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San Diego State Men's Basketball Press Conference Nov. 8, 2023

Head Coach Brian Dutcher

Opening Statement:

"Well, I must need my head examined. We're going to a place we're 4 - 30 over San Diego State's career in basketball at BYU, but we're going. I like the game; I like the rivalry. I know when they come here, the building's going to be full. When we go there, they'll have 21,000. It'll be electric. Now we haven't had a lot of success because both teams are really good and it's hard to get a road win but we're going to try going to Provo and find a way to play good basketball and escape with a win somehow."

On game vs. Cal State Fullerton:

"Yeah, we really shared the ball the last game. We knew that's what we'd have to do. When we drove, they were going to collapse the floor and we did a good job of following the scouting report and kicking out for open shots and like I said, I wish we had a shot better from three. We took 31 of them. Micah was obviously hot, and Reese made enough but some coaches go into a game saying they want to shoot 30 threes a game. I'm not saying that. But it seems to be happening. We'll see what that is going forward for us if we're able to make it up. If we do, we're going to be really good."

On the future of the matchup vs. BYU:

"Obviously it's a game we want to play but now that they're in the Big 12, once they hit conference, it's murderer's row all the way through it. They don't need as many quality non-conference games, but I think they appreciate the rivalry as well over the years and I've talked to Coach Pope about continuing it. I'll get in there and we'll talk about it. You know, maybe it's a game they feel is value to them still, even though they have a tough Big 12 schedule that this is still a game worth playing."

On scheduling non-conference rivalry games:

"Yeah, there's no room. The more conference games everybody plays, there's less room for these out of conference type battles. We're fortunate because we're in San Diego, people still want to come here. With what we've done, they know it's going to be a quality game. It's not going to be a bad loss. Everybody's trying to avoid a bad loss. We're scrambling to find teams that are willing to play us, but they're getting farther and fewer between as we all know."

On Jaedon LeDee's progression from 2022 to 2023:

"Jaedon was ready to do this last year, I wouldn't let him. He was going too fast. I always said he was just scratching the surface of what he's going to be. He was capable of doing this last year, but I had other guys capable of doing it too. And I just

thought he pressed too hard. He's playing more within himself. He's a very good passer. We all know based on what he did in the opening game. Moving forward, he's going to see constant double teams, whether it's on the drive, in the post, he's going to draw a second defender and the key to being a great player is finding someone when you draw the second defender. I think he's more than capable of doing this."

On the return of Jaedon LeDee:

"Yeah, I'm just happy the NFL didn't try to lure him away, forget the NBA. Jaedon's a talent, and I think just because he'd already had two stops, that I don't think he was looking to leave again. And he could have probably got a lot more NIL somewhere else and probably could have improved his position that way but. Jaedon is a straight A student. He's on his way to getting his MBA, and he's a terrific player. Jaedon's future is bright leaving San Diego State whether it's a long professional career in basketball or jumping into the business world. I mean, he's an outstanding young man and deserving of all he gets in life."

On the challenging BYU environment:

"It's obviously a combination. They'll have 21,000 in the building. It's a crazy environment. It's at altitude. It's against really good players. You know, it's not a system. They play the right way. They play fast, faster at home than anybody in the country. They're going to take 30 threes and we got to hope they don't make ten or 12 of them or it's going to be a long night."

On moving on from last season:

"I could talk about last year every day. It was so much fun, but I'm still realistic enough to know that this year is the one we're playing right now. This team hasn't lost focus of that through preseason leading up into the opening game. They were focused, they're getting better every day. New guys are catching up. And so as much as we've enjoyed celebrating that we'll continue to celebrate it. We're focused on this year. I think we saw that the way we played."

On the qualities of a "good player":

"Really good players know; they're not going to go to the NBA and be the man. It's about playing with other players. The more he's able to show he's capable and doing that, the more value he'll bring to his NBA resume. That's anybody on the team. Nobody goes in there as the star of the team. They have to play the right way. They have to drive, kick, share the ball, be in the right space, guard at a high level to get your foot in the door and then what happens after that is part of the journey. You have to play the right way. We play the right way here."

On Micah Parrish playing a lot of minutes while in foul trouble:

"It's case by case by case. We feel a veteran is able to play with more fouls. They're more disciplined and smart enough not to get the extra one. Obviously, Micah played the entire game and didn't foul out and that's the key and that's going to be for everybody that's on Lamont [Butler], Jaedon, Darrion [Trammell], Micah. Those are all guys that have played enough that they're going to have to play with two or three fouls sometimes and be protective of bad ones."

On BYU's returning players:

"I'm sure there are a lot like us, they look at the roster and say, "Is that guy back again?" Spencer Johnson is back again. Knell. Traore. I mean, they got all these guys back again, and it's like, how is this even possible? They're talented, they're well coached and they're experienced. It's a big jump to go to the Big 12. And I think they've got a team that's capable of jumping into that league and competing right away. It won't be easy, but they're about the right things. They play the right way, and they'll have a chance."

On if the team will press against BYU's offense:

"Most teams, we like to pick up full court press and I'm sure we'll try that in time. But they get it in and up the floor so fast, maybe faster than we even get our press set. That'll be kind of adjusting as they go if we can slow him down a little bit with the press. We'd love to do it but that remains to be seen."

Junior Guard Reese Waters

On his first experience playing a game in Viejas:

"It was great. I had a lot of fun. Thank you for the support. I've played in games where there are a lot of people but that was by far one of my favorites."

On what made the Viejas atmosphere different from other games:

"The capacity of how everybody was pregame. I had family and friends come from Los Angeles, so it was cool. Everyone was supporting every single play, every defensive play."

On his comfortability playing offense and defense:

"Pretty comfortable. At times you get uncomfortable when you get tired. You're going to get fatigued but I had a lot of fun. For me it was something that I think I can do."

On what it's like to play with and against Jaedon in practice:

"If you're on his team, you're great with it because either you're going to get fouled and he's going to score. Or he's going to get you the ball. Playing against him, you hate him. Every time you know it's going to be a foul or a bucket."

On the challenge of going on the road:

"What I've been told is that it's pretty hard to win there. I think anytime you step into an opponent's building, it's going to be hard to win. They have their fans there. Especially if you're playing against San Diego State. We all know that we have a chip on our shoulder. We just have to go in there and just play our game. Just play as hard as a team."

On if there's any non-conference game that he's looking forward to:

"I'm really looking forward to every game. There's not one that I look at and I'm marking on my calendar. I'm waiting for every game to take my opportunity. I'm really blessed to be in this position."

On if it's important to have big non-conference games:

"As a player, like for myself, as a competitor, I look at every game. I don't try to look at any game as bigger than any other games because then I think you're weighing your opponent's skill. I'm really excited to play though."

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