

NBA Western Conference First Round: Nuggets vs Warriors

Monday, April 18, 2022

San Francisco, California, USA

Golden State Warriors

Steph Curry

Game 2: Postgame



Golden State Warriors 126, Denver Nuggets 106.

Q. With about four minutes left in the second quarter, you hit -- split Jokic and Monte, hit a layup, you were running back and you were yelling, "I'm back." What in that moment made you feel that that was a moment to proclaim that you were back and what were you feeling in that moment?

STEPH CURRY: Just starting to find a rhythm. Like first game, missing that much time, coming off the bench, trying to get used to the speed of the game again. Somewhat impactful the first game but didn't really feel like normal, like it had a real flow.

The first half, little pep in my step and the body felt good. Was kind of able to get to some spots. You make certain shots, feels a little bit different and more normal and more emotion comes out, especially with that layoff, so it was a nice feeling.

Q. Can you take us through that exchange between you, Gary and Jokic starting the second quarter?

STEPH CURRY: Nah.

Q. You looked to be determined to get to the rim, especially when you have the lineup out there. How much of that was you saying, I want to get inside because we can, and how much of that was just the floor is so spread, the lanes just look wide like that?

STEPH CURRY: It's just trying to be decisive what we were getting. A possession at the end of the second quarter where I forced a tough sidestep to the right shot and I was thinking about that for a long time just because like you said, the floor, the space, there were a lot of driving angles, even if you were not the one going to be finishing, that's when the reactions from the defense starts,

and we have so many shooters and play-makers out there. You kind of have to make them pay. That's where all the flow starts to happen and where all the good open shots -- we love to play that way, and it's demoralizing for a defense.

So just trying to be very decisive, like don't force anything, because if you get attack to the lane or a swing-swing, you get them to react, somebody is going to be open, and you just knock them down.

Q. What are your thoughts on watching Jordan specifically get to the basket? You know how difficult it is, but he seems to have a way about him where he can wiggle and get to the cup. How impressed are you with your protégé's ability to do that?

STEPH CURRY: It's always been a part of his game but just picking and choosing his spots and understanding how teams are going to guard him and pick-and-roll. Again, taking advantage of the space that's out there.

But teams have to respect his jumper, and how lethal he is kind of pulling up; that he can get guys to press up on him and he can blow by them and he's obviously got a quick first step and he's pretty crafty with his finishes, left hand, right hand, all different angles. So it's tough to guard. Especially you have shooter space on either side of him.

And the beauty is he's been able to balance all of it, the shooting, the driving and like setting up guys with some crazy passes and getting everybody involved. Like that's another evolution of his game. It's not just the scoring. It's picking and choosing your spots and making defensive space if he gets a little extra attention.

Q. Draymond says when he feels he's getting under somebody's skin, he just presses even more. Do you sense that he's getting to Jokic? And also, did you have a feeling you guys could make so many deflections and get the steals that you got tonight?

STEPH CURRY: He loves a challenge. Draymond loves a challenge. We understand that it's not like you're just going to shut Jokic out. You're not going to keep him in

single-digit scores. He was MVP of the league last year, and see what happens this year.

It's a thing where you just make him work for the entire course of the game and try to frustrate him as much as possible and try to make things difficult, even if he scores, you want things to be difficult. That's what Draymond loves about this matchup is he still has, what, 26-11-4, but it's how you get that. And that's where we can then turn that into good momentum for our side, Draymond stays engaged, he makes them play on the other end of the floor and we all have to do our job behind him but in that one-on-one matchup nothing is going to be easy. If you're going to score, you have to earn it and that's Draymond's M.O.

Q. There were a lot of memorable sequences with the three-guard tonight but was there one in particular that stood out? Do you have like a favorite?

STEPH CURRY: I can't pick one. It's just that feeling when everything starts to click and how fast we can play, and we still only had nine turnovers.

So like there are a lot of back-to-back to back plays where it's kind of pick your poison and everybody was kind of getting involved. I can't pick one. It's just that emotion, that feeling, that momentum we were able to create got the crowd into it. You could tell it was affecting them on the other side. Every time you look down, you're trying to figure something out. So that's playoff basketball in terms of if you can get a team to have to worry about so many different things, like makes the game a little easier.

Q. Are you expecting to return to the starting lineup at this point or does it matter at this point?

STEPH CURRY: Like I said before, most of it is trying to figure out what appropriately -- or how we can appropriately increase my minutes and then figure out what that looks like. Right now the goal is to make my minutes impactful as much as possible. So, we will see, and I'm pretty sure we don't give any of that away before I get back to the starting lineup.

Q. How is your foot feeling? On Thursday you said you were dealing with some mild discomfort. Has that gone away?

STEPH CURRY: It's still there but it doesn't matter. That's part of understanding what it's going to feel like now and throughout this whole playoff run and how I can manage it and continue to try to make progress, even though I'm back playing.

So I'm not worried about it but want to keep trying to push in the right direction where every game I feel a little bit better and a little bit better. Not there but I'm getting close.

Q. Steve Kerr and Draymond both made comparisons saying Jordan Poole looks kind of like you; they see some resemblance in your guys' games. And obviously there's only going to be one Steph Curry, but what have you thought about and what do you think of those comparisons with Poole?

STEPH CURRY: The maturation of his game in these three years has been unbelievable. Just his confidence in himself to be able to take it up another notch at this stage, it's extremely impressive. You can give the direction and the X's and O's and the approach and all that, but you've got to go out there and do it. The player has to go out there and do it and that's what JP is doing night after night. That can't be taught. That's something that you either have or you don't. I'm glad that he has it.

Q. How does the team recreate the energy to play Thursday in Denver?

STEPH CURRY: Just understand we haven't done anything yet. It's the old, cliché staying, series doesn't start until somebody loses at home. But understanding, the attention to detail and our game plan, knowing it's going to be a lot harder to get a win on the road but we obviously are capable if we take care of our business, continue to play defense at a high level, continue to take care of the ball, forcing them to defend a lot of different actions.

And then how you deal with adversity. That's going to happen at some point in the series. There's going to be a crazy run that they make. Their crowd is going to be into it. And we have to kind of impose our will, hopefully pretty quick when we get up there.

Draymond said in the locker room, Game 3 shoes, because you can snag that momentum, and then try to get greedy after that. So it's going to be a hard-fought game on Thursday.

Q. You and JP combined for 63 points tonight. What's it like being out there with a guard who has similar, in many ways, skillset with you, and the things that you guys can both do that can really do things to defenses?

STEPH CURRY: It's hard to game plan against because you have to give up something and in those moments we've still got Klay on one side and Draymond out there being a play-maker, Otto, Wiggs, Andre when he's healthy, Belly was out there for a little bit. There's just a lot of

options. And for teams to make those decisions on the fly, it's difficult especially when we are playing fast.

It helps, not that we don't take turns, but like you can put him in a pick-and-roll, me and Klay with space in the corner, there can be secondary and third options if they want to trap him; or guys stay home, it's us, and he has all the room in the world to make plays.

All it is is just being decisive. Keep saying that just know we are trying to get on every possession, take care of the ball and usually going to have an open shot and we live with those, every possession.

Q. Draymond got up there, looked at the stat sheet and just said, Wow, commenting about your plus 32. What does that number mean to you? Is it significant?

STEPH CURRY: Make my minutes impactful. That was the goal.

Q. Safe to say, there will be a lot of star players that it wouldn't sit well with them; the idea of coming off the bench after being out for a while. How do you manage to look at this through a different lens?

STEPH CURRY: It helps that I've been through it a couple times and had to make that decision where like what's really important, is it about starting and then just having that moment where you get your name called and is that really that important, or can you think about the big picture of, again, like when you're forced into a minute restriction, it kind of makes the decision a little easier.

But like I want to be out there with a constant kind of flow throughout the game. Obviously I want to be out there in the closing lineup in big moments of games and maybe change that narrative a little bit in terms of the cards you get dealt with an injury and missing that much time and coming right back. It's about just winning the basketball, and obviously the versatility to try to be able to do it a lot of different ways.

Proud of the way that we have all handled that situation, and we'll continue to make hopefully the right decisions as we keep going.

Q. At what point does Jordan Poole shoot the technical free throws?

STEPH CURRY: Never (laughter). Never. Even I miss ten in a row, you see me right there.

Q. Stepped up to the line that first time.

STEPH CURRY: I like that healthy competition because obviously I know he edged me out in the season-long race. He set high standards for shooting free throws. Yeah, it's going to take a lot more than one free throw champ to get me off that line for the techs.

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