

Golden State Warriors Media Conference

Sunday, September 25, 2022

San Francisco, California, USA

Klay Thompson

Media Conference



Q. This was your first off-season in, what, two, three years, that it wasn't rehab-based. It was recovering from the season and getting back. How was that for you mentally but also physically?

KLAY THOMPSON: It was amazing. So nice just being in the gym and working out and getting shots up. I did a lot of things I do in rehab, like calf raises and all the stuff, to squats or whatever. But to be just free in your body and my perspective about what that means because of what I went through, I couldn't ask for a better time off, really. It was great.

Q. Dance parties on the boat looked pretty fun on Instagram.

KLAY THOMPSON: If you're in the Italian Riviera, who is not dancing? It's magical. Magical waters.

Q. Heading into last season, the conversation -- or, I guess, after the season, you guys were talking about that championship run, it was a -- we still got it, everyone was saying we don't have, but we still do. Heading into this year, coming off of that championship, is there still a notion of we're still proving that we still got it because we won, or is it a different mindset?

KLAY THOMPSON: I think we are all so proud of what we accomplished last year, but that's in the past. The greats stay hungry, and we all have our motivations for why we want to win another one. I mean, the guys coming back who have won it for their first time, I just know they want to experience that again.

And, I mean, for me personally, and probably Steph and Andre and Draymond, you think of the players who have won five championships, it's such a short list. And to have the opportunity, just the opportunity, to be able to do that, is like so special.

Like I think back to my rookie season, and if you would have told me in ten years I would have the opportunity to

win five championships with the Warriors, I would have laughed in your face. To be here and heading into the season healthy with this opportunity, I get chills thinking about it every day.

Q. How close did you feel like you were to your old self last season?

KLAY THOMPSON: Well, considering, you know, I was second made threes in the playoffs, and that culminated in a championship, I felt like myself. I felt great.

I mean, yeah, you could talk about the numbers, and I shot better percentages at times. But, I mean, if you end the season with a championship -- I'm a harsh critic, but I gave myself some leeway last year.

So to be a part and be a big part of a championship team, like I'm still in awe we were able to do that.

Q. What was the most enjoyable thing you did this off-season non-basketball related?

KLAY THOMPSON: Oh, man, that's a great question. Getting to go to Nassau and see my family was special because I had not seen them since before the pandemic. You know, I love the beach, but there's not really many beaches better than Bahamian beaches.

What else did I do that was special? I got to go to Europe for a week and be a real tourist. That was a ton of fun. Man, just the daily routine of working out and having time to go to the beach and not having the pressure of performing. I forgot what a championship off-season was like. It was very short, so I counted my blessings every day and I enjoyed every day off, to be honest.

Q. You've played with Steph a long time. How do you think he's been able to maintain this level? He's 34 now, going to be 35 this season. How long can he do that, and how difficult is that?

KLAY THOMPSON: I think he can do it as long as he wants. Steph works so hard. He's in great shape, and he really just loves the game. He's extremely competitive. So



I think Steph can do this until he's 40. I mean, his game is suited for it. He's not a power player. He's powerful, but he's obviously based -- his game is based on more finesse. He'll do it for as long as he wants.

Q. How important is it going to be, obviously, along with the healthy off-season, starting the season from Game 1 instead of having to come back on January 9th?

KLAY THOMPSON: Oh, it's great. It's special. I mean, opening nights are always so much fun, especially when there's a ring involved.

And it's just awesome, man. You don't have to go through, you know, slumps or whatever you're going through during the middle of a season, and you can kind of go through that earlier if you have to. So I'm just excited to play some October basketball again.

Q. You mentioned the possibility of going for your fifth title, but it's also rare to be able to do it with a lot of the same teammates and the same coach. Coming into camp this time around, you see all these familiar faces, how does that make you feel about the brotherhood you guys have built over the years?

KLAY THOMPSON: It's great. It inspires us to keep writing our legacy, keep going hard every day because there's been a lot of great dynasties in the basketball world, and we want to be a part of that fraternity. It's just very special.

We know it's rare in pro sports, but to have that type of continuity, I mean, we don't take for granted, and we all work very hard and all lead by example. I'm just excited for our team. And what we built here is truly special, and hopefully we'll make generations of Warriors fans out of it because we really care about the brand.

Q. This summer it was a short summer, but how careful did you have to be in maintenance with your body, but also getting ready for the season? What was your off-season -- off the court was amazing, I enjoyed watching it, but in terms of getting ready for the season, what did you do and what did you have to be careful about?

KLAY THOMPSON: Well, I had to just -- as you get older, you have to do the little things. It's not just about basketball anymore. So dieting was important, strength training, stretching, the mobility stuff. And of course, on top of that, just getting up shots at the gym every day or every other day was the cherry on top.

I went very hard, but I didn't play a lot of five-on-five because the last time I did that in the off-season, it ended awfully with tearing my Achilles. I might have been a little hesitant to do that. But I kept myself in good shape, and I will be ready to go by the 18th.

And I'm hungry as ever still because I still remember those two years I had to watch. I'm eager to play a full season and show people what I'm capable of again.

Q. What have you seen from the youth of this roster, and how ready are they to step into bigger roles?

KLAY THOMPSON: Well, I'll say, I mean, our front office does a great job of just drafting great people. Like, I love all our young guys. They are willing listeners, and even -- they are even harder workers. I love having them around because they make me feel smart at times and accomplished because they actually listen to what I say.

It's just great to be a veteran and be able to give guidance. I don't take that lightly.

I get excited just seeing him put in the work in because they are not just satisfied with being role players. All those guys, they want to be All-Stars, and they want to be real great players in this league. And I love that for them. I tell them to keep those goals. They will reach them if they just put the work in.

Q. Talking about the potential for a fifth title, how much do you and Steph and Draymond talk about that in historical context and what kind of milestones you want to achieve together?

KLAY THOMPSON: I don't think we've actually talked about it at all, but I think about it all the time. I think about Magic Johnson, Tim Duncan, Kobe -- who else has five, five championships? Kareem got six. The greatest -- Scottie, Michael. The greatest players to ever play are in that zone of championships. It's mind-boggling to think that we have that opportunity. But we are going to seize it, I just -- I can feel it. I can feel it.

Q. In regards to Draymond, we hear a lot about how tough he can be on the kids and the rookies and stuff. Is he ever like that with the veterans? Does he crack down on you guys sometimes?

KLAY THOMPSON: Definitely. Draymond is our vocal leader. He's like an extension of our coaching staff. Such a great teacher. And Draymond is great at giving out tough love. You know, whatever happens between the lines of the hardwood, we don't take personally. And we all know it comes from a great place because we all want to win so

badly.

And if you can't be yelled at by Draymond, you probably can't play for the Warriors. It's just kind of like a by-law now. It's just what it is.

Q. This is James' first training camp, ever. How important is it for him to get something like this under his belt instead of just jumping into it in the middle of the season?

KLAY THOMPSON: Yeah, I'm really excited for James. He was right by my side when we were both rehabbing, going down to Santa Cruz and here during the summer days when it was slow.

He's already through so much early in his career, but his best years are ahead of him and far ahead of him. To have a 7-footer like him who is so athletic, and he works really hard, too, and I'm really excited for him.

Like, wow, what a great piece for us and our future. And I'm just really excited. We haven't had a big man like that in a long time. I think we have an amazing front court between him, Loon, JaMychal, Draymond. It could be one of the best in the NBA.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports