

Mountain West Men's Basketball Championship

Saturday, March 14, 2026

Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

Thomas & Mack Center

San Diego State Aztecs

Coach Brian Dutcher

Magoon Gwath

BJ Davis

Postgame Press Conference

San Diego State 64, New Mexico 62

THE MODERATOR: For San Diego State we have student-athletes Magoon Gwath, BJ Davis, Coach Brian Dutcher. Coach, if we can get your thoughts?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Just another epic battle between San Diego State and New Mexico. All three games were that way this year. We made a timely basket to beat them at our place, they got us at their place, and then this was an epic battle between the two teams that have the most Mountain West titles between us.

Lots of credit to New Mexico, Coach Olen and his staff. That is a really, really good basketball team. We had to play very well to win. I thought our defense was as good as it's been, you know.

Rebounding is rebounding. Usually a guy gets 10 rebounds you're mad, but Buljan had 18 and 16 against us this year, so 10 is pretty good.

With that said, rebounding was the difference in the game. They still had 20 offensive rebounds, but we had the margin at three. They're a very good rebounding team. We had enough rebounding and good hard-nosed defense and found a way to win.

BJ made an important play. We just give him space at the end of the game and he creates his own shot. He's very good at it. He had a three at the end of the New Mexico game that didn't go in, but it doesn't change our mind. We want it in his hands at the end of the game with the game on the line.

THE MODERATOR: Questions for the student-athletes.



Q. BJ, can you just take us through that last play and the trust of the coach to have it in your hands?

BJ DAVIS: Yeah, they scored and it was about 20 seconds on the clock. We knew we needed one shot, so just kind of waited until the time went down. Wanted to drive to the basket; didn't really want to shoot. You kind of put that pressure on the defense and the ref, so just drove to the basket and made a bucket.

Q. 17 points for you tonight, including that big three from the corner to put you guys up two possessions. What worked so well for you tonight?

MAGOON GWATH: I feel like I just went out there, I played hard. I didn't press my game too much. Credit to my teammates for finding me for some good looks. Yeah, I just played harder.

Q. BJ, there's no better representation for the Mountain West Conference than San Diego State versus New Mexico. Can you talk about the rivalry you've had over the years and what will happen in the Pac-12 next season?

BJ DAVIS: The rivalry has been great. Ever since I've been here at San Diego it's always been good competition with New Mexico. They've always been a really good program and the games always come down to this when we play them. It's just a credit to them with and what they do over there.

Q. For both players, BJ, for the guards obviously the game plan, Jake Hall is not going to beat us; and Magoon it wasn't going to be Buljan. Every time you got the ball, there were two bodies on him, and for the guards on the exterior you guys chased Jake everywhere. Can you guys talk about the defensive game plan and how you executed that?

MAGOON GWATH: Oh, yeah. For Buljan, you know, he killed us at New Mexico. Both games really. He had double-doubles both games, and he had 18 the last one. I



think, like, 14 the first game. We just eliminated him off the glass.

That was our main focus. Two guys boxing out if we had to. Trying to stay disciplined on him. Wall up. See if he can finish over us or around us. Worked out well.

BJ DAVIS: For Jake Hall Coach told us we got to respect the scout. I feel like we did a good job with that tonight, just really understanding who he is as a player and the type of attention you have to have while guarding him.

Q. The offensive side of the ball you scored efficiently and pulled down a couple offensive rebounds. Can you just assess how you were able to get positioning down low?

MAGOON GWATH: I was just screening and rolling hard and just finding opportunities to duck in or get some offensive rebounds back side whenever the guards would switch off, because we knew they were switching four, so there would be a guard on me, and I would just stand next to the basket, box out, and try to get the rebound.

Q. BJ, you've had success in that situation, mostly late in the first half. You had the same thing today in the first half. What did you see in their defense? Because both times you drove down the right side. Did you see something? Why do you think you have so much success in those situations?

BJ DAVIS: I seen a little opening, so just wanted to attack the space. I seen an empty space. I think it's just growing up, you know, you always envision those type of scenarios when you're just out there by yourself, you know, just three, two, one, those type of scenarios.

I feel like it's just a testament to all the work that we've put in. I can't do it without my teammates being in the right spot and space out so I can get a look like that.

So, yeah, it's just all about the confidence, and you know, not really trying to think your way into it.

Q. This is for both Magoon and BJ. 14 of the 17 fastbreak points scored by the Aztecs tonight were in the first half. Describe to me playing in such a fast-paced game that's also a high-stakes game for both; like what do you guys --

MAGOON GWATH: We emphasize in practice we got to find a way to get easy baskets, offensive rebounds, and in transition. We focus on getting the defensive rebound, and it was just running hard and put rim pressure on. It allowed other guys to get transition threes. Or if they didn't pick up

the rim, we were able to finish at the rim, so...

BJ DAVIS: I think, yeah, just rebounding and just running, trying to get easy looks, trying to get the easy transition baskets. Yeah, just bot to keep rebounding.

It was a fast-paced game on both sides. They got fast players, and we got some fast players too, so it was a good game on both sides.

Q. It's a midnight finish right here right now. Game is at 3:00 tomorrow. How hard is that as a turnaround knowing you are playing the No. 1 team in the league with a chance to go to the NCAA Finals?

BJ DAVIS: I wouldn't consider that too hard. I feel like all of our guys played AAU growing up, so this is just another one of those things where you got to just be mind over matter.

I feel like we got the right group for that. I don't think we're going to wake up tomorrow like, oh, you know, sore. We don't got no time for that, so just wake up and get ready to handle business.

THE MODERATOR: We'll dismiss the student-athletes. Questions for Coach.

Q. You kind of talked with it already, but New Mexico had 20 offensive rebounds, only nine second-chance points. You talked about what you did to limit Colorado State and getting looks inside, but it's one thing to limit those looks initially, but another thing to limit the second chance points, right?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, I thought Magoon's length was really important. They got offensive rebounds, but he has a length about him where he's harder to finish over, and he did a good job being disciplined and just walling up and using that length to his advantage.

So 20 offensive rebounds is more than we get in a season, and they got it in a game. They're a good rebounding team. So they didn't lead to as many points as they probably could have, and that was fortunate for us.

Q. Can you talk about Magoon's performance both on the offensive and defensive side of the ball?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, Magoon, he's getting a rhythm about him again. I mean, he's been hurt, and he's finally seems like he's in good health. He's in a good place physically and mentally.

Having him this time of the year playing this way gives us a

lot better chance to be successful.

Q. Coach, a lot of the bracketology showed San Diego State and New Mexico as the next four out going into this game, which would make it pretty clear the loser of the game probably not going to get an at-large berth. In your opinion, were those two NCAA Tournament teams out there today?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, the Mountain West is -- like I said, the best thing about the Mountain West is the parity. We shouldn't be punished because we have a lot of good teams. You know, there's not three at the top and everybody else is bad.

This team is 8, 9 teams deep and so it's hard to win in this conference. We finish a game out at first in the regular season, and we're playing for the postseason championship tomorrow, so we've had a pretty good season.

I don't like commenting on anybody other than my own team because I don't watch these other teams, but we put a good season together that's worthy of a real hard look by the NCAA committee. I think we got a chance to be a tournament team, so hopefully we can take all doubt out of the way and win tomorrow and make sure that happens.

I think we've got a good basketball team.

Q. The job that Coach Olen has done after going from UCSD to New Mexico, was New Mexico as good as you thought they would be or has Olen really surprised you in what he has done at New Mexico in one year?

BRIAN DUTCHER: He's a really good coach. These are kids I've watched forever. I watched Luke play at Saint and Point Loma. These are good San Diego players. It's doubly important for all of us, you know?

It was a hard-fought game. I think the unsung here for the game is Reese Waters. He's the one that was primarily in charge of staying on Hall. He did an elite job. Coach Lester told him at halftime, don't get frustrated. He said, offensively, Reese, you're the MVP of the game right now. You are where you're supposed to be at the defensive end, and we wouldn't be in the shape we're in without that.

Credit to Reese who didn't put up a lot of points, but played maybe his best defensive game of the year.

Q. In the second half Miles Heide went to the locker room with a left hand injury, came back out with a little bit of a brace on. Was he able to come back into the game, or was he ruled out?

BRIAN DUTCHER: To be determined, so we'll have to wait and see.

Q. Going back to Reese, how was your approach to Jake Hall tonight different than the previous two games? What was the plan other than obviously you had a bigger body on him?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Just show him the utmost respect that he deserves. First-Team All-Conference player. New Mexico's leading scorer. Elite multi-level player. We showed him the respect he deserved. We stayed engaged. We didn't lose him. We made everything hard. If he was going to get baskets, they weren't going to be easy.

Then when we switched; the guy that switched on to him didn't lose him either. So for a one-day prep I thought we did a good job of following a game plan and trying to stay engaged where he couldn't get going. We were fortunate, too.

He makes hard shots too, so as much as you can say you're there, he's capable of making hard shots.

Q. You guys shoot 5 of 21 from the 3-point line. You were 1 of 11 from three yesterday, but you're still able to overcome that and come out with the win. Can you talk about what that says about the team?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Just what I put on the board. Said it was on the board in 1989. We won a national championship, Michigan. Defense and rebounding win championships. We're not worried about how we're shooting. We're worrying about getting stops.

Like you said, the fastbreaks were had there the first half, because I think they had eight turnovers. We had seven. The second half they only had three. The fast breaks went away because they took better care of the ball. Our defense set the tone in the first half.

Q. My question is this, where do you think the Lobos could have made up those points and scored and won tonight's game?

BRIAN DUTCHER: Listen, they had a lot of shots right at the rim, so sometimes they go in, and sometimes they don't, but they were downhill. They do what they do. They live in the paint, and they finish at the rim. They had some that went in and out that didn't go in, and that's basketball.

I think they got done what they wanted to get done. I think we did a good job of when they got in the paint and

stopped, when they turned to make play for somebody else, we were extended. We didn't let them kick out for a lot of threes.

So we made them finish at the rim as opposed to driving in there and then kicking out and getting a chain start or making threes. I thought our defense was pretty good. Even though they got to where they wanted to go, they didn't have as many kick-out opportunities they normally get, I think.

Q. Not so much about the game or about tomorrow, but this is the eighth time you and New Mexico faced each other in this tournament. It's the last time it's going to be in the Mountain West Tournament. I'm curious your thoughts on what became a pretty good rivalry out west that's about to now be no more.

BRIAN DUTCHER: Yeah, it's an epic rivalry. It's not just about the teams. It's about the fan bases. I mean, this building is full. When we play New Mexico, this building is full. So now the charge for the Mountain West is to fill the building with someone other than New Mexico fans now that the Aztec fans are taking their support to another conference.

So hopefully the new teams they've added will support the teams like the Aztec fans do and the Lobo fans do and fill this building, because it's a conference worthy of following.

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