

Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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Joe Lacob

Mike Dunleavy Jr.

Media Conference



JOE LACOB: Thank you, everyone, for coming here today. I know it's a holiday. Appreciate you all being here. It's a pretty important day in the history of the Warriors. We're here to announce Mike Dunleavy as our new GM. Very, very excited about it.

I wanted to say first of all that Mike has been with us for five years, is that right, five? Almost impossible for me to imagine it seems so quickly that it went by. I remember meeting Mike first with Bob, I think we were in New York, had a dinner once about five years ago. Here we are five years later. He's the new GM of the Warriors. Really excited.

I want to say I think we're very, very fortunate that he was in our organization. I think we had a good sense, I had a good sense all along, if something did happen with Bob, which was a possibility clearly, that we had someone in waiting and in training for the job.

He has 20 years of experience in the NBA. 15 years, I believe, as a player. Five years with us. A lot of experience with the NBA, with coaches, with teams, with organizations, with the league, all that. Actually really an experienced guy if you really think about it in terms of the NBA.

He is a person who is a family guy. Has four kids. He fits culturally and has fit culturally very much in line with the way this organization runs and operates.

He's a very collaborative person, which is very, very important. I've said it a million times in our organization, it's a 'we' thing. I can't emphasize how important that is. This is a we deal. This is not me. This is not Steve Kerr only. It wasn't just Bob Myers. It's not just the players, although we have some great players, including one in particular that is fantastic in terms of legendary with this franchise.

It really is a we effort. Mike fits right into that. The cultural fit was spectacular. The cultural fit was spectacular with

Mike. We're very, very excited to have him here today, to be able to announce him and his appointment to the job.

I want to say right off the bat, I don't anticipate any other title changes in the organization. Mike is the GM. People are going to ask this, Kirk is going to remain in his title, which I think it's EVP. I don't pay a lot of attention to titles. Basically the same role he's had. Been with us 13 years.

There will probably be some other changes Mike will make going forward within the organization, raising the responsibilities of some obviously to take up some of the slack.

Overall very, very excited to have him and welcome him here today.

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Thanks, Joe. Appreciate it.

Let me just start with thanking you and Peter, the whole, in my opinion, group, for this opportunity. Really, really special moment for me and my family.

This is one of the premier organizations in all sports. For me to be able to have the opportunity to continue to lead our group means a tremendous amount. We certainly have some work cut out for us, but I think the future's bright.

I'd also like to acknowledge and thank my predecessor, Bob Myers. Bob has been an agent for me, I've worked for him, he's been a great mentor, but most of all he's been a great friend. We're all going to miss him here. I know I speak for everybody. Big shoes to fill. We've got a great group, great collaboration. It's very doable.

It's funny, I was talking to Bob this week. He asked me, Are you going to do the job?

I said, Yeah, I think so. But I got to be honest, I'm a little uncomfortable taking your job.

He said, Dunleavy, c'mon, man, it's not like you're taking an organ, it's just a job.



We sort of had a laugh about that. At that point, All right, good to go here. Got Bob's approval, which is good. He's somebody I've leaned on and will continue to lean on, as well as other people in our organization.

Thank you, Bob, for all you've done with this team. You will be missed, but we know you'll be around.

The other people I'd like to thank are my family. My parents. Obviously a lot of people know my dad from coaching, playing, also being a GM. He's set a tremendous example for me growing up.

My mom, as well. Anything you may say good about me probably is from my mom, not my dad (smiling). Thanks, mom.

Lastly, last but not least, recognize my immediate family, my four kids, Lucy is here today, and most especially my wife Sarah. If anybody knows this business, the moving around, it's very transient, tough hours, strange things, a lot of unknowns. So having a support system like family and a wife like Sarah has been tremendous. You're a rock. I really appreciate it. Thanks for everything. And thanks for stuff moving forward because I know we'll be quite busy (smiling).

Now, as far as the job, I'd say it starts now. Got a big week with the draft coming up. Our roster is in a good place I'd say. We don't have too many decisions to make. We have things to consider. We will take a lot of things into account. The draft is certainly one of the three areas we feel like we can improve on.

Looking back on last year, by all accounts we had a successful season. But for us, finishing in the top eight after winning the championship, we know we want to be better. Our goal this summer will be to go about improving our roster. We've got one key player we'd love to bring back. After that, my main objective, our group's main objective, would be to improve, if you like, going into it. We've got a shot to contend for a title again. I'm confident about that.

I'm excited to continue working with our great players, our coaches, and our staff. As Joe mentioned, the thing that I've experienced here and feel great about is the collaboration, all of us working together, creating the synergy that's gone so well here.

Really appreciative of the job and the opportunity, Joe. Thanks again. Here we go.

I'm open to any questions, anything anybody has.

Q. So much of what Bob was known for was his relationships, established relationships, with the main players. How do you feel like your established relationship is with those guys right now?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: I think it's good. I've reached out to those guys in the last week or so, and we've had good conversation. Getting to know them over the last few years, even more so. We have the mutual respect of having played. I played 15 years in the league. Nowhere as accomplished as those guys, but I think there's a mutual bond and understanding.

Like I said, I've gotten to know those guys for the last few years and will continue to do so. Those guys, they're the core of what we do. Having a relationship with them is important.

Q. Bob said last month on his departing news conference that you could do the job, you'd be great, if you want it. Was there a thought process that you had to go through in addition to talking to Bob that told you that this is what you want to do or did you want the job all along?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Yeah, I think any time an opportunity like this comes up, in most cases it's a no-brainer, but you should always think through things. Pretty measured in our approach. We'll do that with our decisions going forward.

Sure, I think you want to talk to your family about it, consider things. But when Joe presented me with the opportunity, I just didn't see a way where I didn't want to do it.

Q. When you left here, probably wasn't the best terms as a player. What was it like coming back into the organization? Was there a part of you that, I'm never going back there again? How did you smooth that part out?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Yeah, you know what's funny, things kind of come full circle. Although, that circle that I was in when I played, it was almost like a different organization. Different city, different team, far less success. To say it's come full circle probably wouldn't be accurate.

Ever since I've gotten back, I've felt very comfortable. This is a tremendous organization. Go in there and see the banners that are up. Much different than when I was here as a player.

I have learned that in this league, when you leave a

situation or are traded, move on, things come back around. My dad played for the Milwaukee Bucks. He coached for the Milwaukee Bucks as an assistant. He came back as a head coach, then I went there as a player. I moved to and from Milwaukee four times.

I've learned in this business you don't really cross anything off the books. So needless to say, coming back here has been great. Love our fan base. The passion is amazing. Kind of felt that the last five years. I think we all just kind of want to keep this thing going.

Q. You said there aren't that many huge decisions to make. Obviously most of us on the way driving over here heard about Draymond opting out. When were you expecting that? You are getting thrown into the fire of a pretty critical summer for this team in terms of what it's going to look like in the future. Are you prepared for that? Were you surprised by Draymond?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Yes, I saw the report, too. Until we get the paperwork and the file, we can't really comment or say too much.

I think I will say, Steve has said it and I will reiterate it, we really want Draymond back. What he means in terms of this organization and this team, winning at the highest level, we feel like we have to have him. So that's very important.

Beyond that, yeah, I think a lot can be made of all the challenges that are coming our way, whether it be aging roster, the new CBA with some of the limitations there, anything else you can bring up.

We're aware of all those things, but we also feel like we're in a great place because we've got a competitive owner willing to spend, a group that's tied in, has good synergy, good processes, good, sound decision making. We feel confident we can navigate it.

Q. You worked with Bob for a number of years. What do you think is similar with the way you operate and what differentiates you?

JOE LACOB: They're both tall.

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: And we have bad hips.

JOE LACOB: And they both have bad hips.

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: As far as similarities, we're really close so there's got to be a lot of things that align.

I probably will start with humility. We're pretty humble

guys, family first. I think we're good listeners. Both like to hear people out, hear groups out. As leaders, try to make the right decision.

Differences? I think slightly better basketball player than him (smiling). But after that, Bob is out of this world talented in what he's able to do with people. His record speaks for itself. If I can be anywhere near the realm of successful as he's been here, it would be great.

Q. Joe, I wanted to ask, I know you mentioned the collaborative approach the front office has always taken. There is an ultimate decision maker or power structure in the front office. Do you view Mike's elevation to a power structure that Bob was at or is it shifting?

JOE LACOB: He's the top basketball decision maker. You can call it titles, whatever you want. He's the top basketball decision maker in the organization.

Perhaps a little bit of differences is that when Bob came in, actually it's hard to remember all these years ago now, but he came in right as an agent, and was an assistant GM actually when he started. We promoted him to GM. He got a title change subsequently with success, more of a compensation thing I think more than anything else because he was really in the same role.

Mike is in the same role. He's the top decision maker within basketball. So from my standpoint, he's the guy that I'll be calling however many times people think I call him a day. Actually he called me this morning, woke me up. Actually, I was up but I was watching a show on TV, First Take.

Q. Joe, have you already been calling and texting Mike recently?

JOE LACOB: Is that a serious question (laughter)?

Q. When did you first start?

JOE LACOB: First of all, it started long before he got this job. Obviously we communicate. I did not communicate with only Bob, but with Kirk and Larry Harris, Mike. Obviously, Bob got the brunt of that. We communicate a lot.

One of the things that you have to be able to do to do this job, you have to be a good communicator. He has to be able to communicate to the players, with the players. I think he's going to be great at it, by the way. As a former player, it certainly will help. He has to communicate to employees, people that work for him in basketball

operations. He has to be able to communicate up, which is me.

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: You.

JOE LACOB: (Smiling).

All CEOs in companies, if you want to compare it to that, it's kind of the same thing. That is what makes a great CEO, a great leader, who can do all three levels of communication: here, here and here. This guy has that ability. He's a really good communicator. He's very thorough in his thinking. Very analytical. You used the word 'measured' which is another word I really like. He thinks in a measured way. He doesn't just blurt things out.

I think he's going to be fantastic at this job. We've been communicating for a long time. We do and will going forward.

Q. Other than Mike being there, which he was, what kind of questions did you ask, what did you need to hear from him to beat out other candidates? Did you interview other candidates seriously or was it always going to be Mike?

JOE LACOB: There was not a decision to be made, because I don't think I or we kind of wanted to contemplate Bob leaving. We obviously liked Bob a lot. He was great. Until he made a decision, I don't think I really allowed myself to think about that very much.

But once he made the decision, which was pretty late in the process, I think in the background what had been going on is processing how would we go about this.

I always knew that we had this guy sitting here in the wings. Had to have a conversation with him. We did have conversations obviously to make sure that everything I thought was correct, everything he thought about the job, so we were on the same wavelength.

Did I interview other people? No, not really. We didn't go outside, if that's what your question is. We believe in continuity. We believe we have a really well-oiled machine, well-running organization. Mike gets along fabulously with all the parties inside, everything from Kirk Lacob to (indiscernible) sitting right here, very interactive with the business side, which I think is a great thing in our organization, and all the coaches and players.

Q. Mike, what do you think you learned the most from Bob?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Well, I think I'm still learning stuff

from him, which is a good thing. Our friendship and relationship remains strong.

I think with Bob, the biggest thing I've learned is the value of relationships, his connection with people, not only within this organization, on this team, but throughout the league, is important.

You guys have seen Bob enough, the amount of times he's had his earbuds in, on the phone, talking to people. It's not just catching up with buddies, it's real stuff, communication.

That type of stuff, even from the last five years, getting on top of that, learning to do that, I think in the first place I'm comfortable with it, good at it, but Bob has taken it to a different level, something I really learned to value.

Q. Mike, how do you assess last season as a whole, the regular season, the two rounds in the Playoffs, and what you have, sort of the stated Steph and Klay and Draymond stating they want to be together with Steve versus the need to get better and contend for a championship and the avenues that you have to get better? In essence, they want to be together, but you also have to get better.

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Sure, sure.

I think talking about last year, certainly compared with the prior year, we were the best team in the league, won the championship, last year was internally a letdown for us. At the same time we were two games away from reaching the Conference Finals. I think you have to take it all into perspective.

I think the core group of guys, led by Steph Curry, is at an incredibly high level. For that reason, we feel we have a chance to always be knocking on the door. The rest of the roster going on down the line is a group that probably needs to be better about playing together and connecting, so that's something we'll look to solve for this off-season.

By the way, that's not only externally, that's internally through working together and doing all that stuff.

I think as far as last year, below our standards, but I think we know what we need to do to improve. Now it's our job to go out and do it.

Q. Joe, I still want to ask you a question about this new CBA, but I know better.

JOE LACOB: You can ask (smiling).

Q. Draymond, what do you think he's meant to what



you have been able to do over the years? What do you see him being able to do if he should come back down the road?

JOE LACOB: What's your question exactly? You want Draymond to do something different?

Q. No. My question to you is, what do you think he's meant to what you've done already and what do you think he can mean going forward in the future as he ages?

JOE LACOB: Look, he's been a spectacular player for us. We would not have these championships without his involvement, no question. I think everyone understands that in this room. He's meant a lot to this franchise.

He's a bit of a controversial player perhaps in some corners around the league, certain things that have happened over the years. He knows that. We know that. But the good overwhelms the bad is what I would say.

He probably needs to improve, just like we all do, get better at certain things. We probably need, as Mike said, to improve as an organization in some ways, for sure.

He's meant a lot. I think if he does come back that he will be very important to our success certainly going forward in the next few years.

Q. Mike, Bob said his relationship with Steve, he called it rare, unique that a GM and a coach are that close. What is your relationship like with Steve? Can you build off kind of what Bob and Steve established in terms of the camaraderie and the collaboration that Joe touched on?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Sure.

Admittedly, a big part of me taking this position is my relationship with Steve. Steve's a person I look up to, not only work with, but somebody that I trust just in an incredible level.

What he's been able to do for this team and this organization over the last decade or so, it makes my job easier not having to worry about on a daily basis what's going on with the coaching staff, the head coach. It just takes one thing off the table for me.

We have a great relationship. We speak pretty regularly, especially now. I'm really excited to have somebody like Steve guide me and help me along the way with this, because he's also been in my shoes before as a GM. He sees both sides of it, gets both sides of it. Really looking

forward to working with him.

Q. A couple weeks ago Bob said nothing lasts forever. What would it mean to be able to keep Steph, Dre and Klay Warriors for their entire career?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: That's our hope. We love those guys and value them. I think there is a way to do it. That's something we'll have to work through. It certainly is possible.

The big thing is those guys are still playing at a high level. Steph conservatively is one of the top five players in the league, conservatively. Draymond just had an incredible year. Essentially first team all defense. We're biased. One of the premiere defenders in the league. Klay has really returned well from his Achilles injury and his knee. Those guys are playing well at an older age. That makes it possible to continue to have them here as long as they want to be here.

Q. Mike, when you're evaluating talent and looking to bring guys in, whether it's free agency or the draft, what skills do you specifically prioritize?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: I think first and foremost you got to distinguish between acquiring talent and building a team. For us, the team thing is huge. How do these players work, interact together.

Beyond that, as far as individual skill sets, place a premium on being able to play both ways, defend your position, and on the offensive end to be able to bring something to the table. High premium on shooting in this day and age with the way the league is going. Shooting is important. Those are kind of the main things and you work your way down with other skill sets.

Character is a big part of it. Again, emphasizing what works for our team. That may not work for other teams. Knowing what our coaching staff likes and what works here is an important part of the evaluation.

Q. The draft, how comfortable are you adding another young player to a roster that obviously has plenty of young players? In that same realm, is it possible that you are more targeting a ready-now player?

JOE LACOB: I'll let Mike handle that because it's his responsibility. I'll just say they all seem young to me, so... I'm a lot older, so they're all young (smiling).

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: I think our main focus is on drafting a really good basketball player. Like Joe said, it's pretty hard not to draft a young guy, the difference between 19

and 23 years of age, sure. You can debate that.

I think our focus, as it has for the most part, is to be drafting players that are actually good at basketball. So that will be the thing. We'll look at it from a roster standpoint of how that looks.

You could make an argument last year we were too young in some ways, sure. That's what we'll take a look at once the draft has gone by and take it from there.

Q. Things could change in the next few weeks, you just took the job, but two names, rumors, speculation about your team, are Jordan Poole and Jonathan Kuminga. You've been onboard when they came on, when they were acquired. What are your thoughts of Jordan Poole and Jonathan Kuminga?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: We love having those guys here. Jordan, especially with his contract extension, we plan on having him four more years at least.

Jonathan has shown progression and growth in his first four years. Unfortunately for him, the playing time hasn't been there. That's on all of our shoulders to figure out how do we get him in the game more. It's on Jonathan's shoulders to improve and make the right adjustments to his game, as well as our front office, our coaching staff figuring out what works.

Both those guys, really, really good young players. We're pleased with them. They have great value around the league. Obviously a lot of rumors and stuff come up at this time of the year. We're happy with those guys.

Q. Mike, Jonathan is going into year three, Moses year three, Jordan turned 24 today. The young guys aren't rookies any more.

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: As most players find by the time you get into your third year, sometimes it takes to four, you end up being pretty good. That's just kind of the time to make that jump. We're hopeful that's the case with these guys. Aren't necessarily babies, young guys, rookies any more. They should be able to be strong, contributing players that can complement our older guys. I think that's the hope.

Those guys are on track, certainly working hard, putting the time in. I think we're confident with what they can do moving forward.

Q. We've seen obviously Denver win a championship. They'll be restocked. Phoenix added Bradley Beal. Do these moves change your approach or what you might

want looking into this season? You can us about the call Joe gave you.

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: What's the deal (smiling)?

Look, we're aware of all the stuff going on around us in the league as far as trades and rumors, all that stuff. But we're pretty focused on our own team.

One thing we came out of last year with is we have a good enough core, nucleus, how do we get better? Is that externally, internally, both? Not caught up too much in what goes around us, but at the same time you have to understand it, have a clear feel for what teams are trying to do in order for us to make the right moves and look at things.

I don't know, Joe, do you have any more comments on theoretical trades that actually haven't gone through yet?

JOE LACOB: No (smiling). Thank you for the hint.

Q. Mike, you mentioned the Jordan Poole contract. Various decisions made over the last four or five years. Bob Myers moves. Can we assume you were in on these, your opinion was heard? Can we kind of just assume that Jordan Poole is a Mike...

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: It's a Golden State Warriors contract. Those that have been here and made decisions, drafted players, signed players, we stand behind all those moves over the last few years.

Anything I've been here for, I stand on board. The three championships I wasn't, I'm down with that, too (laughter).

JOE LACOB: I'll just add a comment to you. Mike answered it very well.

People love to ascribe, I read the stuff, too, I read everything, I watch everything, love to ascribe, Dunleavy's guy, that guy was Kerr's guy. That's actually not how it happens. It's just not true.

It is a we thing. I don't know how many times I have to say it. We get in a room and, yes, we argue, we discuss. That's what you're supposed to do. We come out as one and make a decision for the organization. That is true with almost every decision, if not every decision, that we've ever made on a player.

To say it's one guy's guy or another guy's guy. That is some media person or some guy out on some other team making that stuff up because that doesn't exist.

Q. Mike, Joe is sitting right next to you. Commented by Bob and others he has a fairly strong personality. Are you ready for this? Are you ready for being in a room where Joe expresses his opinion or texts you or calls you, calls you again? Is this something that you're ready for?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Absolutely. One, getting to know Joe over the last few years, I'm comfortable with it. But two, I wouldn't want it any other way as far as having an owner that's less involved, less opinionated, less competitive, less willing to spend to make the roster better, giving us the resources we need. Give me all that stuff versus the alternative.

Yeah, I think I'm ready for it. I'm looking forward to continuing our partnership. I think we'll have a great relationship.

Q. Mike, the fan base sort of took a wait-and-see approach with Bob. What is your message to the Warriors fan base as you get this new job?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: First of all, thank you. Thank you for your passion and just investment in this team with what we've been able to witness the last few years. Just incredible. Love coming to the games, seeing our fans and the way they bring it each and every night. We got the best crowd in the league. An amazing following, not only through the state, the country, but the whole world. Thank you for your support.

From that, I think despite what people have said, the future's bright. The future's bright because we have good, new young players now. Like I said before, I think our processes are good. Our decision making is sound. We're capable of doing the things we need to do to have long-term sustainability. I think we all should be excited.

Q. You mentioned having a conversation with Steph. How involved do you think he will be over the next couple weeks? How involved do you want to have him in rebuilding this roster?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Look, I mean, Steph can be as involved as he wants as far as I'm concerned. But that's not his personality. He likes to be kept in the loop on stuff, which he's earned and deserves.

I think just because I value, we value, his opinion, his thoughts on stuff, I think you're always running things by him.

Steph just wants to work on his game, play some golf, be with his family. I'm not going to bother him too much.

Q. What is your vision for this roster heading into next season? What are some areas that you think need to improve?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: Yeah, sure, I think first and foremost, like it's been said, to be able to get Draymond back would be huge. From there we would love to make improvements to the point of can we add some more shooting, versatility? Can we add some connectivity, whether that's through ball handling, passing, veteran experience.

I think we've heard, talked to the coaching staff, talked to our players, we have a good sense of kind of what we need to do. Fortunately it's nothing drastic. But there's things we can do around the margins, make a move here or there. We're going to be open to it.

Q. You said you want Draymond back. Steph is untouchable. Are there any other players you view are unmovable at this point?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: At this point, we love our roster. As far as untouchables and who we'd like to trade, all that, don't care to get too much into specifics other than to say frankly we get a lot of calls. People value guys on our roster. I think we're in good shape in that respect. We'll always look to evaluate stuff.

Q. One of the first things that Joe said was how you fit into this culture. You talked about some of the relationships you have. Steve's exit interview, he said one of the main priorities for this organization this summer is rebuilding some of the trust that had propelled or dynasty that might have been shaken this season. What do you see that needs to happen, the steps to rebuild that? Where do you see your role in that?

MIKE DUNLEAVY JR.: I think that's fair. I think that's something that, like I said, can be done amongst the group that we have internally through stuff over the course of the summer, but also some external changes perhaps where Steve, we've used the word connectivity, we're more connected as a group on the floor.

You look at the championship team with the Nuggets. Those guys were dialed in together. 2022, that's how we were. We can get back to that feel, that standpoint, I think given our talent, that's going to give us a chance to compete for a title.

Thanks, guys. Appreciate it.

