

# Golden State Warriors

## Media Conference

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## Steve Kerr

### Media Conference

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, everybody. Thanks for joining us today. Prior to every season we do a pre-season media availability with our coach and GM. Steve Kerr will start off this afternoon, then we'll have Bob Myers after this.

With that said, we'll open it up to questions.

**Q. This is obviously a rare camp for you guys. As a coach, how do you lay out the game plan going forward the next few weeks?**

STEVE KERR: It's obviously tricky, given the COVID protocols. We're starting out with individual workouts the next few days. Under normal circumstances we would just be getting right into camp. We're starting out with three straight days of individual workouts where we have literally one player, one coach, and only four players allowed in the gym at one time. We'll be doing that.

We've been going through testing the last few days. The testing will continue. Once we are through that phase, then we'll be able to advance through the NBA protocol to advance into group workouts, then from there we can start in on full practices.

We're just trying to follow the guidelines, do it as best we can. It's not easy, but everybody's got to go through it. We're just trying to navigate our way through it.

**Q. Besides Klay, are there any injury issues entering camp at all?**

STEVE KERR: No, no. Everybody is good to go.

**Q. We haven't heard from you since a couple of these signings. Couple guys who are wanting to come in here and not replace Klay, but come in and do their part, fit in with the group. Will you try to see those guys in the early days a little bit when the groups are small? What is your plan to get a feel for some of the new faces, how much they can contribute?**

STEVE KERR: I've been in touch with the new guys already. We met last week in the facility. I've spoken with Kelly and Brad, our draft picks. I have not seen Kent yet, but I spoke with him on the phone.

The plan is to get them acclimated as quickly as possible. We'll be sharing video with them. If we can't do it in person, we'll literally be air dropping video to them. Whatever it takes in this year, this strange year, we have to do.

For all the new guys, we just sort of have tentative plans. If all goes according to the NBA protocol, we'll be able to be with these guys early next week and get started, share everything we need to share with them.

**Q. Under normal circumstances it's hard to bring rookies along. Under these circumstances, where you only met them in the last month, now you have to bring them up to speed in the season, how do you coach them under these circumstances and get them along faster without a summer league and traditional training camp?**

STEVE KERR: Yeah, the challenge, we're not able to put in the basics for James and for Nico that we would normally have in terms of summer league, getting the guys used to NBA terminology, coverages, that sort of thing. We have to do everything on the fly.

Our challenge is to not overwhelm them but to give them the right amount of information that will help them to contribute as quickly as possible and to keep them confident and moving forward without overwhelming them. That's just going to be a feel thing.

We've already put together our plans for development, what those plans include, a lot of detail to them. It's on us to figure out the right dosages.

**Q. Your mix at center, is the goal to determine who starts there by the end of training camp or is that something you will experiment with pre-season and the regular season?**

STEVE KERR: I'm really not even thinking of it in those terms. Obviously we have multiple options with Looney



and Marquese and James. We anticipate all three of them playing. As always, we'll figure out who starts and who plays in what role as we go.

**Q. How many starting spots would you say are secure going into camp? Three? I would assume at least three.**

STEVE KERR: Probably four. I mean, it would be hard for me to not see Kelly and Andrew starting on the wings. Obviously Steph and Draymond will be starting. More than likely four. I suppose there's a chance as we get a glimpse of everything that we might decide we need to change the rotation, change the starting group. That's always a possibility.

But my mindset going into this season is that those four guys would be our starting group, then we'll see with the center spot.

**Q. I know you're probably following all of the stuff happening in terms of with the 49ers and everything. What is your optimism about the season starting on time, on how things are going to go? Obviously the NBA got great praise for how it handled the bubble. This is a whole different thing, in the teeth of the pandemic.**

STEVE KERR: Yeah, it sure is. We can't control the environment like the league did with the bubble. We're going into this thing with our eyes wide open. I talk every day with Rick and Bob about our COVID protocols, the latest updates from the league, latest updates from our training staff, what's happening.

As far as my confidence level, I'm confident that the league is going to do everything in their power to do things the right way and to protect us, protect the players and the staffs.

Then who the hell knows. I mean, it's 2020. I think we just have to go into it with an open mind and do our best and see what happens.

**Q. I'm curious if you had the opportunity to check in with Klay recently and how he's holding up mentally and emotionally?**

STEVE KERR: Yeah, we've talked a couple times. I went down there the day after his injury. I was with him when he got the diagnosis from Dr. Ferkel. Rick Celebrini and I went down there. Then we've texted since then quite a bit.

He's hanging in there. It's obviously a devastating blow for Klay. As much as he loves to play, as much as he was

looking forward to getting back to this season, it's just a cruel twist of fate for him to have to go through this again.

We'll just keep checking in on him. I know his teammates are checking in on him. We hope before too long he'll be able to be back up here with his teammates. We'll get him in here to start his rehab. He can at least be part of the group. That's the plan.

More than anything, we just all feel devastated for him because he deserves better.

**Q. How do you plan on managing Steph's minutes? You've always been pretty protective of your stars, keeping them down. Does that remain consistent? Because he's your primary scorer, might you increase that a little bit?**

STEVE KERR: Well, the objective going in would be to keep his minutes around where they've been. It's probably going to be more difficult. We've always been blessed with great talent, the ability to give our starters a lot of rest. We've been blessed over the years to have a lot of blowouts where Steph didn't have to play the fourth quarter, same with Draymond and Klay and KD. We don't have that luxury any more.

I would love to keep his minutes down at the 34 range. We know that's the best thing for him and for us long-term. That's going to be the goal. Feel free to take shots at me when we have a triple overtime game and I leave him out there for 51 minutes.

**Q. Is 40 even reasonable? Would you push that average to 40?**

STEVE KERR: I don't think 40 is reasonable. I think 40 for anybody is difficult, especially these days. The pace that the game is played with...

I think realistically to get the best out of Steph, and most players really, game to game, as the whole year goes, you'd like to keep guys in that 34 to 36 range.

**Q. With Jordan Poole, you've mentioned a few times how impressed you've been with his work over the summer. Do you see him more as a point guard or a shooting guard at this point?**

STEVE KERR: I think Jordan is a combo. I don't think he's a pure point guard. I think he's a combo guard, a guy who can play on or off the ball. I thought he played really well down the stretch last year. But it was more as a secondary play-maker. We still would like to play him with another ball-handling guard.

But he fits the way we like, which is everybody's capable of making a play. The ball is going to move. Biggest thing with Jordan, he's had a great off-season. He's been our most consistent worker day in and day out. He's been at Chase working with our coaches. He's put the time and effort in. He's really earned a right to play and get his opportunity.

I think he's earned some good fortune. I hope the basketball gods reward him accordingly because he's done everything possible to put himself in position to succeed.

**Q. How do you see your off-season acquisitions changing how you approach your playing style? Do you think getting (indiscernible) will be even more paramount with guys like Wiggins and Oubre?**

STEVE KERR: I'm excited first of all to have everybody together. Obviously we were really hoping to have Klay. We felt like putting that whole group together, we had the elements for a really good team. We still feel we can be a good team. It's hard to lose Klay and realistically sort of try to figure out how good we can become.

I'm not really into predictions or anything. But I do like the concept of what we have, the length and athleticism that we have at every position. I think we have potential to be an excellent defensive team. That will be our challenge. I'll challenge the guys from day one that we want to be a top 10 defensive team. Training camp will largely be centered around our defense. Offensively we'll figure it out as we go.

But I've always found if you have a good defensive team, you have your foundation. It's much easier to build from there. If you can't get stops, you're just kind of running around in circles.

I remember a game last year where I think D'Lo hit seven threes in the first half. I think we scored 70 points, 68 points. It was one of the most incredible offensive displays I've ever seen in an NBA game from both teams. I think we were down four at the half. We ended up losing by 20.

That game was a good reminder to me that no matter how well you shoot it, how efficiently you score, when you can't make stops, you just can't really get any traction in the game.

To me, our whole identity has to be based on our defense. We got to get stops, establish ourselves as a defensive team first, then the offense we'll figure out as we go.

**Q. Do you envision Kelly Oubre playing that Klay role?**

STEVE KERR: I do. I do, yeah. I've had a chance to speak with some of Kelly's former coaches, Willie Green, Monty Williams in Phoenix, I spoke with Scott Brooks. All of them have really raved about Kelly. He's really well liked by his former coaches, which is a great sign.

Scottie told me that felt like Kelly was at his best on the ball. I know we all remember him as Warriors fans and coaches and players for his feistiness a couple years ago when he got into it with Draymond and Klay.

He's got a toughness about him. He's got the length to be a good defender. He's got the ability on the ball to hound people. I envision us using Kelly quite a bit on the ball. I imagine putting Steph on the ball, as well. Even sliding Andrew onto the point when it calls for it.

I think we can mix and match and have a lot of options defensively. We plan on using those options.

**Q. Last year didn't go the way you wanted to record-wise. Did you learn anything in terms of adjustments in lineup, style of play, that could possibly help you heading into another season where you're not having the guys you thought you might have had going into the year?**

STEVE KERR: I think the main thing we learned last year is kind of individual strengths and weaknesses. I have a much better feel for Paschall, Jordan Poole, Marquese Chriss, those guys, going into camp. Wallin, Mike Mulder. I don't think I will take a lot else from the season. We're not coming into this year thinking a whole lot about last year. We'd like to forget about last year.

But having the knowledge of our players, our new players from last year, will be very helpful in terms of trying to fit them into the puzzle.

**Q. About Klay, you mentioned that everybody is understandably devastated still. Specific to Steph and Draymond, how tough do you think it will be to get them emotionally up given this is the second year in a row where they're playing without him?**

STEVE KERR: Well, I think it will be easier than last year. I mean, last year was difficult for a number of reasons. The injuries were really difficult, but so was just the rebound off of five straight years of deep runs, emotional seasons.

I feel like Steph and Draymond are going to have great years for us. I've spoken with both of them, spoke to Draymond this morning, spoke to Steph last night. I've

kept in touch with them during the summer. They are basketball players. They love to play. They're competitors. They've had a long time off. I think they're ready to compete again.

The basketball part is going to be tougher just because we've got a lot to work on, a lot to figure out. Before last year, we were on cruise control in a lot of ways. We knew exactly who we were for five years. So we could come into camp, kind of ease our way into it. By opening night, we were pretty much ready to roll.

A lot more work that's going to have to go into this year with all the new players, without Klay. There's work ahead, but there's an excitement for competing again from those two guys.

There's definitely a hole with Klay not being there. There's a hole in the lineup and there's a hole in our hearts just because he's such a huge part of who we are. Those three guys really are the core of this whole thing, what's been built here over the last seven, eight years. That part is going to be really tough for Steph and Draymond to get past. It will be hard for all of us to get past, but we have no choice but to do so.

**Q. I don't know if you've seen it all, but ESPN put out their projections for this season. They have the Warriors sitting at the bottom of the Western Conference averaging 31 wins, their prediction. You guys would like to forget about last year, but still do you have any sense of like an underdog mentality heading into this season? There's a lot of people underestimating the Warriors' potential. Any source of extra motivation at all?**

STEVE KERR: I don't think we really need any extra motivation right now, given that we had the worst record in the league last year. We're coming off a horrible season. We want to bounce back and have a good year. Everything else we're sort of used to, the noise, whatever you want to call it. There's part of this job that is just the expectations, the judgment, the criticism, the praise. It all lumps into one thing.

It doesn't really mean anything for us as we get started with training camp.

**Q. How important do you think it's going to be to get Wiseman on the court with Steph and Draymond, especially for a young rookie?**

STEVE KERR: Yeah, I mean, it's important for us to get James on the court, period. Obviously with Steph and Draymond, given that our bread and butter offensively is

the Steph-Draymond pick-'n-roll. When he's on the court with those guys, he's got to learn the spacing. He has to learn to get to that dunker spot and be on the backside and understand his role in those circumstances. At the other end of the floor, Draymond is going to be anchoring the defense. He's got to be Draymond's partner ultimately.

Looney learned over his first couple of years, he learned the ropes at the five. Looney is going to be so much more advanced than James will be defensively. James has a lot to catch up on.

But James' potential athletically is so dramatic that I imagine he'll have a chance to step in and help us because he's so athletic and dynamic. But there's a ton to learn, and he doesn't have the value of a summer league, a whole summer of workouts. A lot to catch up on in every respect.

We just got to do our best. I'm excited for James, but also want to preach caution for everybody not to expect too much too soon because we're just throwing him right into the fire. He played three college games. He's got a lot of things to learn.

**Q. How do you feel about your depth? Last year obviously was a whole different year. In your glory years, depth was a crucial element. How do you feel about what you have now?**

STEVE KERR: On paper we would appear to have pretty good depth. We've signed some veteran guys who know how to play, who have been successful in this league. You talk about Brad Wanamaker, Kent. You think about what Marquese and Eric Paschall did last year, Jordan at the end of the year. We have some players who we feel like can absolutely fill roles.

If you look at it, there's a pretty good roster there to have the depth that we need. It all has to fit together. The pieces have to fit. We've got to find the right rotations and patterns and all that stuff.

A lot of work ahead, but it is exciting to think about what we're working with this year.

**Q. Do you feel you'll have to toggle Steph and Draymond to keep one of them on the floor at all times?**

STEVE KERR: No, not necessarily. I think we've tried that in the past and it seems like I almost always end up going back to play them together. I think they're such a dynamic pair, offensively especially, together in the pick-'n-roll. My gut would be from the beginning of this year to just play

them together, then try to find another combination when those two guys are on the bench.

It's different I think if you were talking about Steph and Klay. Then I would say yes because I think you need to keep a scorer on the floor all the time. But it's different with Draymond because part of what makes him special is his pairing with Steph offensively and how well they complement each other on the pick-'n-roll.

My gut as we speak is to say I'm going to play them together. Obviously we'll see how it all plays out.

**Q. A question about Steph on social issues. This off-season he did the IG with Dr. Fauci about how people can protect themselves from COVID-19. We saw him wear Breonna Taylor shoes for a golf event. As the NBA comes back, players have their massive platforms returning, do you feel thing have super-charged for Steph understanding the value of his voice?**

STEVE KERR: I think this has been kind of the natural evolution for Steph over the last couple years. He's obviously such a socially conscious player. He's done so much over the years to help the Bay Area community and nationally. One of my favorite things that Steph has done is really started the golf program at Howard. I thought that was one of the coolest things that he's done with Under Armour.

You start thinking about it, it's like, Oh, yeah, he did this, did that. You can just start checking things off. He and Ayesha have done so many things together to try to positively impact people. It's really inspiring.

The thing I love about Steph is he's well aware, too, that all this comes from him being a great basketball player, the power that he holds to impact people in a positive way. The gist of all that comes from him being a great basketball player. He never gets away from working on his craft. He's in the gym every single day working so hard.

He's able to juggle a lot of different things without losing focus on what really triggers all of the things that he's able to do, which is his basketball career.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, coach. We appreciate your time.

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