

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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Isaiah Joe

Press Conference



Q. You got the contract taken care of. How good is that going into the season?

ISAIAH JOE: Really good. Just to get some security with this great organization, knowing that they like me enough to keep me for a little bit. Now, you know, back to square one, grinding. We got our season ahead much us now and you have to stack days, build for that?

Q. (Indiscernible).

ISAIAH JOE: I think when you play long enough, you understand that this is just necessary to be successful. You can't take those wins with you. Teams have great seasons, and then you can end up having a bad season, and we understand that. So we get back to a 0-0 mindset and focus on the task at hand.

Q. You already have a Jalen/Jaylin Williams problem but you have another Isaiah. How is that working out so far?

ISAIAH JOE: We settled it pretty early. I figured I'm going to go by Zay, and he goes by Hart, even though we both grew up going by Zay. We don't have as bad of a problem as they have the same first and last name. Yeah, yeah. It's a little difficult.

Q. I'm sure you've gone up against Alex a time or two in your career. What makes him a challenging guy to face?

ISAIAH JOE: He is just going to do whatever it takes to win a basketball game. He plays hard, extremely hard offensively and defensively. He does all the little things. He has shown that he is somewhat of a leader. Being able to get him on our team, playing pick-up, you get to see everything that he has put into the game. It's definitely great to have him on our squad.

Q. There's a lot of good shooters in this league, but your contested three-point ability, what goes into being able to block out and maintain your focus on the

shot when you are being contested?

ISAIAH JOE: I think just being a shooter my entire life, it's just something that you learn to fight through. Nobody is going to give you a wide-open look. So my thing is, if they don't block it, it should go in.

Just continue to work on my shot each and every day and the rest is repetition. It's all the same when you get on the court.

Q. With I-Hart, how much have you thought about playing with somebody like that?

ISAIAH JOE: He is a hell of a player. Hell of a rebounder. He is really good at creating action on the offensive end. I think that's the only thing is just going to complement my game as well as his, so we can tag team, whatever, and just build chemistry that way. I think it's going to be really good going into the season.

Q. How have you seen Shai evolve in leadership?

ISAIAH JOE: First and foremost, he leads by example. He just puts in the work, and it shows every day on the court. Now he's starting to build more of a vocal leadership as well. He's improving that as well. I think it's only going to help us achieve even more.

Q. We've been talking about the defense with the addition of Alex and Isaiah. You take a tremendous amount of satisfaction blocking a big shot. When you get an opportunity to contest on the defensive end, you can just see how much satisfaction you get out of it, and with all of the defenses coming in, how much fun is it going to be to bring that every night?

ISAIAH JOE: It's going to be extremely fun. When you are getting stops, it makes the game even more fun. You get to have more freedom on the offensive end, but just understanding that there are two sides to the ball, not just offense. For me it's just one way that I'm able to find ways to stay on the court especially when I'm not knocking down shots to my best ability. So you make defensive plays, whether that's blocking a shot or taking a charge or getting a steal, it makes it all that much better.

Q. Earlier you mentioned if a guy doesn't block your

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shot, it should go in. How much do you feel confidence defines your shooting? You have your footwork, your form. How much is confidence?

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ISAIAH JOE: I think to be a really good shooter in this league, a good chunk of it is confidence. You see a lot of players that can shoot in workouts or in the gym, but when you get into a game, it's like it's not completely there. I think that's just being able to carry that confidence and trust the work that you put in because the more you work at something, I feel like the more confident you can be in that.

Just putting the work in helps bring confidence to the game.

Q. Many people are making bold predictions, best in the West or win it all. Do you feel like this is your best chance to get one when you look at the roster?

ISAIAH JOE: Looking at the roster, I feel like we have a recipe to be successful when we stack days and put the work in. Nothing is given at the end of the day. So no matter what you have as far as a roster of players go, you still have to earn. You can't just say you have this roster, so we're going to be this successful. We still have to put the work in and trust one another, play the right way. Then everything else will play out.

Q. I think I counted, there's five of you guys that don't start, but were on the team two years ago. The NBA is sort of a transient league, but your roster is pretty stable. How does that help you guys as you try to navigate the West?

ISAIAH JOE: You've seen our games -- we can sometimes play a lot of players. It causes us to go really deep into our bench. So everybody that dresses out is in one way, shape, or form effective in something that they do. Just being ready at all times and having guys that can just carry over, even though they're not starters are still helping the team win.

Q. I'm just wondering when the two new guys, you knew they were coming, was one of your first thoughts that you might have more space because you're always looking for more space, separation to shoot?

ISAIAH JOE: Definitely. When you see trades, you try to figure out how you can play amongst them. But what I thought more than anything, like, I saw Hartenstein's rebounding numbers last season. He is aggressive to the boards. He gets a lot of rebounds, but when it comes to offense, yeah, definitely see how he works creating action at the top, DHOs and all that, setting good screens. I think we'll complement each other pretty well.

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