

# Golden State Warriors Media Conference

Thursday, June 29, 2023  
San Francisco, California, USA

## Lester Quinones Media Conference



**Q. Lester, how does it feel to be back and what's it like being out there with Jacob Rubin running the show?**

LESTER QUINONES: It's great to kind of be back in the practice atmosphere I would say. But kind of seeing Rube as the head coach, me and him kind of had a relationship before this, so I'm excited to see how this is going to go. We have a great group of players, and I have 100 percent faith in Rubin as a coach.

He's a great coach. He understands the game at a different level, and just like myself, he's a competitor. I feel like practices every day are going to be competitive, and we're going to get after it every single day.

**Q. Seeing you put in the work social media-wise, what's the biggest part of your game this last month or two that you've been trying to focus on?**

LESTER QUINONES: I would say consistency and being more efficient. Kind of taking that bigger role this year, being one of the guys to really lead the team this year. I would say I have to start off by being efficient and being better with my reads and kind of knowing less turnovers, knowing what happens on the floor, knowing our plays, knowing every single position of it so I can help those other guys who don't know it and those other guys who aren't as familiar with actions as me, so kind of locking in I would say on the mental part of the game and kind of just studying the game more and just being on point with every little read and every little tendency that I have.

**Q. Are you angling to be more of a point guard at the NBA level?**

LESTER QUINONES: Yeah, I could say it's just helping me with my versatility. Being able to play more than one position obviously for anyone is going to help you grow as a player, but my last year of high school I did play point guard. I played point guard for Penny one year in college, I think it was my sophomore year.

But I feel like I'm pretty comfortable at the 1 position, kind

of handling the ball and being kind of a bigger guard at my size, it helps me see, like I said earlier, the reads and the defense more. I for sure been working on my ball handling and kind of like I said earlier, the reads to where it just becomes second nature to me.

**Q. I know Seth had you doing a lot of that stuff towards the end of the season at Santa Cruz, right?**

LESTER QUINONES: Yeah, the end of the season I was a lot on ball, and like I said, just really learning those reads to where me being a bigger guard, not just on offense, but defensively kind of picking up those smaller guards and being able to guard point guards and 1s full court and stuff like that.

**Q. We were all told today that you were extended a qualifying offer by the Warriors, and although there's still more work to be done to secure a roster spot, what does that mean to see the team has faith in you at some level?**

LESTER QUINONES: Obviously it's showing their faith in me and they're trusting me, but like you said, it doesn't stop here. I've just got to get in the gym more, and like you said, just to solidify my spot on the roster I would say.

Getting the extra work in, watching more film, doing all the other little things to where I can get to a point where Steve can trust me out there on the court and he can trust putting me on and know that there wouldn't be anything mentally that could just show that he can't trust me. Like I said, just growing my mental part of the game, I feel like that's just the next step for me because I everything else will kind of just fall into itself with the work.

**Q. Trying to fill in some of the gaps that the Golden State Warriors were missing last season, you're the only guy who would have spent time with the organization last season, G-League and up here in San Francisco. What are some of those areas to you that need to be filled in, and where do you see yourself adding to those?**

LESTER QUINONES: For sure adding. I would say

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scoring off the bench. I feel like with myself being more of a scorer, I feel like that being my primary I would say strength is scoring the basketball. We for sure are going to need more scoring off the bench.

But also going down on the other end, I feel like defensively, that's what I can work on better. Not to where as I'm going to make it my strength, but more so build on to where I could be a two-way player to where guys aren't just knowing that I'm on the court for offense, they can know that I'm on the court for offense and coming down on defense and kind of playing the ball both ways.

So I feel like defensively that'll probably be my niche to start off, and like I said, it's all about just building my trust with Coach Kerr, so I feel like kind of just sitting down with the staff and with them and really just asking them straight up kind of what they want me to work on and what do they see or where do they see me being on the floor and kind of helping this team out, and I feel like I'm the type of player to where once I sit down and understand where and what they want me to do, I can kind of just go 1,000 percent into that and kind of just be 100 percent invested into doing what the team needs me to do.

**Q. Earlier this season when I spoke to you and I asked you about your award and you were like, I'm happy but I'm not there yet, something like you just said, but to get the news, obviously you're notching some things off the list or scratching some things off the list. How does that feel to get the news that at least you've accomplished that much?**

LESTER QUINONES: Obviously it does feel surreal once you kind of sit back and really look at it. Like it didn't hit me winning that award and being first team all-rookie probably until maybe three or four weeks ago where it's like, I was kind of just sitting there and watching myself kind of watching some of my highlights and watching and I was like, man, I was just so locked in in the moment to where I didn't realize what I was actually doing, to where it's like I kind of did; I broke records down there, kind of really solidified myself down there as one of the best guys there.

Just really sitting back and enjoying it, I feel like that's something to where I can't get too comfortable with it, to where I had it, I did it, I saw what I did. But like you said earlier in the question, there's way more work to do and way bigger things that I want to accomplish that are definitely going to come next, but of course it was amazing for me to get those awards.

**Q. You've been revered as somewhat of a vet today by a few of the players, a few of the questions, and Kendrick actually spoke about you guys' relationship at**

**Memphis. Being able to be that leader on the floor, how does that help you feel comfortable going into Summer League, and what is it that it gives you to help those other players, pull them along?**

LESTER QUINONES: Yeah, of course. Kind of going into what I said earlier, I would say it definitely makes my job harder kind of being a leader for those guys, so not getting comfortable, like I said, to where it's like, okay, I'm a vet now, I know everything, everybody kind of listen to me.

It's more so me doing the same exact things that those guys have to do but making sure I'm doing it right every single time to where if it's a certain read or something that Rubin is trying to teach, I need to be one of those guys to where it's like he can just throw me out there and use me as an example and guys can just pick it up like that because some guys are visual learners more so than just telling them to do something.

So just kind of being the type of dude to where it's like simple things; if we're sprinting, trying to come in first in every sprint. If we're doing shooting, try to win every drill, or kind of just setting the tone to where I'm a competitor, so I want everything as it is, but I feel like it's easier for guys as kind of like the inner part of the team if you see your leader kind of doing everything right and never doing any shortcuts or cutting it short, it kind of pushes you and makes it easier for you to be like, okay, if my leader is doing this, I can obviously do it if he can do it. You know what I mean?

**Q. You built a relationship with Patrick Baldwin Jr. and Ryan Rollins down in Santa Cruz and maybe even Jordan Poole when you were up here. What was your reaction to that trade last week and Chris Paul coming in?**

LESTER QUINONES: Oh, man, I'm actually -- I would say I'm the closest to Jordan on the team, on my perspective I would say. I mean, it's a great opportunity for him. It's a great opportunity for PBJ and Ryan, but being down in Santa Cruz with PBJ and Ryan so much, I felt like we were just starting to favor each other's games and kind of know our strengths to where it was like, if us three were on the court at the same time, I knew what PBJ wanted, where he wanted the ball on the floor. I knew what Ryan wanted to do to get downhill and attack sort of thing.

So obviously when it happened, I was like, man, I'm going to have to learn to play with new guys. At least I have Gui still with me. We're kind of comfortable with our games.

But getting comfortable with Ryan and PBJ, it was just -- I feel like, I don't know, all three of our games just translated

and connected with each other to where I was getting so comfortable with them in practice or kind of scrimmaging and stuff like that.

I mean, best of luck to them. They're in a great opportunity. But it kind of did hurt a little bit. But I feel like the team we have now, the players we have now, we have a huge opportunity, so I'm really excited for it.

**Q. I know Jordan is traveling right now, but have you gotten a chance to exchange texts with him after the news?**

LESTER QUINONES: Oh, for sure. I called him right when I saw it happen. He's still out there now, but like I said, huge opportunity for him. He kind of gets to go over there in Washington and really be a leader out there. It's kind of his team I would say. He has a huge opportunity for himself. I'm excited for him. I feel like he's definitely going to perform down there.

Yeah, nothing but love and the best of luck to him, but I'm actually excited to kind of see how he hoops down there and having his own team and really being a leader. I feel like, yeah, it's going to go really good for him down there.

**Q. Following up on what you were asked about being more of a point guard, more of a playmaker, do you feel like that's a strength that you have that you want to see evolved, or is that something they've talked to you about doing more? Is that more of a focus?**

LESTER QUINONES: No, going back to what I said earlier, my last year of high school, I was the point guard, and I did play a little bit of point guard in college. I would say I'm very comfortable with the ball in my hands, kind of being that primary playmaker and really just making reads.

I would say my strength is kind of just making the right read, so I feel like it's kind of second nature to me to where if I have the ball in my hands or if I've got to get a certain guy a shot or if I'm coming off the pick-and-roll and have to make a certain read, I feel like it's all just natural to me at this point where I'm coming off making sure if I hit the right read to hit it every single time versus if I come off and make the wrong read, I've got to know what the right read was. So I feel like that comes naturally to me.

But Seth kind of -- like what he said earlier, Seth making me the primary ball handler, and it did have to do a lot with Ryan kind of going down and being injured, and we also had a couple injuries in Santa Cruz with the point guard, so with those guys going down and pushing me to the 1, I feel like it definitely opened up a different part of my game that I would say I knew I always had, but I feel like everybody

else kind of didn't know I had.

Yeah, just really showing everybody that I really have way more to what I've shown down there, and like I said, kind of just making sure I get and be a student of the game versus kind of coming off and free-styling it. If I watch the film, if I do the work, if I do everything precise, it's just going to become second nature when I'm out there just hooping.

**Q. Going from last year going undrafted and obviously doing so well in the G-League and the two-way contract, you've seen the Jordan trade, what's the biggest lesson you've learned business-wise in the NBA in this pretty wild year for you?**

LESTER QUINONES: That I feel like it's 100 percent what-are-you-doing-for-me-now type of business I would say. So obviously injuries and other things, the way people play inconsistently, all of that goes into it. I feel like, yeah, that's just the main thing I can say. It's a what-are-you-doing-for-me-now business. When your name is hot and when you have the hype, everybody is going to ride your train, but then them lows that come there, that's just tough to kind of overcome those and then that's when I feel like that hits people.

**Q. Coaches tell us that you caught a body in practice today. Can you confirm that?**

LESTER QUINONES: Yeah, it was actually back-to-back plays.

**Q. Can you sort of talk about your friendship with Kendrick and what means for you guys to be sharing the same court?**

LESTER QUINONES: It's huge. Him kind of being down there in Memphis, I talked to him all the time down there. It's just great to kind of be here with him, and for us to kind of -- I would say on the defensive end have that same niche that Penny taught us defensively I would say. So where it's kind of more fast-paced, kind of guards getting into each other, everybody kind of pressuring the ball. I feel like defensively we'll be more intact to that.

But offensively he's an amazing player. He does all the stuff to where the ref won't see it; know what I mean? So he does the little reach up with the arm when he has it. Defensively he knows like the little -- you know what I mean? Stuff like that.

It's probably stuff that he could teach me as much as I can teach him. I feel like it's going to be a great relationship for me kind of playing with him and being with him now versus being over the phone talking to him about hoops.

**Q. Kendrick talked about him being disappointed on draft night, expecting to go late second round, until he got that call from you, and you convinced him to come to the Bay. What was that conversation like, and what was your pitch to him?**

LESTER QUINONES: Just being in that same situation as him, I was in the same boat as him last year in the draft, kind of not seeing your name called, waiting for that call post-draft. It was tough. It goes back to what I said earlier. One of those down moments where you feel like you're at your lowest, and I felt like I was kind of there to talk to him and let him know the process since I've been through it already and let him know how it's going to go.

Like we said earlier, kind of being that vet for him since I've through it, but kind of just teaching him to really keep his head and just trust the process for real.

I feel like, like I said earlier, he's an amazing player. He's a great player. He's also one of those dudes like myself, he kind of just loves the gym. He stays in the gym. He's always working. I feel like for those guys, the work is always going to show, and it's going to show up eventually. So just tell him keep his head and really go through with it, and I feel like it's going to be exciting for me and him kind of to be on the same floor and really learn how to play with each other and just mold together, and our relationship off the court will definitely transfer on to the court and help us win games.

**Q. (Indiscernible).**

LESTER QUINONES: Yeah, definitely. Yeah, for sure, it was tough. I think James only played maybe three games in Santa Cruz, four games, and those were definitely -- those were amazing games to be on the same floor with him again. Like I said, it was similar with him being at Memphis.

It was different than Kendrick because James was actually my teammate and my roommate, so I was actually closer to him, and just to kind of see James' process and just to see everything that he went through and built up and kind of fought through. That was just the amazing part to me, kind of being close to him and being on those calls with him and just always talking with him. Even to this day, I texted him probably yesterday, just staying close with guys like that.

I feel like the basketball world is very, very small, so kind of just really connecting with all those guys that you kind of were in the same path with, I feel like that's important.

**Q. When is the last time you checked in with James?**

LESTER QUINONES: Probably yesterday, yeah. Yesterday or maybe --

**Q. More specifically, how is he doing?**

LESTER QUINONES: Yeah, if it wasn't yesterday, it was the day before. No, he's doing great. Like I said, he's in the gym. He's grinding down there. He's in a pretty great head space out there, but like I say, he's grinding, he's getting his work in, and I'm very excited to see what he's going to do this season because he's locked in.

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