

NBA Western Conference Semifinals: Warriors vs Grizzlies

Friday, May 13, 2022

San Francisco, California, USA

Memphis Grizzlies

Taylor Jenkins

Game 6: Postgame

Golden State - 110, Memphis - 96

Q. What was your message to the team after this game today?

TAYLOR JENKINS: Well, first off, congrats to the Warriors. I know Steve's not here tonight but congrats to Steve, Mike Brown, coaching staff, the players. What a heck of a series. Great competitiveness for six games. Tip my cap to them. Heck of a team. They tested us, they made us better, they made me better, so heck of a series, but congrats to those guys.

I just told our group how proud I am of them, I've never been apart of a group like this, how special they are. That's the players, that's the coach, that's staff. This obviously stings, such a special season with a special group and I want them to cherish that and remember that despite this loss and the end of our season right now how this is going to motivate us moving forward. The growth individually, the growth collectively from this season, it's only going to make us better. This is a step in the direction of this bright future that we talk about all the time. As disappointing as it is I had to remind them of everyone's commitment every single day, not the work just in the games but the work in the off-season, the work in the pre-season, non-game days, and at the end of the day what it comes down to is the care factor. I've never been a part of a group, collection of players and staff that have had this level of care, for many years now, but this is a third season here and this group earned everything they got, just wasn't good enough in the end, that's basketball, but I'm just beyond proud of everyone's commitment and care to making this such a special season and that I also know that this is going to motivate them to continue to having that care factor moving forward to continue to build one year at a time to hopefully bring a championship to Memphis.



Q. What did you learn about this team over the post-season?

TAYLOR JENKINS: I mean we can compete with anybody. When we lay it on the line every single day we have a chance to win. But we also have more to do to get better. Wasn't good enough, you want to be at the top of the mountain at the end of the season, that's what all 30 teams want. We had battles throughout the regular season, battles in round one, battles obviously in this round. It's going to make us get better.

We kept talking about it as a coaching staff, the growth that we're getting for our players, the growth that we're getting as coaching staff, we're learning so much in these five, six weeks that we had after the regular season.

But at the end of the day the competitiveness that our guys played with, the togetherness that our guys played with is going to give ourselves a chance every game every year to have success and do special things. When your season ends early like this you want to go deeper, it's going to reveal things that you got to get better at. What are we going to do individually, what am I going to do as a coach, what are we going to do as a team over the next couple of months to cherish what we did and realize what special things we accomplished, but how do we have to get better, what more do we have to do individually and as an entire team to take that next step.

Q. Along those lines, a series like this, six games, two of them were blowouts, but four games essentially decided in the fourth quarter. What do you want them to take from this experience of a series where they went toe-to-toe but ultimately you fall short?

TAYLOR JENKINS: Well it always starts as I said a moment ago with our competitiveness, the energy and effort that you have to have. You got to lay it on the game every single game for 48 minutes and for the majority of season we did that.

In the playoffs everything's magnified, not to get too coachy here, but it's all the little things and I sum it up by how are you going to make the winning plays one after another.



For tonight's game and outside of the two lopsided games in the series, we did that, but then there was just those breakdowns or that mistake there that, can you control that a little bit better. How can I make a decision a little bit better. It's all of us. How we can just find that those little things if they add up enough they could be the deciding factor in the game. Hopefully that's the biggest takeaway. I told the guys our little -- not that we have a checklist or anything -- but I said, when you compete and play with that effort and urgency, that's where it starts. On top of that just find a way to make a winning play every single play. Basketball's not a perfect game for sure but can you make enough winning plays and unfortunately we didn't do enough in this series.

Q. Kevon Looney started today, 11 offensive rebounds, 22 total, just why do you think he made such a big impact today?

TAYLOR JENKINS: Yeah, I mean great adjustment on their part. Obviously them as an entire team, 25 offensive rebounds, we got lucky with the second chance points it probably could have been even way more than 21, they missed some shots. But 21 second-chance points, 25 offensive rebounds, 23 fast break points, that's a recipe for not being successful and we still had a chance. That's the effort and the competitiveness that our guys continue to play with.

But Looney stepped in, he limited us on the offensive boards for sure, his physicality, I thought his positional defense was really good, they utilized him in a couple different coverages and offensively he definitely really hurt us on the boards. That was just a collection of all of our guys needed to do a better job. So it's definitely tough learning right here, give them credit, we'll get better from this.

Q. Looney of course had a good rebounding game, so did Draymond Green. Steven Adams went out at the half or right before the half limping and came back and played. But didn't seem to have that extra. What exactly happened to him and how tough was that on your team?

TAYLOR JENKINS: Yeah, just minor tweak to an I think an ankle down on the far baseline. Got evaluated. That happened multiple times throughout the season, just come back and played just fine. So felt good, obviously he's been a big part of what we've done all season long, but they obviously they had a good game plan to kind of minimize him on both sides of the floor. So just an injury he's dealt with and he was fine in the second half.

Q. How challenging was it for this season to end with

Ja off the court and does it make you think about the way that it ended any differently the fact that he was your leader all year and he wasn't able to play?

TAYLOR JENKINS: I'm not going to go down that path. Obviously I've said the last couple days since we got the news like you have obviously want Ja out there and all season long now at the end of the playoffs having to play without him it's tough. But so proud of the group's effort when that's been the case and I say it when anyone's been out, we had different guys with injuries all season long, COVID, the whole league deals with that. Obviously you want Ja out there but just the way we rallied and two close ones and then we take care of business in Game 5 we've been doing that all season long.

So I know, just like the entire team, he'll be motivated to come back. For all of us this is great learning, how to be healthy at the end of the year and maintain that endurance and all that stuff, how we put the work in in the off-season, how we mentally get better from learning from this, the winning plays that you got to make this is such great experience for all of us.

Q. Have you been able to wrap your mind around yet in terms of why your rebounding was such a strength in the regular season and in this series in five of the six games it became kind of a detriment to your success?

TAYLOR JENKINS: Yeah, I mean can't really put a fingerprint on it right now. I just think our personnel led to a lot of that success during the regular season. I think the collection of it can't just be all on Steven, we talked about that a lot, obviously he's a force down there when it comes to rebounding, but our guards, I saw upticks in their rebounding throughout the year. JJ as well. Just one of those series where they took advantage. They were beating us to the balls, 50/50 balls, their guards were attacking more, we just kind of got away from what we had been doing all season long and it revealed itself and it was definitely a difference maker in this series and this is one of those things that we got to carry with us and despite the disappointment let it be fuel for us to go, Hey, we did it all regular season, this is one of those things, those winning plays that coach talks about, that we talk about having pride in to not let that be a case and a deciding factor.

Q. Dillon Brooks really showed up the last game, he was trying to carry. A little bit about his bounce back, was this a redemption game for him and you were looking for him and he responded?

TAYLOR JENKINS: Yeah, he was great. Shooting the three ball well, we were struggling trying to generate some

offense and whether it was in the flow of the offense, calling plays, he definitely had a hell of a game tonight. The effort that he gives defensively every single night, the bounce that he showed. They made it really tough on all of us, as a team we shot 35 percent, but we're not in this game without his effort, he was phenomenal tonight. Definitely a big bounceback game. This was great DB. All right. Thank you.

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