

Mountain West Men's Basketball Championship

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

San Diego State Aztecs

Brian Dutcher

Nick Boyd

Jared Coleman-Jones

Postgame Press Conference

Boise State 62, San Diego State 52

BRIAN DUTCHER: My thoughts on today are right before tip, I had my third granddaughter born back in San Diego, so I'm happy about that. At least something makes you happy.

The game, if I were just to read the numbers, defensively, our opponent shot 33 percent from the field and 27 percent from three. I think we'd have a pretty good chance to win. But the thing we put on the board before the game and the thing we said at halftime had to happen is we had to rebound. Because San Diego State and Boise, always comes down to rebounding, and I think that's the key to the game.

Those second-chance opportunities were the difference in the game, and we didn't get enough of them. So, we missed shots and didn't get second-chance opportunities, and they missed shots and found ways to run down long rebounds. You shoot 40 threes, there are going to be a lot of long rebounds. So, then it's just try to beat them to that rebound, run it down, get there before they get there. There were some around the glass we didn't get.

But at the end of the day, it came down to rebounding, and that was the difference.

Q. Nick and Jared, this is your last season for the team, and just kind of how hard you've worked individually and the chemistry you've built?

NICK BOYD: You're making it sound like this year is over or something. No, but it's been fun. Obviously, coming in here new, a bunch of different guys on the team from all over the place, a lot of freshmen, a lot of sophomores,



guys stepping into bigger roles. Outside looking in, I'm amazed by their growth as an older guy, and I'm positive -- I know we've still got basketball to play, so I'm just looking forward to getting to the postseason and having more fun with them.

JARED COLEMAN-JONES: Yeah, definitely. Just piggybacking off what Nick said, it's a great opportunity to play with some young guys and really just see them grow all year. To be in my last year, it's great to be able to just see how far I can take my game in a new environment, step into new roles, step into more expectations. It's fun. It's great to be able to just play basketball and play basketball at this level.

Q. Nick, what would be your sales pitch on San Diego State to get into the NCAA Tournament?

NICK BOYD: Man, I'd just say, you can just go from just our resume as a team. We did what we had to do in the non-conference, handled business, came to the Mountain West league, play where a lot of people thought it was down, but you see now we've got like five teams fighting to get in there.

On top of that, we had to beat a team three times, which isn't easy. But at the same time, no excuses. But beating them three times -- you see what we did in the non-conference, and that would be why I think we should be in.

Q. Obviously, the season isn't over. You will play in the postseason. But it will either be the NIT or the NCAA Tournament. Given the expectations of this program, is it a failure if you don't make the NCAA Tournament? Is that how you guys view it, knowing how many times this program has been? Or is this season a success if you make the NIT?

NICK BOYD: I mean, I wouldn't say it's a failure. You can ask a bunch of teams around the country how hard it is to play postseason basketball. That's not an easy thing. Like you said, the program, those around postseason basketball, like it's nothing, but if you ask a bunch of teams

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around the country, it's not easy to play postseason basketball.

For our group, we're talented. We're talented to be in the tournament, whether the NIT or the March Madness tournament, I'm going to be happy, and I'm grateful to have the opportunity to have more games with this team and keep building to something special.

JARED COLEMAN-JONES: Definitely I'm grateful to be able to be considered for any postseason, but at the same time, I wouldn't call it a failure. I think it's all about perspective. Once again, we have a really young team, but at the same time, guys are growing. You can throw Heidi in there. You can throw BJ in there. Guys who have really stepped into their roles and grown and are playing way better and doing better things. I wouldn't call it a failure, but at the same time, it was a goal, and hopefully, we can still get in there.

Q. Jared, even though you didn't have your teammate Magoon out there, Boise State still credited your defense for being an elite shot blocking team, especially inside the arc. Did you expect Boise State to shoot 40 threes out there today?

JARED COLEMAN-JONES: I didn't, honestly. But I talked to them for identifying what the crux was on our team. Cardenas and some of those guys were finding switches and pulling their shots when they got their shots, and they were hitting them. It's just tough to guard that sometimes, but we've got to tip our hats to them.

Q. The second-chance points, the 18 offensive rebounds, I know Coach touched on it, but obviously, you knew that was something that when we win, they're doing that well. How frustrating was that to see them get some huge buckets on put-backs?

NICK BOYD: Yeah, Coach touched on it. It's on us to do something about it. Very frustrating. We just didn't execute in that aspect of the game, and it ultimately cost us. They shot 40 threes. They didn't make a lot of them, but they got a lot of them back. When you do things like that, you're playing with fire, and that's where we are right now.

Q. Coach, Leon Rice was just talking about how you guys were the more physical team in the first half, but then he said they were the more physical team in the second half. Would you agree with that, and what do you think went wrong in the second half?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, both teams are physical. That was the main thing. It's like when we played New Mexico

the second time. We felt like we got pushed around in the pit, and we beat them twice so I'm sure like they felt they needed to be more physical, and they were. Most of that happens on the glass. They did a good job rebounding the ball and running it down, and there were short ones where we didn't hit body, and there were long ones they beat us to, and the offensive rebounding was the difference in the game.

Our numbers are great, defensive numbers. 33 percent from the field and 27 from three, you're going to win those games. But they ran them down and got more shots than us, I think nine more shots and made four more threes, and that was the difference in the game.

Q. You've said that you can either try to teach rebounding or you just have to go get a rebounder who knows how to rebound, just innate. Going through this experience, so much of the focus with looking towards next season has been retaining this roster, but going through this experience again tonight, is it just hard in your thoughts that you have to go get a rebounder in the portal?

BRIAN DUTCHER: I think we had a rebounder. Unfortunately, he hasn't played the last six games. His name is Magoon Gwath, and he was Freshman of the Year in the Mountain West. First Defensive Player of the Year. We've done a good job playing without him. It's not easy but we don't make excuses, but obviously everybody knows we're a better team with him on the floor.

We have a rebounder, and we were hoping to use him this weekend. He warmed up, was not able to go, said it felt good, pain-free, but we always err on the side of caution. So, our intention is to have him ready for the first game in postseason, so whether it's the NCAA Tournament or not, time will tell, but I think everybody would fear playing the Aztecs with the Freshman of the Year on the court.

Q. This was a remarkable streak of 17 straight seasons winning the quarterfinal game and playing on the Friday night in seven straight championship games. Talk a little bit about the program and how consistent success has played a role in everything over the past few years.

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, we play our best basketball in March. That's what we always do. This is my first time -- this is my eighth time, and I've been in the championship game seven times. Unfortunately, I'm 3-4, but I've made the game. This is the first time we've bowed out early, and it's unfortunate, but that's basketball.

We lost to a very good team, a team that we have great



rivalry with, a team that is always hard fought. We know each other. It's a good rivalry. That's the thing I like best about the Boise rivalry, is that it's good. Teams respect each other. There's not a lot of trash talking. It's just two teams playing hard, and they played harder than us on the glass tonight, and that's why they got the win.

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