

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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Kenrich Williams

Press Conference



Q. You guys really set a culture, a tone of no excuses, no looking around, just sorting it out, figuring it out within the locker room. How rewarding does it feel to have done all that together and have the season that you guys had this year?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: It feels great. It's an honor to be a part of a team, an organization like this that truly puts the team first. I'm super proud of our success this year and how much growth we made from not only last year but the previous years before to where we were this year. It's something you can't take for granted. I'm extremely grateful for it.

Q. Shai was just talking about how much fun he had with this team, this group, how close you guys are. Describe the joy that you felt with this group and how close-knit they are.

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, that's spot on. It's a joy to come to work every day and be around those guys. It's a joy to come in this building every day and be around the same faces that we see all year. Usually in past situations, you'd just kind of get tired of -- you'd just get fatigued of being around the same people. But it was nothing but positive vibes and good energy this year. That's kind of what makes it -- it makes it super good and super healthy to come to work every day.

Q. Before you started playing more the latter part of this year, were there parts of this year you felt you could have contributed earlier on?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: As a competitor, yeah, you want to play, but I trust the coaches. I trust the coaches with that.

Q. Did you feel like you had to become more of a leader in a different way this year, playing eight minutes less than you did last year?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Not necessarily. I feel like being a leader is a person that's doing the right thing always, so whether I wasn't playing at all or I was playing 30, 40

minutes a game, being a leader, what you do doesn't change.

Q. I wanted to ask you about Game 4. At the time did it feel like that was maybe a turning point in the series?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: I don't know. I think we went on a run. I mean, that was two games ago, honestly. I've forgotten, to be honest.

Q. This is your first taste of the postseason. What was it like for you?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Oh, man, it was a great experience. Great experience. Something that you won't forget. To be able to do it with the group of guys that we have, I was extremely grateful for it. There was no better way to start my playoff journey.

Q. Last year you said you thought that J-Dub would be an All-Star. What did you see from him early on, and what do you think about his progress, and honestly, your prediction looks pretty good right now. What did you see in him?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, I'm thinking about being a GM in the future. But no, he's just a complete player coming out of college, and I seen it the first day we kind of played pickup together. I was like, man, this dude can do it all. Defends at a high level, can score the ball, pass the ball well, and he's super competitive.

The thing about J-Dub is he's just a different type of guy. He's not your normal rising star. He's got a little different type of swag to him.

You add that on with the gifts and abilities that he has, and I think that the future is super bright for him.

Q. Can you go into that a little bit more, he's a different type of guy?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: He's a different guy. Y'all see the outfits and the swag he has. It's not normal, but that's what makes him unique. He's not afraid to be different.

As a rising player in the league, you've got to be different.



Something about you has to be different. It just so happens to be his swag and his game.

Q. Earlier in the series whenever you weren't playing, Mark mentioned that he still thought the series could swing back to you. Whenever you're not playing, what are those conversations like with Mark and how constant are they about when you might be getting in the rotation or whatnot?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, he always keeps me in the loop about everything. He always tells me to stay ready. That's my job as a professional, especially playing in the NBA. You just have to be ready, no matter what. Your number could be called at any minute.

It's my job and my responsibility to always stay ready.

Q. What does staying ready tangibly look like as a professional?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Staying ready, just staying in shape. One of you guys did a deal with the high-intensity workouts we do. So just playing in those, staying game ready, just continuing to do the right things on and off the court. That's kind of what staying ready looks like.

Q. What was your one-on-one record this year?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: One-on-one? I beat Trey, then we traded him. I'm trying to think if I played one-on-one again this year. I played some one-on-one with some coaches, but that was like -- (laughter).

Q. Who was the best competition?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: The best coach? Probably Obi. He's a player development coach, one of the video guys. He's got a little game to him.

Q. Anyone get close to beating you?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, some of them beat me. Some of them beat me. I'm not afraid to say someone beat me. Someone beat me.

Q. Are they going to be named? Are you going to say who beat you?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: No. No. They don't get that.

Q. After practice you go one-on-one against J-Will (indiscernible) partners in one-on-one?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, they will be moving forward.

That was our last game that we played, and once you start playing kind of more towards the end of the season, the one-on-one kind of dies away.

But at the beginning of the season is when you really see kind of the one-on-one battles, one-on-one games.

Q. What did you see out of Lu's game?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: I like Lu's game, man. He's still growing. He's like 6'10", versatile. He has a bright future. He has a bright future.

Q. What's it been like, you've been here since you were traded here as part of the rebuild. What's it been like, this whole journey to get to this point where you're out in round 2? This is probably what you were hoping for down the line. What's it like to get to this point?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Man, it's been a journey that I'm extremely grateful for. Being here in the COVID year and going through that, it kind of makes you grateful for where you were. It does make you grateful for where you were at and losing those games.

It's like when you're playing those games and you know you have 82 games, it's 82 games and the season is done.

But when you're in the Playoffs, it's like, man, we're still playing. That's why I think the loss hurt so much, not only to me but to the guys, as well, because it's like there was no date -- to end the season basically. But it's been a great journey, and I'm super grateful, like I said, to be able to do it with this group of guys and with this organization.

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