

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

Monday, September 27, 2021
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Ty Jerome

Press Conference

Q. Ty, just because you're a UVA guy, I wanted to get your reaction about the Thunder signing Mamadi and what you're expecting from him.

TY JEROME: I was super excited to see that yesterday. He actually called me right away, so that was pretty cool. I think you guys can expect just energy, a great teammate, and he'll come ready to work.

Q. I was wondering if you could tell us how Mark year one as a head coach last year was able to seemingly connect really well with you guys. We were obviously seeing it from a distance, but did you sense him connecting well with guys, and if so, how did he make that work?

TY JEROME: Yeah, absolutely. He made an effort to do so. I think as a player you could see it and appreciate it. I think from 1 through 17 last year, he made an effort to reach everybody individually and as a unit, and he got us all to buy in and understand that every day it's about getting better. What he preached every day, he was all about it, too.

Q. He didn't play in the league; (no microphone) does that carry any weight in the locker room?

TY JEROME: My rookie year in Phoenix I played for Monty Williams, and he did play in the league, and I think that it may carry some weight, but I think Coach does a great job here of relating to guys, and he understands that he didn't, and he actually says it. So he owns it. We definitely don't hold it against him at all. We respect him 100 percent.

Q. You mentioned Phoenix; you didn't get a lot of playing time there but did here year. Probably opened some eyes of some people that didn't get to see you play at Virginia or whatever. What do you do this year? Do you add or just try to get better at what you did last year as far as the second year in Oklahoma City?



TY JEROME: What do you mean by add?

Q. Well, did you add something different to your game? Or just sharpening up on what you did last year?

TY JEROME: Yeah, I think I'm always going to try to get better every year at my strengths. I think that's how you stay in the league for a long time. I think if the team needs me to do something else, I'll do it, but I think my main focus is going to be my strengths.

Q. I know you're close with Shai; how have you seen him settle into his leadership role, especially now signing a max contract, and he's clearly the face of the franchise? How has he taken on that responsibility?

TY JEROME: Honestly if you were just hanging out with him for a day, you would never know it. He's super humble about it. He's a great teammate every day. He comes in, treats every single person in the building the same way. He comes in trying to get better every day. So I think he handles it as well as I think anybody can.

He's one of the best teammates I've ever been around at any stage of my life. He handles it in a great way.

Q. Last season at the beginning you were hurt and dealing with injury, and so I'm wondering if the mindset this year is a little different coming in, assuming you're 100 percent healthy.

TY JEROME: Yeah (laughing), for sure. I think whatever happens you come in every day and honestly just try to get better and focus on growth and try to win that day. I think that's my mindset no matter what the circumstances are.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports