

Golden State Warriors

Media Conference

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San Francisco, California, USA

Denver Nuggets

Coach Michael Malone

Postgame Media Conference



Warriors 123, Nuggets 107

Q. What did they do that kind of tilted it in their favor in the third quarter?

MICHAEL MALONE: Yeah, obviously give them credit. This is a very talented team with tremendous playoff experience. I think the key stretch was the end of the second quarter. They closed 18-4, and I thought that gave them separation.

You don't want to play from behind in this building against that team.

Then to your point, they called a time-out, we were up 11-8 in the third quarter, hanging in there, staying with it. But we gave up 21 points on 11 turnovers. 11 turnovers is a great number in a playoff game, but they scored every time. We only gave up 10 offensive rebounds, but they scored 20 points. That is 41 of their points off turnovers and offensive rebounds, and to your point in that third quarter, that was a key stretch.

Third quarter I believe they had five offensive rebounds for 12 points in that quarter alone. I think we had four turnovers for eight points, so 20 of their points in that quarter came off things that we can control.

We did a poor job guarding the three tonight. 16 threes. We gave up too many to obviously Jordan Poole and Klay, and then the fouling. The free throw discrepancy, they got there 29 to our 13. We must do a much better job of defending without fouling namely Jordan Poole, who played a great game tonight.

Q. I know you said you wanted to limit their three-point shooting and their attempts. Where do you think the breakdowns were?

MICHAEL MALONE: Yeah, the attempts is pretty good. They're a team that likes to shoot into the 40s, so we did a

decent job of limiting the attempts, but we just had too many breakdowns within the game plan.

As I mentioned to our players all week, as I mentioned to you guys pregame, we can't beat ourselves and the Warriors in the same game, and we did that tonight, whether it was the 41 points off turnovers and rebounds, whether it was blown coverages -- like there was a blown coverage where we should have guarded a play a certain way, we don't, and then we even make matters worse by fouling Steph Curry shooting three free throws.

Just too many lack-of-discipline examples coupled with everything else, and that's why we got beat pretty good tonight.

Q. You had mentioned before the game about how much success you had in the regular season getting to the free-throw line against these guys. Is there something different about playoff basketball or is there a different approach that has to be taken by your guys to get to the line?

MICHAEL MALONE: Well, yeah. I think being more aggressive, playing with an attack mindset, playing in attack mode. We'll watch the film. Obviously Nikola Jokic played 34 minutes and got to the foul line two times, so that's something we'll look at the film to see what they're doing because they're doing a really effective job of keeping him off the foul line, and I think there were some times where his jersey was getting pulled out a lot. So I don't know, we've got to see how they're guarding him and how we can make them pay for how they're guarding him. But overall we have to be much more aggressive like they were tonight, and maybe that leads to a lot more than 13 free throw attempts.

Q. I think Joker had 11 shots before he got a foul called against him, and that was late in the third quarter. Do you think he was not aggressive enough or something else going on there?

MICHAEL MALONE: No, I thought Nikola was pretty aggressive. 25 shots, 34 minutes, I thought he was -- obviously we're going to him in the post, in the high post,



on the elbows, everywhere on the floor. I thought there were many examples of Nikola being aggressive, playing to the basket. Obviously depending upon who was on the floor for them, they guarded him a little bit differently, one-on-one at times and then they brought a double-team once in a while.

But at least from my vantage point prior to watching the film, I felt Nikola had the requisite mindset tonight of kind of being aggressive to the rim.

Q. You mentioned the second-chance points. They only grabbed one more offensive rebound to outscore you 12 on second-chance points. What goes into getting a stop after they get that offensive rebound, or are you more concerned with limiting the offensive rebounds?

MICHAEL MALONE: No, that's a good question because in our four head-to-head meetings this year they only averaged four offensive rebounds for eight points. We did a really good job in the four regular-season games. But we did talk about rebounding being a key because the number of long shots, long rebounds, but they also are tremendous in terms of turning those offensive rebounds into dagger threes. Steph Curry when he shoots a dagger three I think is at 49 percent on the season. It's one of the best times to get an open three is on the offensive rebound.

To your point, if you do give up the offensive rebound, well, you've got to scramble, multiple effort, fly around, find shooters so we're not just giving up -- because again, 10 offensive rebounds is a pretty good number. But for that to lead to 20 points is not good enough, again, the rebounding and the turnovers were very, very costly tonight.

Q. What transpired with DeMarcus's first technical and second technical?

MICHAEL MALONE: Yeah, I asked Karl Lane after the game why the first technical was called. It happened right in front of me. I did not see or hear DeMarcus do anything from my vantage point that would have required a technical foul to be called, and I think the ensuing one, I guess Scott Foster said he said a few choice words which warranted the second technical foul.

Again, I did not see or hear anything for that first tech, so that's something that we can look at and maybe speak to the league about because from my vantage point, it just didn't seem warranted.

Q. How did they make things tougher on Gordon tonight?

MICHAEL MALONE: Yeah, they're a really good defensive team. I think that's one thing that really hasn't been talked about a whole lot. I think during the regular season they were a top-five defense. Closing out the season they were even more improved on the defensive end of the floor.

We scored 107. A lot of that came late, let's be honest, in that fourth quarter when we scored 37. They made it tough for everybody.

But we go 11 for 35, and we just did not shoot the ball well, and Aaron Gordon is at his best when he's attacking. We don't want to just settle for threes as a team, we want to put pressure on the rim, we want to put pressure on the officials to get to the foul line, and I think Aaron, when he plays with that attack mindset, as you know, we all know, he's a different player and he helps take this team to a different level.

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