

NBA Western Conference Semifinals: Warriors vs Grizzlies

Saturday, May 7, 2022

San Francisco, California, USA

Golden State Warriors

Steve Kerr

Game 3: Postgame



Golden State Warriors 142, Memphis Grizzlies 102

Q. You said it was mostly about your offense the last game and shots would be there and if you make it you would be fine. Was this game mostly your offense finding a groove?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, the shot selection was much improved. We worked harder to get great shots instead of shooting into shot challenges and moved the ball beautifully. After that first half of sort of phrenetic turnovers, we settled down. We only had three turnovers in the second half. So great night offensively. Competed defensively as well. We tied the game together really well, and it was a good night.

Q. What went into the decision to start Kuminga and how did you think he fared?

STEVE KERR: We wanted to replace Gary's athleticism around the rim. Memphis is a really athletic team, and it's tough to finish at the rim. You saw Gary do it first game several times, and we knew JK could do the same. So just wanted him to get the first crack.

Q. How do you think he fared?

STEVE KERR: I thought he played well. We did not start out the game well. But I didn't think it was JK's fault. I didn't think he did anything wrong. He might have had a turnover there but we were just too phrenetic to start the game. We had a bunch of turnovers and they hit three threes, three long threes at the end of the shot clock and got that early lead. So slow start but as I said we settled down after that.

Q. Is this the most mixing and matching and shuffling of guys you've done in a playoff series, starting lineup?

STEVE KERR: I don't remember, frankly. You know, we've had a lot of playoff games. We've probably had some time like this with injuries where Steph was out or someone was out and we had to do some of that.

But yeah, I mean, we've got good players. We've got a lot of depth. We feel like we've got a lot of options, a lot of good options.

Q. They hit a bunch of threes early, but generally seemed like you held the difficult shots. What did you like or not like defensively tonight?

STEVE KERR: I thought we competed better. I thought even though Ja had another huge night, I thought we made things tougher on him at the rim. He scored some buckets over some really good verticality plays which we'll live with.

But I thought we just made it tougher on them in general overly tonight defensively.

Q. We've asked you about Otto Porter all off-season; was there a point where you saw in the season that he fights to get the ball or did you know that when you guys signed him?

STEVE KERR: We knew that he was capable of that because we had seen him have great success in the league. But we didn't know with the injury history the last couple years.

So the big thing was when he started out the season healthy and he showed what he could do, it was obvious that he was a great fit for us. You know, whether he was making shots or not, he's just a great player. He understands the game. He's a rebounder, he moves the ball. Otto just knows how to play. He's a really good fit with us.

Q. They were attacking Jordan last game and this game he seemed to be bent on attacking. How critical has his penetration been for your offense?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, fantastic. Jordan, just our ability to



space the floor and get him going downhill, and what he's added to our team, is so important. You know, we're able to put Steph on the bench, and I would say for the series, we're probably winning the non-Steph minutes, which is a big deal for us. Because for a long time, that's been an issue.

But Jordan gives us another pick-and-roll player, another play-maker, another scorer. At the top of the quarter, they kept their starts out there. They figured they were going to make another one, and if they were going to make one, they had to do it then. So they kept Ja on the floor, Steph goes out and Jordan scores three or four buckets in a row to keep them at bay. That was a huge, huge part of the game for us.

Q. Klay found some offensive rhythm. What did you see from him?

STEVE KERR: I loved a couple of shot fakes that he made. Instead of shooting into the shot challenge, he pump-faked and side-stepped a shot. Moved the ball along.

I just thought in general, he got better shots. We got better shots. You know, when you establish a tone where you get good shots, then the tough ones tend to go in. He had the one-legged three-pointer which was not a good shot but by that time he was comfortable, he was in rhythm and you know, he's very capable of making those.

But if he's taking that kind of shot the entire game, it's not going to go well. So I just liked his poise and his patience.

Q. We often talk about aggressiveness of Wiggins. Tonight he had five fouls which is a glimpse of that; a play late in the first half he rips a rebound and goes coast-to-coast and barrels through, and somebody gets the three-point play. Is that what he's trying to do this postseason?

STEVE KERR: That was a big play, just his aggressiveness, the two for one and the tone that it sets. Somebody going to the rim and attacking like that for us.

Wiggs has been great all postseason. Really good in the Denver series and he's been battling on the glass in this series, making some big plays. He's having a great run.

Q. Steve, what did you see on that play where Ja got injured? Apparently Taylor Jenkins just said postgame that he look at the play and it looked like Jordan had yanked him?

STEVE KERR: I didn't -- I didn't even notice. I didn't

notice the play.

Q. You had predicted that it would be loud tonight, and you're undefeated in this building so far in the postseason. You know, there was obviously some wonder about how it would be; would it be like Oracle. What do you feel is the feeling in this place right now, especially like in the third quarter tonight?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, I mean, I think the fans are excited that the playoffs are in this building for the first time; that our team is whole again after the last couple years of kind of getting through the adversity and you know, everybody's enjoying the ride. So we've got to enjoy it while it lasts.

Q. Another Porter question. Plus 30 tonight and however much you know, he's doing good stuff. Sometimes are you marveling at that plus minus number showing up for him?

STEVE KERR: I think he was plus 17 in Game 2, if I'm not mistaken. It's not a coincidence. You know, he just, like I said, he understands how to play. He's in the right spot all the time. He's made a huge impact on our team.

Q. I know you were talking about Klay earlier. How much of a barometer is he for your offense? It seems like the way he plays and the catch-and-shoot, when he's going well, it sort of typifies your offense. Fair to say and how much was that connected tonight, do you think?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, when we're getting good shots, the chances of Klay getting hot are much greater, and when he gets hot, our team takes on a different look. We just become much tougher to guard.

So I think it's all connected. If we can seek great shots, then Klay is much more likely to get hot.

Q. I know you don't have the complete personnel with the stars and everything, but with the stars that you do have, is this as close to a peak performance you could expect from the guys that you have?

STEVE KERR: It was a performance that I knew was in them, you know, after watching the tape for the first couple games. Memphis is a really fast, athletic team. But on tape, we saw that if we were a little more patient and a little more poised; that we could get some good shots, and I think our players have adapted now to that speed and the type of defense we're facing, and they did a great job tonight of generating better looks.

But it's 2-1. Long way to go. We know that Memphis is a

tough team and they have just got through a difficult series against Minnesota and we know what they are capable of. So we're going to have to continue to play well.

Q. Draymond said yesterday he was going to be his emotional self and whatever the highs and lows of the game, but he did keep his cool through some moments there. You spoke about that earlier in the week. Just everybody not letting this get under their skin, so to speak. What did you think of how he did it on both ends?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, Draymond is always kind of our heartbeat, and I've called him that many times over the years. He sets a tone. I thought, you know, he did a great job leading the team. He talked to the team before the game at the walk-through about coming out, ready to play. You know, Draymond is Draymond. He impacts winning at an incredible level. So he was great tonight and this is what he does.

Q. Obviously the Grizzlies obviously didn't have Brooks. What do you expect in Game 4 with him returning?

STEVE KERR: You just play. You just go out and play. They have got guys who are capable. Melton was fantastic last game. Some huge blocked shots.

You know, we didn't really talk about any absences or anything like that. What I'm expecting from next game is great effort and competitive desire from Memphis because as I said, we know what they are about, what kind of team they are, and so we've got to be ready. It's just 2-1. There's a long way to go.

Q. One more question about Otto. Obviously he's been key to you guys all season but how does it become that much more important with guys like Andre and GP2 out?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, with those guys out, we're really leaning on Otto even more. He's capable of playing matchup positions. He can play across the frontline, 3, 4 or 5. He's done a great job.

Q. 142 is the most you've ever scored in a playoff game. Does that surprise you?

STEVE KERR: That's a lot of points. I'll bet the Nellie Warriors scored more than that in a playoff game.

Q. Nope.

STEVE KERR: In franchise history?

Q. I think I saw San Francisco Warriors in like '67.

STEVE KERR: Take that, Nellie, wherever you are (laughter).

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