

# Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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## Draymond Green Media Conference



### **Q. What's going on with the ankle? How did you first suffer that injury, and how are you feeling now?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: Was just playing pickup. I was going up for a lay-up, came down on JK's foot. But I feel good. I feel like I'm improving fast. I'm a pretty fast healer. I feel like I'm improving fast, and it's good. Didn't quite foresee this coming into the season, but everything happens for a reason.

I think I'm excited because we have a great performance team, and I'll be in even better shape whenever it is when I start playing than I even am in now with our performance team.

It's an opportunity for me to get better and to improve on some things that I've been working on, and when the time is there, get back out there and be ready to go and hit the ground running.

### **Q. You obviously twisted your ankle a few times. Is this as bad as you've ever twisted it?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: No, I've had some bad ones. It could have been as bad -- thought it was going to be, especially initially. But I've had some bad ones. It's tough, but it's fine. It's not the end of the world.

### **Q. Grand scheme, how big of a setback do you view it as far as timing and right before camp and missing these practices?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I've missed the beginning of training camp before. It actually sucks because from that point on you feel like you're playing catch-up. I think the goal and the task is to put yourself in a space to where you're playing the least amount of catch-up that you could possibly play.

And so that's my goal, just to do everything that I can to where I'm not -- essentially use this time as wisely as I can so that I'm not totally playing catch-up. It obviously helps that I'm going into year 12 and I know what to expect. I

know the task at hand.

I think it's a lot tougher as a young guy coming into training camp hurt. You're trying to learn. You're trying to get the speed of things, all these things going on. It's a whirlwind. For me, I've been around the block a few times. I'll get up to speed pretty fast and just try to make sure I'm a part of the practices, know everything that's going on.

Things change from year to year, so just try to be as much of a part of it as I can while still getting my work in and getting back as fast as I can.

### **Q. Following up on that, it is year 12 for you and Steph, Klay, you've been around those guys for a long time but with a different supporting cast. Chris coming here, how does this change the way you can keep up with things when there are inherently going to be some differences, Steve playing around with the lineup?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I think there's definitely going to be some differences, and I think one of the things that will be important to keep up with is Chris, because Chris will have his own view of how certain things should work, and like you just don't take that and throw it away. It's Chris Paul; he's one of the smartest players to play this game, so he's going to have some things, say some things, see some things that quite frankly nobody else may see or say.

So I think just from that perspective alone it's a difference. Like that's a totally different force to be reckoned with. Like I said, that'll come with some different things, some different vantage points. That'll come with, oh, man, I see y'all doing this this way. What do you think about doing it this way, and then you look at it like, Ah, that makes sense, wouldn't have thought it that. And all of a sudden something we've been doing this way changes.

I think just understanding all of those things will be important. And Steve, like you said, Steve will teeter with things during preseason. That is the time to do that.

But I think for us the goal is to get our foot in as quickly as we can, kind of settle into who we are, who we want to be as quickly as we can, and then go from there.



**Q. Going back to what you were saying about Chris Paul, you've been the lead playmaker on this team, assist guy for a long time, but even with all that experience, what can you learn --**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I don't see that changing now.

**Q. That's not what where I was going. What can you learn from a guy like Chris Paul?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I think number one, for me to learn -- anytime you get to learn from a guy like Chris Paul, you're lucky. So for me, I'm looking forward to the opportunity. I have this saying, I always walk around talking to guys like, I see everything, I'm a point guard. It could be us sitting here and I see this thing like I'm a point guard, I see that.

But to actually have a guy like Chris Paul to learn from, the experience that he has, when you talk about mastering the point guard position, he mastered that position. He's one of the most incredible playmakers we've seen in this league.

It's funny because I was talking with a couple friends, Travis in particular, the other day, and we were sitting and talking with a couple of the young guys. I thought it was very interesting some of the things that the young guys had to say, and we was just talking about pickup.

A couple of the young guys was playing on Chris' team, and he was telling us some of the things that Chris was saying and doing with like him and Kuminga, and I was just sitting there, and Travis and I were sitting there looking at each other like, wow.

The first thing Travis said is, wow, I've got to teach TJ that. TJ is Travis' son, my nephew. He's like, I've got to teach TJ that. We weren't even sitting with Chris. Chris wasn't even in the same place we were.

But yet and still, we're sitting there essentially learning from Chris.

I think that is, A, something that you just can't quantify that because that is influence, and so, like I said, that's without Chris being there, so now imagine Chris there and the things that you get to learn.

Because what we learned in that situation, it was from Chris' perspective in a sense, but it wasn't from Chris. But yet you'll have Chris there to learn from.

Man, I'm extremely excited about the opportunity to learn

from him. I think even in -- when I look at Chris' career, one thing he's been absolutely incredible at is bringing younger guys along, and that's something that I feel like I can be so much better at.

So to have someone like that to learn from I think is pretty incredible.

**Q. Given Chris' personality, we know his impact on this league. Where do you fall on the starting lineup question? We know Steve has said we're going to see what it looks like. You had the best starting five in the league last year. Do you think Chris should be in the conversation to break that up a little bit?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I mean, you said it. We did have the best starting lineup in the league, so you can't ignore that. And yet you can't ignore Chris Paul is Chris Paul. He is very much so Chris Paul.

You have to take all of that into account, and then once you take all of that into account, I am a basketball player and not a coach, so it's not my job to figure it out. It's not my role.

But what I do know is whatever is best for this team is going to happen. What I do know is in spending time with these guys over the last month and a half and getting together and spending time together, the number one goal from everybody here would be to win.

When that is the number one goal of everybody that walks into this building, everything else you figure it out.

It won't always be my way. It won't always be Steph's way. It won't always be Chris' way. It won't always be Steve's way. Because when the number one goal when you walk into an arena, when you set out on a journey to do something and the number one goal is winning, it don't always go anyone in particular's way, and then you have to sacrifice things. That's what makes up a team.

What I can feel with this team already is that everyone who's walking in that door has a dedication to winning, and because of that, everything else that'll happen along the way is just a part of the journey. You figure those things out.

But in figuring those things out, you do what's best to reach the end goal, and I have no doubt in my mind that everyone who's here has that goal. And so I have no worries about a starting lineup, about a finishing lineup, about a second unit. I don't have any worries about that because those are all things that's just a part of the journey of what we want to ultimately do.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

**Q. You mentioned that everyone is on the same page, and last season there was obviously some disconnect with the team and chemistry was off. How much is that getting in some new faces, having a more veteran squad compared to the year prior?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I think having veterans definitely helps because there's just more of an understanding. I think anything that you do, when you're mixing this amount of experience with this amount of experience, there is a disconnect. You try to do all that you can to lessen that disconnect.

Sometimes you succeed, sometimes you fail. That's just the nature of it.

I think for us, you bring in more veterans. We are veterans. You bring in more veterans, guess what, you lessen the disconnect. It doesn't mean you can't -- Moses isn't a veteran, Kuminga is still not a veteran. Trayce isn't a veteran, BP isn't a veteran. You're still going to have guys that aren't veterans. That's an NBA team. You're always going to have guys that aren't veterans.

But I think when you start looking at adding a CP, adding a Dario, guys who -- proven veterans in this league, it changes things because ultimately the experience that guys have makes a huge difference in this league.

That's why guys get better as they go. You figure more things out. You figure schemes out. You figure how to work. You figure all of these things out.

So adding more veterans I think it shores up things. It lessens the room for error.

I think anything that you do, if you can lessen the room for error of something, you're trying to do that, and I think adding veterans for us helps.

**Q. Steve said last week that he felt like last year you might have come in with your foot off the gas, having won the championship, short summer, everything. In retrospect do you feel that way, and do you feel a different kind of sense of urgency or that your time together, the three of you especially, is shrinking? Do you feel a different sense of urgency this year?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I think anytime you're coming off a championship, a sense of urgency won't be what it will become when you're not coming off a championship. I don't even get into the space of trying to compare the two because it's just really not a realistic comparison. As a human being, one of the things that we all fight as human

beings when we have success is complacency. It's a natural thing.

Because you worked so hard to reach the mountain top, and when you reach the mountain top, you can appreciate that. The time that you spend appreciating it is time that you don't spend getting better. It's just a very natural thing.

In anything that you do, if you're not spending that time getting better, you're getting worse. When you win a championship and you're spending your time appreciating winning that championship, which we all do, which you should do, by the way, because who's working to get to the mountain top to only not appreciate it, then what's the point of getting there, and you should never get there again because you didn't even appreciate being there.

So I think for us, we reached the mountaintop a couple years ago, and you're coming off that, your foot isn't on the gas. Small things that you may stop when you're not on the mountain top, you let slide. You let those things slide, small issues become big issues. Sometimes you can correct them; sometimes you can't.

I think for us going through this so many times we understand that. Last year the season did not end how we wanted it to end. You're going to come back naturally even more motivated when that happens if you're competitors when you don't have the success that we've had if you're not competitors.

I think for us, it's a natural thing for us to come in more focused this year than we came in last year. I don't really necessarily take that as a knock. Like I said, it's human nature.

But I do think it's important, and I can see that, that everyone comes in locked in, ready to get off to a good start, because that will determine how the rest of our year goes.

Everyone is definitely more focused.

The way I view it is sometimes you have to lose to win. Last year we lost, and I think it set us up to put us in a better position to win this year.

**Q. You're on record saying that you did not like Chris Paul. How has your perspective on that changed since you've been able to work with him, play with him, if at all?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I've had some conversations with him, with Chris, over the last couple months that I haven't necessarily had, not only with Chris, but just in my career.

I've said this before, too, on the record. He's one of the smartest guys in this league, when you talk basketball IQ. I've said on record, Chris Paul, LeBron James, Rajon Rondo, like I've said that on record a million times.

Number one, we've had conversations, basketball conversations that I've just been excited to have because it's sitting and speaking with the guy with an IQ level of a Chris Paul. For me I can get basketball geeky at times. I love the game of basketball. I think one of my best attributes as a basketball player is my IQ.

In speaking to a high-IQ guy like Chris, for me that's everything. Like that's gold. We've been able to share in those conversations. We've been able to share in a bunch of conversations. We've been collaborative on things, things that you do with teammates we've been doing.

In doing that, you start to get to know people outside of just what you're doing as far as basketball goes.

I'm starting to get -- I've started to get to know Chris better. I didn't know Chris at all outside of competing with him.

If you've ever watched Chris compete, he's kind of an asshole. He may say the same thing about me, and that's okay.

But he's also one of the most competitive guys that I've played against over my 11 years in this league. I'm also an extremely competitive guy, and I'm not backing down from anyone, he's not backing down from anyone. That will bring some clashes, and it has brought plenty of them.

When you look at the last seven, eight years in the NBA, Chris Paul is right at the center of all of it. And guess what? So are we, and we weren't on teams. If there wasn't any hate, then everybody would get to talking like, oh, man, those guys are too friendly, or why are they working out together, this, that, in today's NBA.

But then when you have competitors hating each other, then that's like, oh, man, they hate each other; how is that even possible? You've got to pick a side. You either want us to be friends and all work out together and everybody accept it, or you want us to hate each other. In this case, we competed. We're trying to get championships, Chris was trying to get championships. And guess what? When you're competing for that at the level that we've competed for that, that sometimes brings hate because we're going after the same thing, and that definitely had brought that between us.

But look at the runs we were on. Houston was right at the

center of that. The Clippers were right at the center of that. Phoenix was right at the center of that.

So you look at -- been in the league 11 years, we've been competing on a championship level for eight. He's at the center of six of them. Of course there's going to be some animosity, and there was a lot of it.

Now, in saying that, we're dogs. We're men. We have an opportunity to go do something special together. Would never let that go by the wayside.

Just getting to know Chris and seeing how he operates, seeing how he moves, how he carries himself, how he walks in the gym every day. Like it makes sense of why he is who he is, why he's had the success that he's had. I'm growing to know that. I'm learning from that. I don't think you're ever too good or have done too much to learn from someone.

Chris Paul has been in this league, what, 18 years? Definitely somebody I can learn from. I'm excited about it.

We're growing in more facets than one. It's been an incredible start to it.

I know, like I said, for both of us, the goal is to win, and I know he wants to win, as we all know, and my goal is to do all that I can to make sure I help him win. And anything that happened before that, it happened. It definitely doesn't change our past.

Like us becoming teammates doesn't change the things that's happened in the past. We have battled and battled for sure, but I think the part I'm most excited about is you now get to know the person.

I know for myself and where I can probably relate to Chris, most people probably hate me that don't know me. I think if you get to know me, you don't necessarily hate me, but if you don't know me you definitely hate me, and Chris has definitely got some of that himself. If you don't know him, you probably hate him. You get to know him and you realize there's a competitor and a person.

But hey, it's not always easy to see that when you're in the heat of the battle. When you step outside the heat of the battle you can separate these two things, and I am thankful to have the opportunity to separate the two things.

**Q. The front court, there's plenty of conversation if you guys are big enough. I know you guys brought in veteran centers, including Dwight. Do you think in this conference you guys have enough size?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I mean, they said we didn't have enough size in 2022 and we won. I've been told I wasn't the right size forever, and I've won. I'm never going to hear something and be like, they don't have enough size to win because I can show you where we didn't have enough size, and we won.

In saying that, I'm not totally against having another big, you know. But at the end of the day, I think Mike Dunleavy has done an incredible job of filling impossible shoes. You go from Bob Myers who's coming and had the most success of any general manager, not only for sure in this organization but more success than probably 98 percent of general managers in NBA history, and then you're tasked to follow that up.

It's impossible shoes to fill, yet I think Mike is doing an incredible job. He's transparent. He's up front. He'll have a conversation. Whether you think that conversation is tough or not, he's showing that he's willing to have those conversations, and he's doing the job.

When someone comes in and is doing the job like Mike, the number one thing that Mike has to do is come in and create trust, and every move that he's been making and moves that he hasn't made, but communicating with us and making sure we're in the know, that we know certain things I think is incredible. I think he's doing an incredible job.

Just to get back to your main question, which is do I think we need a big, I don't think we need anything. I think anything we need we've got right here.

Would a big be beneficial for us? I don't see it hurting us. I think it definitely could add a benefit. Lakers are huge. Like that's who we lost to. So if you look at someone and you're like, this is who we lost to, where do we need to improve, probably need a little bit more size. Doesn't mean we're necessarily going to lose again if we don't get the size, but it may help, so we'll see where it goes.

Mike has got my support 100 percent. I think he's been a pleasure to work with, even in my deal and going through that with Mike and different things. It was incredible.

So he got my support, and whatever he does, he does. I'm going to support that, and I'm going to do my job as a player, too. If I feel, oh, man, we could have had more size, well, I can't affect that. And I ain't talking about us signing -- I can affect the outcome. I'd rather focus my time on affecting the outcome than focus my time on affecting who comes. That ain't my job.

Pause. Have a good one.