

Golden State Warriors

Media Conference

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Steph Curry

Postgame Media Conference



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Q. What did it feel like physically, and were there any hiccups were? Was it pretty smooth out there for you?

STEPH CURRY: It was smooth for the most part, understanding it was nice to get back out there. It was nice to feel a playoff vibe again. Obviously it's different coming off the bench and trying to make the most of the minutes that are appropriate right now and had to kind of control adrenaline for the first six minutes until I got out there and everything went fine.

And obviously JP, do what he did, Draymond bringing the energy, defensive presence, just IQ; Klay getting off to a great start; and then you know, everybody else stepping up and playing an amazing game, it was nice to just be out there with my guys and a step in the right direction.

Q. Can you take us through the decision to come off the bench and do you expect that to continue into Game 2?

STEPH CURRY: I have no expectations on what's next. We're always trying to figure this out because this is kind of a tough situation to deal with in terms of the quick ramp up that I've had, and then this is a playoff-type intensity and atmosphere.

But I learned a lot even just watching Klay's comeback. There's an energy to start in terms of that's what I do, it's what I expect. But there's also like how can you make those minutes the most impactful. And when I watched him go through it when he came back, you know, that's a long time he was sitting end of the first, most of the second and you're trying to find a rhythm.

So I want to play kind of, I guess just a constant pace throughout the game; and knowing what my allotment was coming off the bench and playing those six minutes in every quarter was probably the right move. And we'll see what happens with me and Rick's conversations with how I

come out the game and respond tomorrow and into Monday.

Q. Impressive jacket.

STEPH CURRY: Thank you.

Q. Coat. Are you able to visualize the potential for the three-guard lineup when you guys are out there with Wiggs and Draymond and how good it might be able to be?

STEPH CURRY: When you look at it on paper, what we all can do, there's just a lot of space on the floor. A lot of shooting, a lot of play-making; and if we can defend and rebound, you push in transition, it's really hard to guard us.

Technically I guess we are undersized but you have to bring a defensive force and effort and energy, and then you can again just turn it into an advantage on the other end of the floor. Seeing JP be able to make plays in the pick-and-roll with me and Klay spaced and Draymond setting and Wiggs slashing, like kind of, you know, it checks a lot of boxes on the list of like what would you want for a potent offensive lineup.

If we can do the job defensively it, puts us in a good position to make teams kind of pay on the other end.

Q. We had talked about that group for a while, and I don't know if you maybe played a couple minutes before this one together; did it feel natural? Jordan came in and went boom, boom, boom with you guys. Was it natural? Did it take adjustment? What was the feeling like?

STEPH CURRY: It was just playing basketball. Really it's kind of an easier transition because you just kind of keep things simple. The matchup works where you put -- get you a lot of pick-and-rolls, and then you have to have good spacing on the back side and then we have options. If you keep things simple, don't turn the ball over, you're probably going to get a good shot.

Thankfully we made a bunch of them tonight. And the only



difficulty I could see is if you have a guy getting the hot hand, just making sure you put him in the right positions and don't over-complicate it. We'll continue to grow with that group, and even if you throw Otto out in that lineup, we have options. Andre, as well. We got different looks to kind of answer different matchups as we go along.

Q. How easy, I mean, it's team work but how easy it for someone like you or Klay to say, let Jordan go do it for a couple sessions, given everything you guys have achieved?

STEPH CURRY: It's more that he's capable. Again you give teams a different look. Like, again, you put him in a pick-and-roll to play make, and you've got Draymond in the pocket, you've got me and delay on the back side, I don't think teams have gone through scenarios where you're trying to decide who you're going to come off of.

Again, we just have to keep things simple, be decisive, play with that type of confidence in each other. JP is a part of that now, and he's demonstrated he's ready for pretty much any moment.

Q. To what extent is Jordan's play and his presence, to what extent does that make you willing and comfortable to ease your way back in today?

STEPH CURRY: That's a huge part of it, especially how he finished the season the last two months, basically. But it's also confidence in what we do as a team, and it's like the third time I've done it in a playoff series coming off an injury. I've got a little bit of experience.

But it's also like just that we can -- I can hopefully provide a lot of energy when I come off the bench. But the way JP and Klay started the game offensively, gave us a big boost. So we'll see how it goes the rest of the series.

Q. Jordan had that play with about three minutes before halftime where he came in transition and cut back and forth through the key for that layup and you guys stared each other down. Andre came out at one point in the second half on the court and talked to him, and he said there's no better feeling right now than having the vets who have been through this support him and give him that kind of guidance. Do you sense that he's just soaking it all in and just going for it?

STEPH CURRY: Absolutely. That's his personality. You know, he doesn't lack confidence in himself. But it's also again trying to make sure he understands how he can influence a game, influence a series.

It's nice to know like after probably like the first three

minutes when he got his bearings straight, he remembered it's just basketball. It's just the same way he's been playing the last two months of the season and everything he's done to prepare himself for this moment. Once you get over that mental hurdle, you kind of just become more free. That play embodied it. Because you just have the creativity, confidence in yourself to make a play. You don't second guess yourself. You kind of live with the results and we've all done it for years and he's stepping into that now. It's fun to see.

Q. You mentioned the other day that a big part of the rehab for this injury is managing it. What does it look like for the next 48 hours?

STEPH CURRY: A lot of ice. It's tough because of the balance between rehab and therapy part and managing it, but also trying to get as much work in to get my skillset right.

Because I talked about it, like first three weeks, I literally couldn't do anything on my feet. And then you have a ten-day stretch where you have to be mindful of how much I'm on my feet and doing all that stuff while I'm trying to get reps in and get shots open.

Rick came up to me during the second quarter, and I already knew it but he was just trying to remind me, like I only have one scrimmage, and you know, you're trying to match playoff speed and all that. I've been through it so I have an expectation. I know how to do it, but it's also a reminder of the big picture, knowing what we're trying to build towards, knowing we're trying to play for two and a half months.

It's a tough balance, because tomorrow, like I'd love to just go get shots up and all that, but got to clear some hurdles first.

Q. It's one game and this is one series, and that's my disclaimer, but curious about your perspective on the bigger picture. If you go back to the regular season, you come out of the gate crazy, and so title contention becomes part of the conversation immediately. You navigate injuries and all these different things, and by the end of it, Phoenix is jumping ahead and conversations around your team has changed. Did you need a game like this where you see how dynamic these guys can be together? Because you're not just beating the Nuggets, you're taking it to them in the kind of way that if you can replicate that, you have that swagger back; there's one goal in mind. Does it change the outlook at all?

STEPH CURRY: For the guys that have been there and



understand what that journey is like, and at this stage of the season and playoff chase, yeah, you start to kind of think about like what's next. That is because we've been there and we know there's no guessing.

But it's also like a reminder that this group hasn't done it yet. And so no conversations in the locker room or in our practices, our preparation is about anything other than how do you win Game 1, how do you win Game 2 coming up Monday, and then take it from there. That's the only way we're going to get to where we want to go.

So yes and no.

Q. How about you? You're still finding your way back, coming off the bench. For you, this is a blow and you're getting comfortable but then you took it to them. That's a pretty good sign, no?

STEPH CURRY: It's a great sign. But if you look at years past in our runs from 2015, we swept New Orleans, and then we are down 2-1 the next series and you face a little adversity. So you know that's coming at some point, and how we'll respond, we'll see.

But right now it's literally about, to your point, taking that confidence from Game 1, how do you double down on that next game, find your niche, put in niche plays, your go-tos, pet plays that you want to form an identity around, whatever lineups are going to be the most potent.

And then hopefully when you look up, you've got four wins in this first round, and you go back to the drawing board and understand the challenge only gets harder. There's a good energy and good belief in what we're doing in that we can be that team and it's not just talk. But at the same time, this team hasn't done it yet. So we can't get too ahead of ourselves.

Q. Do you ever in a defensive matchup worry about if Draymond can handle it?

STEPH CURRY: No, never. His IQ is crazy just in terms of being able to make those adjustments based on who he's guarding what challenge it is. He's just always in the mix. He don't have to prove who he is anymore but he continues to go out and impact the game. You know, the eye test is crazy when you watch him where he's at on the floor, in a match against Jokic in a post-up situation, like he finds ways to make his presence felt. It's great to see him peaking at the right time after all he's been through this season.

Q. You've obviously had a front-row seat the last month and a half to Jordan's surge. Especially with

the stuff he's doing with Draymond, DHOs, are you ever like, looks like me out there a little bit?

STEPH CURRY: Yeah, because our system, it's predicated on ball movement, player movement and everybody being in sync, and Draymond, obviously talked about his defensive IQ. His offensive IQ as a playmaker depending how guys are guarding him, he makes sure to get everybody involved. There's some patterns that JP has figured out that made the game a little bit easier but he's also different, too. He's got that shiftiness and change of speed and stuff. He just continues to find a way to make the defensive pay for how they are going to guard him. It's only going to continue to elevate from here.

Q. How important is your defense when you're going in this small unit, and did you know or understand that this has been your best defensive statistical season and how proud are you of that?

STEPH CURRY: I need that clip from him, and I need to send that to Mike Brown. Because we had this like defensive grade thing and some other like metrics that he's been --

Q. Did you win --

STEPH CURRY: No, early in the season. We had some may tricks -- any time he comes at with me some pointers, I'm going to play that clip for him, let him know that I'm here. Appreciate you.

Q. You got a nickname for that closing unit yet?

STEPH CURRY: No, that's y'all's jobs, right? See, it's hard to keep doing it over and over again. Hard stuff we all do.

Q. Draymond said it was clearly wired and important for him to get to Game 1. Did you sense that he was on edge and beaming for playoffs, to get back in the playoffs?

STEPH CURRY: For sure. And this is an interesting week because you had -- finished the year strong, he played a couple back-to-backs to get his body going and then you've got to wait six days while the play-in tournament is going on which is obviously fun to watch.

You get sick of -- I think I was the only one, I think I said it yesterday, I was the only one that enjoyed practice because that was my only time to get reps in. Everybody else is coming off that end of the year good down the stretch and they just want to keep playing and get back out there. Yesterday's practice was funny, because it was

preparation but everybody was kind of pissed off because it was another day to have to wait.

Today was just a different vibe knowing the game was here and we had an opportunity to go out and just compete and enjoy a playoff atmosphere again. Draymond definitely brought the juice today and we'll need more of it.

Q. I've got to ask you about the shoes. You pulled out the Curry 6s from Ten and the Town (ph). Obviously a tribute to my high school; correct?

STEPH CURRY: Obviously. Obviously. Obviously.

Q. What was the motivation for pulling out the classics?

STEPH CURRY: It was that and knowing we haven't been in a playoff series since -- so passing the torch off. There was also some Tech stuff in the shoes for my foot to make sure I was in good shape. It was like my Forrest Gump, just trying to learn how to run and walk again situation.

There were some great moments. Like I said, still a young building and environment and trying to find its identity but it was loud at times. Went on some runs. There was a moment, I don't know if it was the third quarter or fourth quarter, I can't remember, end of the third, I think we got up to an 18-, 20--point lead, 18, something like that and JP got fouled in transition and it was almost like the lead was so big, you lose the anxiousness the moment.

That's where you remind yourself, like this is a playoff game. Every possession is important. I start pointing at the scoreboard like trying to get everybody hyped knowing that you've got to build on that momentum every game to create that home-court advantage. It's only going to get better as the stakes get higher and higher.

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