

# NBA Western Conference Semifinals: Warriors vs Grizzlies

Monday, May 9, 2022

San Francisco, California, USA

## Golden State Warriors

### Mike Brown

Game 4: Postgame



Golden State Warriors 101, Memphis Grizzlies 98

**Q. Probably about 5,000 questions to ask you tonight, when did you hear that you were going to be coaching tonight and what was -- you've done it before but was it different this time on short notice?**

MIKE BROWN: Yeah, I was putting the minutes sheet together about to walk out for the National Anthem and Steve called me from his house and said Mike, "You've got to get out there before the anthem and coach." So right before tipoff (laughter).

Steve called me on his way in about 4:45 and said he just wasn't feeling well, and he said there's a chance that he may not be able to coach tonight. You know, we've done this drill before, and so I said, okay, and he came in, tested; I get a call back at 5:15 saying that he's out. So that's how I round out.

**Q. Probably like nine questions, but I wanted to ask about Wiggins defensively, seemed like he made a bunch of stops individually.**

MIKE BROWN: Wiggs was fantastic. This game reminded me of Game 2 in Memphis, you know, just kind of an ugly, grind-it-out game. We weren't really making shots. I thought we moved the ball well enough and we spaced the floor well enough to where we had some great looks. They just didn't go in.

And so the one thing that I felt we just needed to do was just stay with it, stay with it, stay with it, and if we did, with the way that we were defending and rebounding, Wiggs had 10, Draymond had 11; one of our biggest keys in this series was we don't want to give these guys extra possessions and, so with Wiggs stepping up and doing that, you know, it helped us. It gave us a huge advantage and our guys stayed with it, and then we made enough

shots and free throws down the stretch.

**Q. How would you describe the first half and the final minute?**

MIKE BROWN: When we went in the back, Chris DeMarco, he says, "Punch 42. Dive 52."

I'm like, "What are you talking about?"

He's said, "We just kept handing the ball off to the fullback left and right, and at the end of the game we kicked a field goal to win it. Hell of a football game." And that's what it was. But that's playoff basketball. Sometimes it's grimy. Sometimes it's gritty.

For me, I know that again, it shows it, because they have turned it into that Game 2 in Memphis and we lost, so they turned it into it again tonight especially with Ja out and our guys found a way.

I'm so proud of them, our leader in Steve being out with COVID right before the game. Draymond, emotionally, he's our emotional heart and soul, and for him to get hit with something that impactful, not only was it you have to for him but we felt it. We felt it as a group.

It was a tough night for us, but at this point in the year, you win ballgames. Doesn't matter how you get there, but you win ballgames and we found a way to win tonight and that's why I'm excited.

**Q. Can you talk about your emotions the last 24 hours, and congratulations on the new job, and what it was like to have that, a lot on your mind and get this news and go through this?**

MIKE BROWN: It was an interesting day for me. You know, obviously everybody knows what's going on, and so going through that process, while still trying to get ready for the game and then finding out, not only that -- I love Draymond, you know, and when he hurts, we all hurt. So that was tough on me personally.

Then to find out Steve was out, too, it was an up and down



or motional day for me, too. Again, all of our guy, Kenny Atkinson, Bruce Fraser, Chris DeMarco, Jama, Deki, all of our coaches were fantastic.

And I said this before when I took over for Steve: Andre Iguodala didn't get enough credit. Andre, I know he's not playing but just his voice, his presence, he's always saying the right thing. It uplifts all of us. And for me, it uplifted me. I told him, I told Draymond, I said, "I need you guys tonight. I need you guys. I'm going to lean on you guys." And those guys stayed steady the whole game, Andre on the bench obviously and Draymond out on the floor, and we found a way. You can do that when you have Steph Curry and JP out on the floor.

**Q. You did take better care of the ball in the first half. How key was that and did you think it was a matter of time for some of those shots to fall, even though Klay's were not falling as much?**

MIKE BROWN: Klay hit a big shot for us in that deep corner. It was huge. That kind of got us going a little bit. I felt eventually, we are too good of a shooting team and the times that we took care of the ball, we got some fantastic looks, and I take those looks with all of our guys at any time. Eventually I thought they would go down. I just wish that they would have started going down sooner.

**Q. Following up on the offense, after the last game you were really emphasizing shot selection and that's what helped lead you to such a great shooting night in Game 3. Did you like the shots that you were getting and it was just a matter of them not going in?**

MIKE BROWN: Early on, I thought we were playing a little frantically, you know, and again, I felt that we have done that before in those playoffs. We have been pretty frantic to start the ballgames and then we settled down. The one thing that I worried about was when we forced the issue turnover-wise driving into their length and athleticism. That was something we didn't do a lot of in our last game.

So when you drive that ball into the teeth of their defense, they collapse so well, they got active hands and they get out to our shooters and make it tough and turn us over.

Once I felt we figured that part out, we get good looks, and we did. I thought past that first quarter and the second quarter and even the third and fourth quarter, we got pretty good looks because our guys just hit singles.

**Q. You said you had gotten off to some rockier starts this series and last series. What needs to happen to not fall behind so early on?**

MIKE BROWN: The biggest thing is just taking care of the ball. Defensively seems like our guys have been pretty locked in getting after their missed shots or getting after the boards has been pretty good. We just had a few unforced turnovers that gave them confidence and kind of took away from our spirit a little bit, and then we rushed some shots.

If we can figure that out for 48 minutes instead of a shorter time, then I think we'll be fine.

**Q. Otto Porter, Junior has been like the unsung Hero coming off the bench. What have you thought about him over the last two games? He was the first to hit a three and that seemed to move things along.**

MIKE BROWN: His feel for the game, his intelligence is at a really high level. We always I feel like we can plug him in as a starter, plug him in coming off the bench and he's going to give us size and he's going to help us space the floor because of his ability to shoot. He's going to take care of the ball.

But the biggest thing, he can guard multiple positions and if he's guarding a bigger guy, he's great putting a body on a body or keeping his man off the glass so somebody else can get it. The versatility he brings to the table is much needed for us, especially at his size because we play small a lot.

**Q. I guess Steph joked, some version, they were shooting like the Kings or turning into the Kings. How much teasing did you get, and why was the Kings the right opportunity or moment for and you are you going to miss some of this, too?**

MIKE BROWN: You know, just to be fair to their organization and our organization, right now I want to focus on this and when that press conference comes, I'll answer any question that you want me to answer.

But yeah, we got a lot of jokesters on the team, and I'm okay with it.

**Q. Is it definitive you'll be wearing the head coaching hat for Game 5, or in theory does Steve have enough time to clear protocols?**

MIKE BROWN: Steve, if you're watching, get healthy quick. (Laughter) I don't know. I don't know.

**Q. You mentioned some of the vets really helped out tonight such as Andre and Draymond. What specifically did they say that really resonated?**

MIKE BROWN: Well, you know, it may not be one point or

two points that they said that turned the tide. It's just, you know, their calmness, knowing that it's a long basketball game. There's no need to panic. Let's do what we do. Move the ball a little bit better. Come to a jump stop here. Box out there. Push the ball with pace and get to the corner, little reminders like that, things we have been talking about the whole series against this team.

To have veterans like Andre and Draymond who have been through the highs and lows of many playoffs series, when they are reassuring the guys of that, it gives everybody else confidence because we are playing guys right now that haven't been as far. Again, their presence, their voice, their calmness, reassurance, all that stuff means a lot for our group especially with Steve being out.

**Q. What was that like for you just taking over the team on this game on this stage with so much on the line at this point? What were the emotions around the entire thing?**

MIKE BROWN: Obviously there's butterflies, because again you're going into the game with a certain mindset and it's a big game. Every game that we play at this point in the year, it's huge.

So to have that kind of thrown at you, you've got to switch gears because I know what my responsibilities are going in as Mike Brown the assistant coach, and it changes. Now you have to manage everything and not necessarily manage the specific things that you are asked to do before game time.

So I had to change hats quickly and like I said, give Draymond, Andre, most of the credit, but our staff is phenomenal, Kenny Atkinson, Bruce Fraser, everybody was great, Jama, they all were terrific the whole game.

**Q. Did you have any conversation with Steph, like we need you to get going, in between the third and fourth quarter, and what do you think he figured out to be able to come through in the fourth?**

MIKE BROWN: The great part about Steph, he's got to be the easiest superstar to be around. I hate to say, I don't know if he has a great memory, which is fantastic. You need that in his position, because he missed shots that he can make in his sleep.

And so because he doesn't think about it or think about the past or dwell on it too hard, he always thinks that the next thing is going to happen in a positive manner for him, whether it's a made shot, or the right pass for an assist or him cutting back at the right time to score a bucket. And he's always that confident because he thinks next play all

the time.

And so I didn't say anything to him because just being around him, I know that he's always thinking about, how can he help the team next, how can he help the team next and that's what it was tonight. He got free on a pindown and knocked a big three for us late. And obviously right place, right time in terms of the box out, gets fouled, goes to the free throw line and knocks six, eight, whatever it is, free throws down in a row. So he'll always be there in my opinion.

**Q. Steve said this is a classic young versus old playoff series, with you guys being experienced; was this one of those, the last five minutes of the game, you saying, stay close and our experience will take over? That's kind of what it looked like.**

MIKE BROWN: Any time you have Steph Curry, Klay Thompson, Jordan Poole on the floor, and a guy that if he wasn't hurt he would have been defensive Player of the Year in Draymond Green on the floor, you know good things can happen. If it's a one- or two-possession game down the stretch, whether you're down or up, you feel pretty confident.

And yes, a lot of it has to do with the playoff experience that these guys have but their talent and IQ in my opinion is second-to-none.

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