

Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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II Gary Payton

Media Conference



Q. Gary, how would you evaluate your time here this season, just kind of how it went for you?

GARY PAYTON II: Yeah, it was just, you know, getting my body back right. That was the biggest thing coming back and getting situated. Knew it was going to take, you know, some time to get that right to get back to feeling like myself so I can, you know, help the way I do.

But yeah, other than that, yeah, it's good to be back with the guys, with the organization. Clean up some stuff this summer and get back to it and make another mush.

Q. Going back to last year, you know what that was like, winning the Championship and everything, but you look at last year's team and the roster you had versus the roster you had this year, what do you think are the differences?

GARY PAYTON II: I think it's just a little bit of mixture of just age and experience. Last year, you know, guys was on, you know, Otto, Beli, understood and knew their chances, and it was hard to get here. It was a first for some of them, and took all this time to get here and just maximized and take opportunity of everything in the moment. Other than that, you know, we got some young guys -- some good young guys, and they continue to grow this off-season and come back and try to do it all over again.

Q. Did you at any point feel like you were really recovered this year?

GARY PAYTON II: No, I knew that, you know, having surgery at the beginning of the season and just fighting through that, I was never going to be fully healthy. Just get to a point where I can be myself and just help out.

Q. How much pain were you playing through then, even especially late here as you guys are playing every other day?

GARY PAYTON II: As of late, no. It was good. It was just

maintaining and just trying to keep it, you know, good so it wouldn't spiral down on me. You know, the guys did a great job here keeping that and managing it. So got me able to do what I needed to do.

Q. Last year you were one of the guys that both had respect from the older group of players and the younger group of players and then when you leave, you see what kind of happened in the preseason. When you come back, what kind of a team did you see and how did you feel like you could help out in that department in the locker room with the controversy all throughout the season?

GARY PAYTON II: I came back, you know, the guys are the guys. Everybody goes through stuff in life, their every day stuff. I just try come back and be myself, you know, talk to guys, hang with guys, laugh with guys. The vibe was a little different, obviously. Just, you know, coming back from the beginning of the season and all that.

But you know, when I got here, everybody was themselves. It was, you know, just trying to figure it out, you know, you know and continue to do what we had to do the rest of the season.

But you know, it was a different vibe. It's going to be a different vibe near and it's going to be a different vibe after that. Just come in and try to all gel and get accustomed to everybody and do what we got to do.

Q. What does the off-season rehab process look like for you? Now that the season is done, can you focus on getting back to that point and not just maintenance?

GARY PAYTON II: Oh, absolutely. We got some time now, good time now. So just take care of my body, get a team together and just continue all summer, strengthen and maintain and get ready for next year.

Q. Have you started that yet?

GARY PAYTON II: No, got to get that schedule right but I'll have it in the next couple weeks or so. It will be right.



Q. When you look the Lakers series, there were a couple games you could have won and did not win. Frustrations or just a learning experience?

GARY PAYTON II: Learning experience for me. LeBron James and Steph Curry, you're in the series with those guys, and you can't ask for anything else, you know, playing at the highest level with the highest players. There's no failure. There's nothing like that. It's just a learning experience and grow from the situation. If we win, we won. If we didn't, we still learn from that series. It was a fun series. Great series, fun series. But everything about it, I loved it, learned from it and apply next year.

Q. Obviously you started the season somewhere else this year and I know your affinity for Golden State. Was your heart, do you feel like here, even throughout the first few months and how were those first few months before you got traded back here?

GARY PAYTON II: Yeah, my heart's always been here before I was even here and just growing up as a kid. It somehow, some way, always leads back to the Bay.

I still was tapped in, you know, beginning of the year, make sure, checking on my guys and making sure, see how everybody was doing and seeing what was going on with the road wins, home wins. Difficult on the road. But once I got back was trying to find ways to help out and clean up some of the stuff from earlier in the season.

Q. What was it like seeing all that stuff from afar, knowing that you could not really do anything about it?

GARY PAYTON II: You know, it's basketball. You know, guys are competitive and have emotions, so you know, things happen. I've had fights with my little brothers all the time. But at the end of the day, we're brothers, and you learn from and grow from it and, you know, just be mature about it and continue to do what you need to do.

Q. Did you guys have your exit interview with the organization and what was their message?

GARY PAYTON II: Mine was quick. Get your body right, come back and continue to do what you do and just work on cleaning up my stuff that I need to do. Continue to work on my shooting and whatnot and my play-making, and my biggest thing was just to get my body right. That's the plan.

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