

Oklahoma City Thunder

Media Conference

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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Luguentz Dort

Press Conference



Q. Tell us about the experience of taking the trophy around back home, sort of like Stanley Cup style.

LUGUENTZ DORT: It was great. We had a lot of fun. Got to sign (indiscernible) up in Montreal, which was huge for me and my family. And also got to bring the trophy to my neighborhood.

Yeah, it was fun. A lot of people showed up, a lot of kids. It was just great being able to do that event for my people. We enjoyed those two days.

Q. What would you say most has changed since you won a championship, just your personal life, maybe on the floor as well? What is the biggest you've seen over the last few months?

LUGUENTZ DORT: I would say recognition, honestly, from our fans here and from anywhere in the world, honestly, where I've been. A lot of people are fans of basketball, and they recognize me from being on the team and making this championship run. That was big.

But I would say also just the confidence that of achieving something like that. It's really big. Just walking around, knowing that it was a great win that we had.

Q. How did things change just from a (indiscernible) in your regard, the offseason getting rest, but also getting some basketball? (Indiscernible) how did that change?

LUGUENTZ DORT: I approached it like any offseason. I took some time off just to reset my body. And after that, when I was back on the court, I just had the same routine I always have. I'm always training, always doing my conditioning stuff and all that.

That's been fine. Just happened in a shorter time. But other than that, I was back in the gym as soon as I was ready and then I was back on my routine.

Q. You've always been kind of an underdog, kind of a

guy that was maybe overlooked a little bit. You've always had to fight for respect. Now you're known as one of the best NBA players of the game. You're NBA champion. How do you keep your edge when your situation has changed so much?

LUGUENTZ DORT: For me, I would say just to never forget how everything started for me. Like you said, the underdog and the under guy, it's always like that in my head. And I always feel like I would have to prove something. That's just how I keep myself going.

Obviously there's still a lot of work to be done for myself, the same way I approach the game. But it's nice to be recognized as this type of guy now. But in my head I just still feel the same way just to keep me going.

Q. You have been, like he said, a lead defensive player in the league. It kind of felt like last year that Dub really went from (indiscernible) defensive player to the kind of level and became one of the best in the leagues. What did you see as someone who is familiar with that kind of craft that you thought made him go up a level on that end of the floor?

LUGUENTZ DORT: Yeah. For him just knowing the stuff that he can do on the court. Dub can do so much and especially on the defensive side. He's really aggressive on that end, too. Just him noticing and knowing some of the stuff he can do on that end of the floor, and the fact that he got recognized as well. I'm pretty sure he still has the same approach and he'll attack that side of the floor.

Q. Coming off a championship win, how do you feel like you guys are going to approach or just you in general are going to approach having that kind of target on your back? You guys already did (indiscernible) the last two years, but how do you approach it now from your vantage point obviously being one of the leaders?

LUGUENTZ DORT: I would say try our best to approach it the same way we've done in the past few years, not really get into what the other people say out loud, the media and stuff says. Just saying whatever happens in our locker room and in our stuff.

But yeah, you know, we know what to do and we know it's



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going to be a long run. It's a long season. So we'll try our best to get better and to approach every single day to get better. And then we'll see where we end up.

Q. You mentioned going back home with that trophy, seeing the kids where you grew up. Has it kind of sunk in the domino effect, the impact you've had on them to show them that kind of stuff is possible?

LUGUENTZ DORT: Yeah. Obviously every summer I go back home and try to have my camp for my foundation and trying to give back to my community. And that one was just real special, just the fact that I know a lot of people back home support me and follow me all year long.

And then the fact that I got to bring a trophy was even bigger. There was a lot of activities that we got to do. They got to enjoy a lot of stuff and just seeing me and the trophy at the same time was amazing.

Q. How much do you pay attention (indiscernible) around the league (indiscernible)? And most are aiming to try to knock you guys off?

LUGUENTZ DORT: Yeah. Like I said, I'm trying my best to focus on our team. I mean, you know, other teams do a lot of movement, and that's just like every offseason. You say a lot of stuff change.

But I didn't really pay attention to that like that. Like I said, I was just focusing on getting my body right for this season, knowing that we had a short offseason and, you know, also seeing the stuff that we can get better at for the season.

Q. Since you got the roster, the franchise has been pretty stable, not a lot of changes. This year virtually no changes other than a rookie who's not going to even be able to suit up. How does that change the dynamic what you guys do? How much of an advantage is that, just the stability of the roster, especially one this good coming back intact?

LUGUENTZ DORT: Yeah. I don't think anything should change. Obviously it's pretty much the same team. You know, we all comfortable with one another. We just spent a whole year together. So we kind of know each other really well.

So I would say just on our side just keep doing the same stuff, always improve and see how we can get better throughout the season. But obviously it's good to have the same guys that we had last season.

Q. Last week, we talked to Sam sort of about your development offensively. I know we talked about it

before, but he mentioned sort of your humility and just the competitiveness to be able to take a step back for the betterment of the team. What were some of the tougher parts of sort of adjusting to that?

LUGUENTZ DORT: I would say my shot selection was a big one. Obviously when we had a lot of guys down, and I was one of the guys that was healthy, I was able to play and I had a big task on my back.

But other than that, just I had a lot of good conversation with the coaching staff. And I wanted to get better myself and be more efficient and all that. So we went through a whole plan and we spoke about some of the stuff that was better for me and for the team as well.

And so I just followed it. I know it was going to be best for me and best for the team. And it worked out and it's still working out. So I'm going to stick to that plan.

Q. When you talk about short offseasons, how much more do you appreciate the Lakers of the early 2000s or the Warriors of the mid-2010s, being able to continuously do this time after time again after short offseasons?

LUGUENTZ DORT: Yeah. I would say they were probably real disciplined in how they -- I don't know how -- I wasn't born in those times, so I don't know how stuff was going.

But just having a short offseason you gotta be disciplined and you gotta know exactly how much time you need off and how much time you need to get back on the court to get ready for the season. So I guess on that end they were real disciplined to do that, to be able to come back and having more success.

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