

# NBA Western Conference First Round: Nuggets vs Warriors

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

San Francisco, California, USA

## Golden State Warriors

### Steve Kerr

#### Game 5: Postgame



Golden State Warriors 102, Denver Nuggets 98

STEVE KERR: Just want to say congrats to Denver on a hell of a series. The first thing we told our team before the series started was how experienced and tough Denver is. They came back from 3-1 down. They have got a team that's stuck together now for years. I think they came back from 3-1 down twice in the same season.

So it's a group that it has just, you know, they have been together. They have been through the battle, so we knew it was going to be really difficult. Mike does a hell of a job. Jokic is ridiculous. Really happy to not have to worry about him anymore.

But they had a hell of a season with all the injuries and I hope they get healthy. I also want to just mention how happy I am for DeMarcus Cousins, you know, obviously I wanted to win but that guy put his heart on the line for us several years ago and he's been through hell, torn Achilles, torn ACL. He's a great guy. He was a great teammate here and really, really fun for me to just see him play so well. I can say that now because we won. He had a great series.

**Q. Starting the fourth quarter down eight, what were your thoughts at that moment and what was difference in the fourth quarter?**

STEVE KERR: I think it's been three years since we've been in the playoffs and you kind of forget how difficult close out games are and I think our guys felt that the entire way. Denver, they had nothing to lose. They played really well for three quarters.

But eight points is nothing. That's what I said to the team. Eight points is just a couple of minutes with two or three stops in a row and a couple buckets and we're right there and I think we felt that playoff pressure for the first time in a

few years, and our guys responded.

But to be honest, for three quarters, our main guys, Steph, Draymond, Klay, maybe they had forgotten a little bit about how difficult it is to close out a series.

**Q. How would you describe what you got to Gary?**

STEVE KERR: I don't know how to begin on that one. His defense in the fourth quarter was fantastic. That's why I stayed with him. But then he started knocking down threes and getting to the rim for a couple lay-ups. I thought he was just a huge factor in the game and he deserved to stay out there with the way he was playing so we kept him out there the whole fourth, and he came through big time.

**Q. Is this what you saw from him, several points during the season? A lot of times role players will have not regular season moments but he always seemed like a fourth quarter-type player.**

STEVE KERR: Doesn't seem to phased by anything. I guess when you've bounced around like he has, been in the G-League, played on ten-day contracts, never really found a home, there's a lot more pressure in that than there is in playing in a high-stakes game.

He's found a home here. He's always seemed comfortable on the floor. Never seems overwhelmed. His defense is elite and he's a very unique offensive player. But he's worked so hard on his three-point shot, and I think that was really a big factor in his growth this year and his ability to stick and make a big impact for our team.

**Q. How would you evaluate Draymond and everyone swarming on Jokic?**

STEVE KERR: What Draymond does, it's hard to quantify. The stats never do him justice. I just I feel like he's built for the playoffs. This is what he's all about when you can actually exert the energy that he exerts and the competitive force and get a day off the next day and not have three games in five nights in every city and all that stuff. The regular season is kind of hard for him because the games are not as meaningful, and he's at his best when the



games are the most important.

**Q. This game had a lot of shoulders and elbows, a lot of fouling and so forth, kind of ugly. What did you think you had to do to kind of bring the game back to what you guys want to do on offense especially?**

STEVE KERR: I thought when we started getting stops in the fourth quarter and we didn't foul. So the game started to flow and we finally started to move the ball. I thought we were really forcing shots the whole first half. Everybody was kind of anxious, trying to do it on their own a little bit.

They shot 20 free throws in first half, too, so we were bringing the ball up the floor against their halfcourt defense which is excellent, and they are fifth-ranked defense in the league in terms of playing in the halfcourt.

So you've got to be able to beat them in flow, in transition, and even after if they make a shot, you know, Draymond can push it up but after a free throw, they are just sitting there waiting for you.

So second half was way better, only nine free throws compared to 20. We got a lot of stops. We held them to 44 percentage shooting, 6-for-29 from three. We are getting stops and then that allowed us to flow and the ball started to move.

**Q. You mentioned Gary's defense in the fourth quarter, but what about overall the team, Nuggets only scored six points in the first eight minutes of the quarter and seemed like you said you got a bunch of stops in a row that you had not gotten earlier. What changed or did anything change?**

STEVE KERR: I just think that the lineup that was out there really set a tone with Gary and Otto. That's why we stayed with them throughout that fourth quarter because that group was playing so well with Steph, Klay and Draymond.

So it was all about the defense.

Gary is right there. You'd rather talk to him.

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