diego State vs. Nevada Postgame Quotes

Viejas Arena | San Diego, Calif.

Feb. 6, 2022

### Brian Dutcher, San Diego State head coach

#### Opening statement:

"That was a hard game. I told the team after the game the Mountain West is no joke. This conference has so much parity, so much toughness. I watched their game against Fresno State, and I called Steve [Alford] last night and said, 'Steve, your team plays so hard, especially minus Sheffield and Washington.' They're down two starters, but I just told him how hard they competed against Fresno State. I told our team that this team coming in plays hard. So, we have to play hard. This is too hard playing teams, and it's going to be a fist fight because both teams are going on short rest. Our advantage was being at home, while they've been on the road for three straight games. I can't believe how bad Nevada must feel, but how hard they play. It took a great effort on our part to play as hard and find ways to win the game. This is just two good college basketball teams going at each other on short rest and I thought both teams played with great character and toughness."

#### On finding a consistent scorer to pair with Matt Bradley:

"Trey got back in an offensive rhythm today. So even though he didn't end up in double figures, I think they ducked under a ball screen and then he made a three. They went over [a screen] and he had a mid-range pull up. So, I thought Trey's offense took a step forward from where it's been. Lamont is playing good downhill. So, it may not be another 20-point scorer, it might be Josh [Tomaic] stepping in and just providing enough points. AG didn't play, so we lose something when he's not out there. But I'll say to you, Josh was fantastic. Here's a guy that didn't play much against Colorado State. He didn't find a way to sulk and pout. He had himself ready when his number was called, and he was on fresh legs today because he didn't play a lot of minutes at Colorado State. I think his fresh legs showed in the game today. He was quicker to the ball, quicker to the roll and quicker when running the floor. So, it's by committee right now. Matt is Matt and then we got to find someone else that has a good night with him, so we can put up enough points to find a way to win a game."

#### On the managing the pressure Matt Bradley has to score:

"Matt works for everything he gets. Everybody knows he's shooting the ball, so it's not like he's a surprise and he's a guy that pops up and gets 26 [points]. He does it every game and that's always the way he's played though. We knew that when we got him. He creates his own shot off the dribble. It's something he's been doing since he was in high school. This is just him being him and playing his game at a high level. We saw off a ball screen that they overhelped and he dropped a little pocket pass for a layup, so he's a good playmaker too. Matt is just a good all-around player and I think we can all see he's more comfortable. His comfort level is way higher than it was at the start of the year and he's dribbling less and is more efficient at getting the shots he's getting. Matt was sensational and we need him to be so that's a lot of pressure, but I think that's the pressure he wanted when he came here."

#### On the full court press:

"We were trying to wear Blackshear down. He's not a true point guard, although he does a great job at the point. We were just trying to press to wear their legs out, so that we could have a run. I thought maybe part of the reason we had the run in the first half is they kind of got tired. That's

a lot of tax on a body, to have to go to Fresno travel, here and then play here. So, we weren't creating turnovers. We were just trying to create a tempo that would fire them out as the game went on."

## **Matt Bradley, San Diego State senior guard**

### **On what he said to the team after the turnover with just over a minute to play:**

"I said we just need to win this game. You know, regardless of what the situation was, we just need to pull out a win. We're in the best defensive team in the country and were on the defensive end. We knew we should feel comfortable be on that side of the ball."

### **On what if he feels he has to take on more offensively toward the end of games:**

"I feel pretty confident regardless of who's making shots in the moment. If I put them in a position to score the ball like I did with Keshad (Johnson) or Joshua (Tomaic) just on like a pick and roll I really have to take accountability on myself. If I'm not shooting the ball and if I'm taking as many dribbles as I am, I should find somebody wide open. Which I try to do. I think before the second half started, I had a couple of turnovers that kind of made me refocus, but late in the game, I understand either I'm going to get a good look or hopefully I should get my team a one."

## **Joshua Tomaic, San Diego State senior forward**

### **On if he is more comfortable at the four or five:**

"I can play any position and the coaches know that back in my old days, I was more comfortable playing outside. I was more comfortable playing facing the basket and I was more of a perimeter player when I was in Spain. So, they know that, and they also believe that I still have that in me, and they try to bring that out. So, it was kind of like a mutual thing and knowing that maybe in different game situations, I can rotate to the five then I can rotate to the four."

## **Nevada Head Coach Steve Alford**

### **Opening Statement:**

"I told them afterwards I'm super proud. Nobody's more competitive than I am. I can't stand losing, and I always want them to understand that and feel the hurt of losses. But we just got better every game on this trip. I told them that this has been a brutally difficult trail and we don't have any wins to show for it. But I said I'm so I'm proud of you all because we've got guys playing different roles, different minutes. Teams know that (we're) without a true point guard (and they're) coming at us even more and more and I just think our guys have handled things really well. The other difference in this game was the foul line. They got 17 points the line we got seven. We shot nine free throws. So I just thought we battled and did a lot of good things. I liked how we guarded, I liked our shot selection and we made 10 threes. We haven't done that in a long, long time. I just thought that there were great strides on this trip. Obviously, we've got a tough week (ahead of us). We've got a home game that's going to happen within 48 hours against very, very good Colorado State team then we have to go on the road and play maybe the hottest team in the league at Utah State. So it doesn't get any easier. But I told them that (if) you keep playing that hard with that kind of energy with that kind of enthusiasm, the wins will come."

### **On if his team played with a chip on its shoulder today:**

"I think what you've seen in the last two or three games, to me, it's more joy. They're appreciating the time that they get on the court (and) not taking it for granted. Sometimes I think athletes get a little comfortable and you forget that there are so many people that love would love to be in their position. I told them that. Like I'm 57 years old. I would give anything to be back between those lines, driving past people. That was fun. That was the time of my life and I don't get that back. So when you have it, enjoy it, smile, make the most of it, I think we've got kind of a quiet group, we're kind of an inexperienced group and they're starting to learn that. I thought there was much more joy on this trip of just how to play and how hard to play. Now we have to get a little smarter. But that's where lack of experience comes in. understanding how to play and time and score and those type of things. You just got to get more and more experienced, but I can't fault their effort."

**On San Diego State's defense:**

"Well, that team's the No. 2 defense in the country for a reason. We weren't going to score 22 (points) in the next five minutes (after taking a 22-9 lead in the first half). In fact, they held us to two points over maybe the next 10 minutes of the half. Very, very good defensive team. Very athletic, very long. Play very hard. (Brian Dutcher's) teams have always been elite defending teams. I just thought we did a good job of making sure we started the game. You know, this a team (Nevada) that hasn't made a lot of shots, and so our confidence was probably at its highest, and it showed me they grew a little bit because we came into this place, a tough place to play (against) a very, very good, very good elite defensive team and we made 10 threes. If we got the line a little bit more, who knows? Because I really thought that was the difference in the game."

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