

Oklahoma City Thunder

Media Conference

Monday, September 29, 2025

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Jalen Williams

Press Conference

Q. A little different situation from you now, new contract, NBA champion. How do you approach all of this with all of that being considered targets on your backs? You've got television appearances now. All the things you have been fighting for, you have. How do you stay focused?

JALEN WILLIAMS: That's a great one question. Wow, congratulations. Good question.

What we've been doing. You know, we're not playing for the TV games or the contracts or, like, you're chasing -- this is going to sound really dramatic, but you are chasing greatness. You're chasing to achieve stuff that hasn't been done in our organization. And that's everybody's motivation. I think that's why we're a special group.

So looking at it, the contract, obviously, very nice. Very blessed to have that. It's changed the trajectory of my family's life for sure. The championship is something that you obviously play for but all that's in the best.

I think having the wrist surgery I think was a really good thing for me. It allowed me to be grounded and kind of focus on that and forget about the championship and everything else.

But everybody is trying to compete and get back to, everybody is saying defending but we're trying to be on the offensive as well and do that. So we're coming in with more motivation to do that every year.

Q. So it felt like last season whether it was finally getting recognized for being on the all-defense, or maybe you just did level up a level on that side of the ball, what do you think you changed last season that made you go to a new level as a defensive player?

JALEN WILLIAMS: I think first is like getting the notoriety is not something that I said I'm playing for, if that makes sense. So, my job defensively is to make sure I'm on time and I'm doing the right things for me team. And if people see it, they see it; if they don't they don't.



I think it's the longer you're in the NBA and you apply yourself to defense the way I have, like, you start to pick up little tricks and you start to really understand it. And I've been lucky enough to be in the same system for three years to where I kind of know tendencies, I know what we're trying to get accomplished. So, when you have like a level of comfort, too, it makes it easy.

And also I have, like, five players on the defensive end that can be all-team defense as well -- K-So (phonetic), Lu, Shai is usually in the running, Chet, A.C. -- so we have these guys that can really play defense and make an impact so it makes it easier on me to give my all defensively, too.

Q. From a basketball standpoint, how challenging was the offseason? Were you able to get work in, things like that?

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah, I'm always able to get work in?

Q. Because of the wrist.

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah. I'm always able to work out and do that whole thing. I think it was a good like blessing in disguise, though. It allowed me more to take care of my body and like not go full throttle. With the short offseason it's kind of hard to like manage how much you want to work out. So it actually made me take a break which was nice.

But yeah, I got my work in, for sure. Still got some ways to go with it, for sure. But yeah, I got work in. It forced me to be really creative, me and my trainers who I had in my camp. It's hard to do the same drills over and over again especially when you're in a cast. So we got pretty creative as the summer progressed.

Q. We saw you obviously traveling the world, obviously, when you had down time after the season. What would you say has been your favorite part this offseason after obviously winning the championship? What was it like to travel the world for the first time, to go all the places across the country.

JALEN WILLIAMS: I think my favorite part of every summer is there's like a point where I can just hang out with my family and not have to go anywhere, which is

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

obviously opposite to your question. But I think when I can just kind of be home and like actually spend time with my brother and my sister, like see my parents and family, like that's like my favorite part of the summer because during the season especially now that Cody is in the NBA, we don't all see each other at the same time. So that's my favorite part of the summer every summer.

But definitely going to China and Japan was like really cool. I've been to Japan obviously one time before. But to be able to do a camp out there I thought was super cool. They don't really have basketball camps out there. It's not really a thing they do, so I thought that was really cool for me to be able to do that. And the turn out was supper cool. So hopefully I can do that annually.

And China was an experience of its own. I've never been there. Just the amount of basketball love they have is really cool to see. I think everybody saw me getting off the plane at, like, 2 a.m., and there's hundreds of people at the airport. So that was a really cool experience.

I think anytime you can go out of the country and receive love for just playing basketball I think it's a really special opportunity. So hopefully I can go back with these quick offseasons.

Q. Two questions. One, concerning travel, how was your experience taking the trophy back to Santa Clara?

JALEN WILLIAMS: It was dope. My teammates were hogging the trophy all summer. So I got it last (laughs). It worked out good though. I was able to see a lot of like familiar faces, I actually passed the point like nobody on the team is like somebody I played with. So I'm getting old.

But it's definitely special to share that moment especially with my coaches and the ads and stuff like that, people who were there when I was there. So that was really, like, full circle moment, to be able to be the first person to bring it through there and just have the turn out that I did was super special.

And, yeah, like I said, I think going from my freshman year with my coaches, having them be the same coaches that got to see me win a championship and embrace with me I think was really cool.

Q. Second question, we're told that the same doctor who operated on you is John Mateer's surgeon. Everybody in the state needs a scouting report on this guy's medical situation.

JALEN WILLIAMS: I'll keep it short and sweet. He did Kobe.

Dr. Shin is awesome. He's been good throughout the rehab process and just the surgery in general.

Yeah, actually, crazy enough, I think he actually did my brother's ankle stuff, too. So he's kept it in the family.

Q. (Indiscernible) can you kind of look back on the parade at home? You guys come out in the street and actually cheered (indiscernible).

JALEN WILLIAMS: It was special. I'm not too familiar with everybody else's parades, but I don't think everybody would run the whole entire parade the way we did. So that was cool.

It just felt very fitting. It's a very genuine fan base. And it's, like, seeing them when we were on the float, just felt weird. Now, granted, there was some alcohol involved. So we were running around with that.

But it was just cool. Like it made me want to jump in the crowd almost. So that was a really cool moment. It was definitely special. I felt like everybody kind of like got to see our personalities and stuff like that.

I think taking into account, like, not everybody's seen us play. Not everybody's been able to go into the arena and see us. So for that to be some people's first experience with us is pretty cool.

Q. You said "slam," I'm kind of paraphrasing, you said you guys (indiscernible) to win the championship. How is that received around some of your league guys and whatever? And do you think (indiscernible) some older players?

JALEN WILLIAMS: No, it's not that you -- it's not that you don't need vets. It's more if you can have a veteran mentality going into it is more the case. I don't know if anybody was offended by it. I don't think anybody should be.

But we have veteran presence, but you don't need, you know, five or six guys in the NBA that have been there 10-plus years. It's more about the culture of the organization you're in. And that's what I was getting at.

When I got here, it felt like you're held to a higher standard and the way that they do it is very professional. And, like, that's engrained in the organization. So when you get here, a year or two in you already feel like, quote/unquote, a veteran. You've been through it, you know a lot of the ins and outs in the NBA. And I feel like this organization prepares you for that.



And we've been able to mature through our experiences as we've gotten older. And that's kind of what I meant by that. Hopefully nobody is too offended by it, but it is what it is.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports