

# Golden State Warriors Media Conference

Wednesday, June 22, 2022

San Francisco, California, USA

## Bob Myers

Media Conference



BOB MYERS: Before we start, just want to thank everyone in the organization, the coaches, the players, ownership, all our employees. We have 500 full-time and 1,800 part-time employees, and they don't probably get enough recognition for their role in this whole thing.

But winning a championship is obviously hard and it takes a whole organization. Just want to thank everyone that helped pull their weight, and it worked out for us, so it's good.

### Q. (On the draft.)

BOB MYERS: Ready. I guess high-class problem. We've done this five times, so this is six. I didn't know that we'd be doing it again. But we have done it before.

Got to lean on your staff. Got to lean on the people that have been doing it the whole year. I don't think the money is going to be a factor as far as whether we trade out or keep the pick. It'll be if it makes sense, so it won't really be a money decision. We've got like 15, 20 people up on the ninth floor right now watching film and getting the draft order and getting our board aligned.

So we'll be ready. Like I said, we've been in this position before. But you get a guy like Poole it shows you valuable is it to get it right. We don't get it right every time. We have had some guys that haven't worked out.

So, yeah, and then free agency is like 10 minutes after that.

### Q. Roster spot wise, is there any concern as far as do you want to preserve a roster spot potentially for a vet over a rookie?

BOB MYERS: We have a lot of free agents, and so we probably will have roster spots. We'll see what a lot of those guys end up doing, whether they come back or leave. But we feel like if we get a guy -- depends on who we draft. That's the advantage of I guess having the draft before free agency, to see what our needs might be, who

we take, how ready that person is or not.

But like last year we always thought we could fill some of the experience gap in free agency. It's easier to get older guys in free agency and there's more available than youth.

If we end up drafting and keeping it, we'll look to free agency again to kind of fill that experience void.

### Q. How much are you looking to next season being about Wiseman, Kuminga, and Moody getting some minutes, maybe not full rotation minutes, or maybe even rotation minutes? Are you looking to have that next season?

BOB MYERS: If they earn it. Steve did a good job. It wasn't easy to try to kind of assimilate those players, whether it was Wiseman the first year trying to fit him in, Kuminga, Moody.

It's not a perfect thing to do with a team that's trying to win a championship, but I thought he did a really good job of finding moments for them.

This off-season will be big for all three of those guys, just like it was for Poole heading into his third year. All those guys I think are going to play in the Summer League, the ones you mentioned, those three.

Hopefully we'll be ready for training camp, and Steve will get a longer look certainly at James. If those guys earned it and they can help is win, I think Steve will play them.

There will be games where I think Steve doesn't play some of the vets as much like he did last year. There's certain back to backs where guys didn't play. Those will be good games for the younger guys.

The season is so long, especially coming off 103 games for our team, I think there will be times where the young guys might get more of an opportunity.

But there's no kind of mandate or thought from the front office to Steve, you have to do this. Sure, we'd like it, but if there's guys that are playing better, he'll play those guys.



**Q. Speaking of those guys, how much is what they just experienced for the last three months kind of jump start them, and how much do you think they've matured, whether they got much playing time or obviously none in James' case? But just being part of this experience, what do you think that does for them in any tangible way in terms of their experience for next year?**

BOB MYERS: Well, and there's the on-court experience, which seems like a long time ago, but Moody played in pretty meaningful minutes. Kuminga started some games. So that's valuable, to play in the Playoffs as a 19 year old.

And then there's the time in the Finals where they didn't play, but by being around it. I saw both of them after we won it and after the parade and they were kind of in shock as how much fun it was. I think when a player experiences it for the first time, the natural response is I want to do this again.

But for a 19 year old, I'm not sure they can understand how hard it is to do. It's not something you can tell them because they just won a championship in their first year.

A guy like Otto Porter, Jr. or Bjelica that have been around can maybe appreciate how hard it is more because they've been in the league a long time.

But the experience is invaluable. It really is, just to see how hard it is, how long it is, what it takes, the focus. But it'll be up to them as to how that resonates. It's different for everybody.

The good news is they got to see it and experience it. The hope would be when they're back, if they're back, that they have a sense of what it takes. And I think they will.

It's not just being there, it's also watching this group of veterans that have done it a few times already and how they kind of moved through it.

That's the advantage of having kind of the stewardship of those three guys that have done it now four times.

**Q. A lot of the free agents that we talked to a few days ago, Kevon, Gary Payton, they all made it very clear that they would like to stay here if possible, and a lot of them talked about just the culture here, the family aspect, how well this organization treats them. Can you use them as maybe leverage in negotiations, and how much do you value some of those players and wanting to bring them back to run it back, I guess?**

BOB MYERS: Well, I think that language is great to hear. Maybe it means we win a tie, but if we're not close, players usually go what's best for them, which we have no issue with. We'll try on all those guys. All these guys were great.

Free agency, unrestricted especially, is not something -- it is in our control to a certain extent, but in some ways it's not. When I was an agent I felt like I probably had more control than a team because I had more information, I knew what the market was.

I don't know what the market is for a lot of these guys, nor will I. Sometimes you find out with a Woj tweet that a guy is gone.

Thankfully I hope that our players will give us a chance to respond to an offer. They don't have to. They don't owe it to us. But that's what you get if you win and you create a good environment. You might get a chance to match something, although they don't owe it to us, and we'll have to react.

But sometimes the money doesn't line up for us or them, and then you move on. But our goal, our hope, is to bring all those guys back and try to do it again. They were all great in different ways and all fill different needs for us and all played -- a lot of our free agents had big moments in the NBA Finals, which means they're pretty important.

**Q. In addition to all the free agents, Jordan Poole, Andrew Wiggins, they're up for contract extensions. How big of a priority will just tying those up be this summer?**

BOB MYERS: A big priority. I think we'll get through tomorrow, and then those guys are not unrestricted free agents, so we don't need to do that on July 1, 2, 3, 4.

In my experience, those things happen more towards October when there's a deadline. In the case of Jordan, and Wiggins couldn't have a deadline.

All these negotiations take on a life of their own. They're all different. But I know with a guy like Jordan, usually those things come down to kind of training camp and end of the line deadline.

Wiggins, those are a little different because sometimes guys sign end of season. Sometimes there's a thought I don't want to deal with this during the season so they'll impose kind of their own deadline, like Aaron Judge did with the Yankees. I don't want to deal with this during the season, so if we don't do it by the start of the season then I'm not going to do it during the season.

We're a long way from figuring out what Andrew wants and what his agent wants, but I do know what we want. We want to keep him and we're going to make every effort to keep both those guys. They were huge for us. They're young, especially Andrew had kind of a career Renaissance.

It was so nice to see him experience the success he did and Jordan. Both of them were kind of -- I don't know what the correct word is -- but at a somewhat downtrodden place of their careers, and to see them respond was fantastic for them and for us.

Can't get much better than it resulting in a championship, so we're hoping we can get them back.

**Q. All of this leads to a lot more money that you guys are going to spend, and we all know the tax bill and what that means for you guys. I think in the past you've said \$400 million might be --**

BOB MYERS: Did I say that? (Laughter).

**Q. Maybe winning the title changes the equation. I don't know. Where are you guys at just on where this tax bill might go?**

BOB MYERS: I don't know. I didn't think it would be where it is, to be honest. I will go to Joe like I do every year and offer, you know, this is what it's going to take to sign this guy.

We've blown through kind of these budget thresholds before. It doesn't mean we'll do it again. It's pretty case specific.

It wasn't public, but when we had this roster, Joe said this roster -- paying this much money doesn't make sense if we don't think we can win a championship. He said that before the season.

He said that during the season, and as you all know, there was many times where this team did not look like a championship team.

But the pressure I felt, I guess, in the front office was if we spend this much money and lose in the first round, that would be pretty catastrophic.

Fans don't have to care about that part too much, but the only way paying that much money made sense was to think that we could make it this far. Again, there's so many things that go into winning a championship.

The same idea would have to take place and take root for

next season. If we felt like it could be a championship team, then you do kind of go all in with all your chips. If we didn't, we'd probably hold back.

But the payroll is already, as you know, the highest in the league. It's pretty -- second place isn't that close. That'll change over time, but Joe has always wanted to win.

But last year we didn't spend the tax pyramid level and ended up signing some minimums that worked out. So it's just dependent on if we think we can get value in free agency for some of these guys. We're not just going to spend to spend. We didn't do that last year.

People may think we do that, but a lot of our players have been here and have been paid. We have -- the larger money contracts, I think is there's only five of them, four of them I suppose now, that aren't rookie scale.

So we don't have a ton of players. It's all in the group of four for the most part.

We'll look and see what we can do and I'll ask Joe what he would authorize, but there is a limit. It's not limitless. I would like it to be limitless, but trust me, it's not. You've got to have some constraints on a salary.

**Q. I know you said there's a bunch of staffers upstairs watching film on prospects as we speak, but if the team does decide to hold on to that 28th pick tomorrow night, is there a specific position you're zeroing in on? What's the feel with that?**

BOB MYERS: Yeah, I don't know. I think we'll go best player is usually what we fall back on. But I think the league is pretty wing heavy and we've seen that position have a lot of value.

But we haven't narrowed it down. If a point guard or a big makes the most sense, we'll do that. It's probably going to be -- that's the thought as we approach it.

You know, that's the, I guess, disadvantage of having the draft before free agency. We don't know. That lends itself to saying let's take the best player. If we find that we're unbalanced at a position, then let's try to recover in free agency.

Sometimes you can; sometimes you can't. We've had rosters in the past where we had six centers, and this time I guess there was a lot of narrative that we didn't have any or two. Thankfully we stayed healthy.

But these are all things we try our best to accomplish, but I think in the draft we usually land on best player available.

**Q. The last time James talked he said that there was a 90 percent chance that he would play in Summer League. Is that number maybe at 91 percent or higher, and what are your expectations for maybe Kuminga and Moody possibly playing Summer League, as well?**

BOB MYERS: It's not lower than 90. I don't know if one, two, three, but he's working out, and those setbacks -- he worked out yesterday. I think he'll work out today.

What Summer League he plays in, I don't know if it'll be the one here or in Vegas. He'll scrimmage with our guys. He's going to start doing live stuff. All indications are good.

Kuminga and Moody are planning to play as well, and so I don't foresee that changing. It'll just depend on how many games, which one they play in, but they're all planning on playing, which we think is great.

We think they should. It's going to be a long stretch from the guys that show up here for the Cal Classic. I don't know that all those guys will play all the way through.

But I think of those three, you're going to see all of them at one time or another in the Summer League.

**Q. Obviously Steph, Klay, Draymond still have a lot left in the tank, but they are getting older. For example with the '90s Bulls there was a lot of speculation that Jerry Krause ended the dynasty too soon. As you approach the latter year of this core's run, how do you determine when it's time to move forward? Do you have any certain markers in that or do you let the players tell you?**

BOB MYERS: Well, they're looking in pretty good shape now because they just won. You know, I don't have the numbers to back it up, but players certainly seem to be playing longer into their careers. Why is that? You could point to a lot of different reasons why, better training, nutrition, sports science.

Those guys, it'll be interesting to see a guy like Klay who missed two years, does that add two years to his career? Steve Kerr would tell you that Michael Jordan taking those couple years off and playing baseball energized him as his career went on.

But everybody is current. Curry didn't -- I would argue not just you just asked, but, look, this is the best he's ever looked. So until something changes, and it doesn't seem like it is yet, we would let these guys try to win for as long as they can.

I guess maybe that's where the youth makes some sense is to kind of offload some of their bigger minutes.

But the league is so shifting, but they've been great. With those three in the playoff series they've been really hard to beat, so hopefully we can keep it going.

**Q. I've heard a lot of personnel people say that obviously the top of the draft you're looking for stars in the lottery. As you get to the late first round and into the second, you seem to hear that you're looking for a guy that has at least one identifiable skill. I'm just wondering, the one skill philosophy, is that something that you adhere to or is that something that -- do you just go, no, best player?**

BOB MYERS: Well, you'd like to be able to identify maybe one, maybe two things that you think translate to the NBA level. If you can't find one, that's usually not great. Sometimes it's athleticism, so it's not -- I guess you could call that a skill. Sometimes it's size. Sometimes it's shooting. Sometimes it's passing.

As you've mentioned, as you go further down in the draft those -- it may just be one thing. When you're drafting high up you'd like it to be four or five things. But if we can get a guy at 28 that is great a one thing, yeah, then you've got something.

With Jordan, when we drafted there it was kind of like we liked the ability to maybe create a shot, which is kind of one thing, but it encompasses other things. We liked his passing a little bit.

With Looney a little bit, we didn't draft him to be a 5. We loved his rebounding but we envisioned him more as like a 4. Some people called him a 3, and he morphed into a 5.

Even Draymond I guess you could argue what was his one skill, and he might say winning was his skill, which it still is his skill.

Yeah, you'd like to be able to envision something that translates to the NBA, but sometimes when we haven't been able to do that, we've thought we had something with a guy, and not just us, but you find out you were wrong.

So you try to get better and learn from your mistakes.

**Q. Bob, I asked Steve this: Is there a moment a few days removed that you can realize, okay, this one I am going to remember from this playoff run, this is something that just hits you immediately? Like this is a moment that will always, always be memorable in your mind?**

BOB MYERS: Yeah, as the run was going on. This was an interesting one. I don't know how to characterize this one because the first one was so -- kind of like a fantasy deal, 14, 15, because we hadn't won in so long and we hadn't really been one of the contending teams, and then the other ones with Kevin felt like -- felt a pressure like we have to win. Our team is better than the other teams, we have to win.

This one was different in that it's a great story to be honest because of what happened after '19. It's a fascinating story. There's a lot of storylines.

I think this one, kind of climbing out from a pretty deep hole, there's a lot of gratification to that. It doesn't diminish the other ones, but as far as what I will remember from it, it's seeing the guys -- just watching the ones that had won it before with those three and Andre coming back even and Looney, and then watching the people that had never won and watching a guy like Wiggins get the acclimation that he got, watching Poole's ascendance.

I think flying out to Boston, Draymond mentioned -- I had a really interesting conversation with those three guys. I will remember the kind of -- the off-the-court stuff, talking to Steve. Steve said to me at one point, he goes, I don't know if this is a championship team -- this is before the Playoffs. We know what a championship team is. I don't know if this is a championship team. So we were laughing about that. We said, well, what do we know?

I was like of like, yeah -- we had a pretty high bar I guess for what we were comparing it to.

I don't know, I think as I've gone on in the job, I guess what this one might land is kind of like a -- it wasn't as happy, if that's the word, but job well done, kind of like hard work paying off, so to speak.

This one culminated in three years. It wasn't just one year, it was like a three-year attempt to win it again. So it wasn't just like we started the year and we were good the last year and the year before. It was like a three-year journey out of the ashes to get to the top, which there's a lot of stories in there.

**Q. You guys have a vacancy on your coaching staff. How big is it that Kenny Atkinson will be staying with this organization and taking on a higher coaching position? And then secondly, have you guys started the coaching search? Is it external? Are you looking internal? What can you share there?**

BOB MYERS: Yeah, Kenny -- yeah, he's a great coach.

As long as we can keep him, he'll help us. I'm hopeful we can continue to keep him, but I imagine he'll have a lot of opportunities to get another head coaching job.

But Steve called me this morning. We just haven't had a lot of time to figure that part out yet. I know he's been thinking about it more than I have, which he should. It's his staff. But he has ideas on what he might do, but he hasn't formalized any of them. He's going to be talking -- you can grill him on that one.

We've talked about it. We prefer internal because we've done that in the past with Santa Cruz, and we value that process. But last year we went external with Kenny and Jama and Dejan, there's a lot of guys. We'll see. I think he is probably thinking about a lot of those things right now.

I know we will miss Mike Brown. We would have really missed Kenny, too, so we're glad he's back. But it's interesting, the coaching world changes, too, so even just having Jama in player development, does he stay there? Does he move? That's what we're trying to figure out and that's what Steve is working on.

**Q. With the core coming back and so many young players hoping for more prominent roles next year, what is your expectation with anyone you expect tomorrow in terms of being able to contribute to this organization, this team?**

BOB MYERS: It's a hard lineup to crack because we have some older guys. Depends on who we sign in free agency. Depends on if they're better than the rookies we have now.

You know, it's hard to predict these things. It just is. One, I don't know who we're picking, and two, is that guy a four-year guy, is he a freshman? Does Steve -- there was times where Moody fit better than Kuminga in certain games and Kuminga played.

So it shifts a lot with rookies until Steve figures out away to trust them.

But there is not an expectation, if you're wanting me to answer to that point. We don't have an expectation that this person is going to step in, provide minutes.

Even though we drafted Moody and Kuminga last year, we didn't expect them to be, hey, this guy is going to play 15, 20 minutes every night. We thought we could solve that in free agency.

I don't know if we'll have the same hit rate this year that we did last year with minimums. Sometimes you get those

guys and it works out, and sometimes you don't.

So I don't think we'll draft tomorrow and say, well, that guy is going to play 20 minutes a night. I don't believe we will do that. We might look ahead two years, three years and say, maybe in three years he can help us.

**Q. Back to the one identifiable skill again. Gary Payton II came out of college with one identifiable skill, but it took him six years to finally get to the point where he was a rotation player in the league. I'm wondering if you have any idea what took so long? Did he change? Did the league change? A little bit of both? What got him to the point where he couldn't play in the league to being a rotation player on a championship team?**

BOB MYERS: I think Gary suffered from a little bit of -- he was a little miscast. I think people saw him as a point guard, and that's really not what he is. Same thing maybe happened with a guy like Draymond, although he didn't bounce around.

Some of these guys that are more positionless were penalized for that, and I think the league has shifted towards that being an asset instead of a liability.

Once you take off that label of Gary and not try to look at him as a point guard, you start looking at all the things he can do instead of the things he couldn't. People would label him as a non-shooter, as not a guy that can run a team.

But he does everything else. Everything else is a pretty big bucket. Sometimes it takes a while to figure that out. Sometimes you have to land in a spot that gives you a shot to show it.

Even Livingston who we've had, we signed Shaun off a little bit of a similar situation. He was bouncing around the league and then he had a couple of good years in Brooklyn on a minimum, and we were the first team that signed him to a multi-year deal, and I still don't exactly know what position Shaun played for us.

He did play some backup point guard, but he was in the game with Steph quite a bit just like Gary was. If Gary was only a point guard, then with Steph playing 35, 36 minutes, Gary could only then play 12, 14. That's not the case, because Gary can play with Steph.

The shooting of Steph, Klay, and the way Wiggins, Poole, Port, a lot of these guys that can shoot allows for a guys like Gary to be on the floor. He benefits them, they benefit him. He's a great finisher around the paint.

Obviously you talk about the defense.

Sometimes it's just a circuitous path to success. It's not a linear thing. Gary is a really good example of that, of somebody who kind of stayed the course and ultimately got rewarded and was giving us big minutes in the Finals.

**Q. You mentioned you're happy to have Kenny back. What did he bring to the coaching staff that maybe you didn't have in the past that's unique?**

BOB MYERS: Just a different way of looking at things. We had a pretty homogenous group and they stayed together for quite some time, new voices, someone that's been in multiple organizations. I've only ever worked here, so has Steve.

The people we've brought in have worked in other places. That's really valuable for people like us who have just seen what this looks like. So to bring in outside voices, whether it's Mike Brown, Kenny, DeJan, who coached in Europe, Jama, who comes from the Raptors. I mean, you can pick their brain on what they learned from other organizations.

We don't do everything perfectly, so it's always nice to find someone like Kenny who was a head coach but coached in many other places underneath some good coaches and approaches things differently. I think we realized when we hired him last year we needed some new voices, and Kenny is not reticent, so he will say what's on his mind, and we value that.

Very analytics driven, which we have shifted more towards, but weren't always super weighted in that area. So he checks a lot of boxes and areas that we were kind of deficient or unaware of, and that's why we value him so much.

**Q. It seems like you were in this exact position four years ago, coming off a title, 28th pick. How did that shape your front office? How does that prepare you for doing this again this year?**

BOB MYERS: Well, I think this is a little better because we didn't -- we weren't losing one of our best players and the other guy didn't tear his ACL, and we feel a little bit better going into this next season than '19, which was just a tough one to walk out of with all the things that happened.

Obviously we lost in that Finals.

But yeah, I mean, every year is different. This year the challenge is going to be retaining the free agents. You're talking about '18? Okay, so '18 I've got to remember what

we were doing. I know we just won.

We had a good team going into '19. Obviously our core was under contract. I've got to remember who our free agents were. I think at that point the challenge after that year was how do we -- everybody needed -- that was four-years in row of going to the Finals, and I think even though we won, there was a fatigue to it.

But everybody -- when I've asked people how they felt about that, everybody has a different answer as far as how they were feeling. Back to back championships is awesome. Some of us had won in '14 and '15 and lost in '15 and '16, won two, and so just processing that.

But I felt good about the team going into '19. I think that was a really good team. It just didn't work out.

I've got to remember who came off that team. At that point I think we were just signing minimums. I think we lost David West. I don't know if -- I forget who -- Zaza maybe, McCaw. But it wasn't -- I think these players off this team now that are free agents are going to command maybe more interest than some of those guys did.

So this is going to be a tougher free agency in my opinion. We're going to have to really work to retain some of these guys that gave us great minutes.

**Q. Are you better positioned now to bring on rookies than, say, you were when it was Jacob Evans?**

BOB MYERS: Yeah, staffing-wise, I think so. Yeah, we're better -- if the question is player development, structure, organization, yeah, we're better. We're utilizing the G-League better. We've got guys like Mujtaba working with the young guys.

You know, having to build out an infrastructure to work with 19 year olds is something that we just assumed would happen before, 19-, 20-year olds, but we do a much better job now of surrounding some of these players with help, with guidance that we should have done a better job of back then. And coaching obviously has gotten a lot better as far as how we integrate those guys.

**Q. I was wondering, what's your gauge on what Andre's interest level is in prolonging his playing career?**

BOB MYERS: I don't know. I hear he wants to play; I hear he doesn't want to play. I don't know if he knows.

He was really good, and I know it's been written and said, but his value off the floor was pretty powerful. Not many

people can command the respect of the other three guys that have won at the level they have, and Andre is one of the few people in the world that -- maybe Shaun Livingston, as well -- that they would look up to or even look evenly after.

But I don't know if Andre is done. He certainly didn't do the kind of Harley Davidson last year, you know, I'm retiring after this year thing. He's got a lot going on outside of basketball, but I think he enjoyed the year.

He's seen everything now, so whatever he decides, I trust that it'll have been thought out. But I don't know the answer to that. He'll probably send some cryptic tweet out.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports.

