

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Keyontae Johnson

Press Conference



Q. Keyontae, when you're starting out the year on a two-way contract and this organization has a long history of converting two-way deals and giving them opportunity to play, does that give you any boosted confidence heading into training camp that you're going to get the opportunity to play?

KEYONTAE JOHNSON: Just knowing I have former teammates that have done two way, like Wigs, and I've been getting feedback from them, just asking them questions, seeing how they control this mentally and physically just going back and forth.

It's definitely a great learning experience for me.

Q. Your experience so far with the NBA is playing out in the summer league, and I'm sure that had to be an awful lot of fun playing at that level. But now that you're in camp with this team and playing with all of the dudes who have been in the league and they've been around for a minute, playing a little bit higher skill level, how much fun is that coming into the facility every day and knowing I'm going to work against some of the best players I've ever seen?

KEYONTAE JOHNSON: It's been a great experience. It's been fun for me. A lot of guys on the team are around the same age, so we can relate to each other. It's like we've all got a motive behind us. Everybody's trying to prove a point. So in practice, everybody's going 100 percent. For me, I'm going against J-Dub in practice. He's like me. He's the same position as me. So he's getting better and I'm getting better by just defending him and by playing against him.

Q. Anything about your experience around the guys has surprised you, something you didn't know about? Whether it's Shai or Holmgren or anybody. Something that's sort of surprised you?

KEYONTAE JOHNSON: For me, it's knowing like this isn't college anymore. It's more professional. A lot of players on this team is well connected to each other. They make

sure everybody is doing good, families are friends, and anything. It just shows how much they were connected the year before they came and how much of a brotherhood it is.

Q. You started that heart nonprofit organization this past summer. How big of a deal is that to you to give back to your community?

KEYONTAE JOHNSON: It's definitely a big deal for me, just knowing it's a lot of athletes that don't go through screening through high school, so they only find out when they get into college that they have a heart situation, and some schools might not let you play. For me, it's trying to give back to a lot of public schools and private schools to put defibrillators in and just have like early heart screening.

Q. Keyontae, you and Tre Mann played together at the University of Florida. What's it been like to have a familiar face, someone you know well, heading into your first year at the OKC organization?

KEYONTAE JOHNSON: It's been great. First thing I got drafted, Trey was the first person to reach out and made me feel welcome. He was a close friend at Florida, so being able to play here with him is a dream come true. It's a great moment playing with your friend and former teammate.

He's been helping me, guiding me with things if I need help. So it feels good to have him assisting me.

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