

NBA Western Conference First Round: Nuggets vs Warriors

Wednesday, April 27, 2022
San Francisco, California, USA

Denver Nuggets Nikola Jokic

Game 5: Postgame

Warriors 102, Nuggets 98

Q. Nikola, you said all year nobody expected you to be competitive. How do you feel in the aftermath of losing tonight?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I mean, we fought, and that's the most important thing. We didn't quit. They were up 3-1. We beat them at home. It was interesting game. I think today was interesting game.

We were playing the really good basketball. Feels like we could do a little bit different in the end. We lost probably focus, probably too much you wanted to do too much. I think it feels like the first two games were where they get the lead, and then when we were playing at the home we kind of figured out, Yes, we can play and give ourselves a chance, be interesting.

I mean, they executed in the end. That's why they're a really good team.

Q. How much was your hamstring bothering you tonight?

NIKOLA JOKIC: That's a weird feeling. I had one hook. Actually I was jumping really weird. Felt a little bit different. It wasn't something big.

Q. How are you able to just put your head down and go to work like you do?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I thought even in the start of the season, like, we have what we have. We cannot think, Oh, this guy is going to come back, this guy is going to come back. People forget we lost P.J. P.J. was injured. I think he was a big part of our basketball. The guy who is six, I don't know, seven, eight, nine. He can handle the ball, guard multiple positions. He knows our system. I think we miss



him.

We miss Mike and Jamal, then Vlatko was having some playing time, he get injured. Yes, it's Mike and Jamal the most, but I think we missed him a lot, P.J., in that stretch.

Q. What are your immediate plans in the next few days?

NIKOLA JOKIC: Hopefully I'm going to leave to Serbia as soon as possible.

Q. Looking forward, one of your agents a couple months ago indicated you would likely be signing a super max extension. If that is the case, what would it mean to secure that?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I mean, I would like it, of course, but it's not something that I'm deciding. I think, of course, if offer is on the table, of course I'm going to accept it because I really like the organization, I really like the people who works here. I'm in really good relationship with everybody from owner to equipment manager.

I think we have something that we're building. It actually feels really good.

Q. Do you still feel as good about this future in terms of what this group can do fully healthy?

NIKOLA JOKIC: We don't know what we can do because we were not healthy.

But, yes. Do we have some talent? Yes. Can we do something? Probably you can see through the league teams are making super teams and they're not making any success, let's say like that.

I think we have talent. We have players. We have pieces. We have tools. The only thing is are we going to work together. That's the only thing. That's the question. You cannot know that until you start playing.

Q. It seemed like you were able to find more success going against Draymond Green throughout the series.



What did you learn with your matchup against him?

NIKOLA JOKIC: That he's a great player. I mean, give the guy credit. I think, to be honest, he stopped much better offensive players than me through his career, through his playing, whatever.

I really appreciate whatever he's doing for them because that's a tough position. He needs to do everything. He's really accepting the role and really being the best that he can be in that role. He's a big part of their rings, their championships. I think that's really hard to do.

There is not a lot of people who can do that, just accepting to be that guy, like a glue guy who is going to do a little bit of everything for them. He's a great guy. You can hear him talking non-stop in defense. He's actually their eyes and their ears.

Amazing player. I really, really appreciate our matchup. Like one time he stops me, one time I score. I think it was interesting to watch.

Q. He said after the game that he talked to you and thanked you for making him better. He said you are far from soft, you're incredibly talented. You're so smart. What is it like trying to match IQ and wits with him? Like playing chess?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I think it's just like look in each other's eyes. He's looking our coach when our coach makes a common play. He knows the game. He learn a lot through the years. He knows situation. He knows the time to score. Is it a chess match? Maybe yes, maybe no. I think, like I said, it was interesting.

To be honest, I learn a lot from him, just how to get open shots, how to be where I supposed to be, so...

Q. Very possible you could win a second MVP. What would that mean? Is that something you ever dreamed of?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I mean, I never dream about it. It's something that if it happened, it's a great thing of course. It's something that probably legacy, my name is always going to be there. But if I don't get it, I'm not going to die. I'm just going to keep playing, keep trying to play the right way like I did my whole life.

It would be nice, but if it happens happens.

Q. If that happens, how will you celebrate?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I mean, I don't know. Probably with some

music, beer, friends around, family. Like how you supposed to do probably.

Q. How much are you looking forward to being able to mentally unplug after three consecutive years of grueling basketball?

NIKOLA JOKIC: A lot, to be honest. Just going home, being around my family, being around my friends, being around my horses. I have a daughter now, so it's going to be even better.

I just hope that I'm going to have a - how you call it - non-stressful, stress-free summer. Hopefully I'm going to come back for the season.

Q. About your daughter, being a father, how does that change your perspective?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I mean, just feel bad because whenever I'm on the road, she's bigger when I come back. She really loves her mom, probably supposed to be like that. Just show me that is the most important thing. Everything else is just there.

Q. DeMarcus said he felt you were one of the most disrespected MVPs. You tell all the time you don't care about the awards. Do you care about the respect?

NIKOLA JOKIC: I mean, I cannot control that. I respect every player in NBA. I think it's really hard to get here, especially like how I get here. I know how hard is to do that. So I respect every person, every player that come here. Not just the players. You can see the coaches coming here and being here 10 years and they improve maybe one or two spots. People don't know. Probably they think we are living the best life. It's work. It's a daily work. Basically like you guys, we are working every day.

Like I said, I cannot control if someone respect me or not. Of course I appreciate it. I cannot control how other people are having feelings or what did they thinking about me.

Q. Does it ever bother you?

NIKOLA JOKIC: What?

Q. When people don't seem to respect your talent.

NIKOLA JOKIC: Can't care less, brother.

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