

# Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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## Isaiah Joe

Press Conference



**Q. We talked about you having been in the playoffs before, but not a role like this, an opportunity to impact things at this level? What was it like in those moments? How much are you relishing every second that you're out there on the floor?**

ISAIAH JOE: It's an opportunity I would never take for granted. Really intense out there. The fan reaction on both sides are always amazing, at an all time high. Yeah, it's just a huge honor to be in those positions and be able to play in those types of games because this is what you live for.

So just to go out there and lay it all out on the floor, it's a blessing.

**Q. I know that probably during the midst of it, you're not necessarily thinking this, but do you ever consider where you were maybe two years ago, 18 months ago even, in your career and just the place that you're in now and how all of that has transformed since coming to OKC?**

ISAIAH JOE: All the time. You can never forget where you came from. The journey, the grind, that's what it's about. Just knocking down barriers everywhere you go. So just to continue to grow as a person, continue that grow as an organization, as a team. As always, it's pretty dope to see where you came from.

**Q. When you were put into the starting lineup in this last series, what were the conversations like that led up to that? Just your thoughts in general on starting.**

ISAIAH JOE: It was just some adjustments we made. I think being on the roster, you've just got to be ready for whatever it thrown at you. We've been a team that's been able to do that all year. So when it comes to making those kinds of adjustments, there's not too much talk that goes into it because we all know what's at stake and what we're trying to accomplish.

When things like that are decided, we go with it, and we

trust our organization. We trust in ourselves to be able to make those adjustments.

**Q. What are some of the main things you want to improve on this summer?**

ISAIAH JOE: Yeah, always shooting. Really going into this offseason working on my body, durability. Working on ways that I can help the team, being a gravity shooter, being a catch and shoot, that nature. Being in with the coaches a lot. They've got a lot of insight. So just continuing to grow that way.

**Q. What does off-season shooting look like for you?**

ISAIAH JOE: The amount of reps I put in, it's insane. You get in the gym two, three times a day sometimes, and it's all form shooting, just working on your craft. A lot of game speed, game-like stuff.

**Q. I saw you later in the season shoot the ball, if you catch it high, shoot it high, don't bring it down at all. Is that something you hope to incorporate more into your game? Where did that come from?**

ISAIAH JOE: Yeah, that's just stuff that's worked on. You never know what type of shots you're going to have to take, bad passes, good passes, late shot clock. So just being able to get off any type of shot is a skill in itself. So, yeah, that stuff is worked on.

**Q. How much fun is it to be a part of this group this season? You seem like such a tight-knit group, and Shai talking about the joy they had throughout the year?**

ISAIAH JOE: It was an amazing year. These group of guys, we really created a brotherhood. We're so close. Everybody works so hard and has the same goal in mind. Just to be able to go out there and battle with these guys day in and day out, it's truly been a blessing.

Looking forward to getting back out on the court with the fellas. We've got a lot left.

**Q. What's it like, the season kind of comes to an end just like that, but then you've also got the contract situation. Obviously you want to be back for it, but**



**you've also got to get the best deal. How much of the summer is concerned with this?**

ISAIAH JOE: My job is just to be ready when it's time to play on the court. I leave a lot of that stuff to my organization and my agent to talk about that. My job is to be the best version of myself that I can be for the betterment of the team. So that's my mindset going into this summer.

**Q. Is it surreal that you and Jaylin are on the same team? Do you guys ever talk about that?**

ISAIAH JOE: It's still one of those things like I don't know if it will completely hit until we're done playing, how rare it is for something like this to happen. But in the moment, we always cherish all the moments that we have. We don't regret it at all. We do understand that it's a blessing to be in this situation.

Yeah, it's definitely cool. When we're done playing, we'll be able to look back and then we did something special.

**Q. You and Danny Gafford used to play against each other in AAU?**

ISAIAH JOE: AAU, played together in college my freshman year. That's another guy, hard worker, and it shows. He's a helluva player, helluva dude. I tip my hat to him. So that's my guy as well.

**Q. (Inaudible)?**

ISAIAH JOE: We've been building something. It's been under the radar, but I think what we've been building in Arkansas, I know this as well.

**Q. One of the keys to you guys success, just according to Mark, is all year nobody's been looking outside of the building or outside of the walls for something else. Do you guys kind of know that internally you can do whatever you want to do. What's that like heading into an off-season with the recognition that guys can and should get better heading into next year?**

ISAIAH JOE: I think it's just guys, they look within the team for everything that they do. It's a lot of outside noise, a lot of outside distractions that can come during the season and after the season. I think we do a really good job of staying within ourselves and staying within the team. Whatever we do, whatever we're working on, even off the court things, when it comes to representing OKC, families and all that, we're true to who we are.

So I think our guys are all focus, same mindset going into the summer for next season. We're here to grind, ready to get better.

**Q. Looking forward to getting in some golf this summer?**

ISAIAH JOE: Most definitely. I was thinking I'd go play a round today.

(Laughter).

**Q. (No microphone.)**

ISAIAH JOE: I think I made some defensive strides. To be able to be out there on the court when shots aren't always falling, just trying to make the right plays at all times, trying to be more of a vocal leader out there as well, I think that's something that our team really needed.

Yeah, just defensively being a leader and finding ways to play in the offense when teams recognize me as a shooter, the last thing they want me to do is shoot an open shot. So I feel like I got better at that.

**Q. I know you like golf. What are some of your other hobbies that you're trying to get to?**

ISAIAH JOE: I video game a little bit. Last summer, I got into bowling. Shout out to my man tray man, I got into bowling. So I do a lot of that as well. Other than that, I'm a family man. Anything I can do with my family, that's what I like to do.

**Q. Better bowler or better golfer?**

ISAIAH JOE: Golfer for sure.

**Q. With the crowd in the playoffs, your dad is always there. What does it mean to have your dad literally always be there?**

ISAIAH JOE: Not only my dad, but my whole family, they're just all so supportive. They want to cherish every memory, take part of, no matter what they have to do.

I remember my dad drove like 15 hours to El Paso, Texas, for my first college game, just to drive back. Him and my trainer, they both have bad backs, but they both made it back from that long drive.

They really let it be known how much they love me and how much they care for me and how much they cherish these moments that I'm going through, the journey that I'm going through. They're in there with me. They would

never show me otherwise.

**Q. How does that look for you with your family? Do you go back to Fort Smith primarily or does your family come here and hang out with you?**

ISAIAH JOE: During the off-season, it's more so me moving around. I'm so close, only a few hours. I'll be here working out and then shoot back home. I've got a foundation out there that everything is set up for me.

Just back and forth a little bit. They do a lot of traveling during the season, so why can't I do that in the off-season.

**Q. When you a foundation, do you mean like a home foundation or an actual foundation?**

ISAIAH JOE: Just for working out and getting the training I need. My trainer lives with me. He travels with me everywhere I go. But I've also got like a strength and conditioning trainer out there. I've got a PT out there. Everything I need as far as working out to get better.

**Q. Are you holding any camps?**

ISAIAH JOE: Yeah.

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