

Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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Kevon Looney

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Q. This was kind of a different year for you. We've been watching you start most of the time the last few years. This year you were in and out starting, sometimes in rotations, sometimes out. What was it like for you going through that and how did you deal with it?

KEVON LOONEY: It was tough a little bit, you know, role changes from night to night, tried to make the most of it, tried to -- it was a pretty deep team and we had a lot of guys that could bring different things to the table. So it was a lot different lineups and things we tried and stuff like that.

So I was trying to figure out how I can try to make an impact on this team and on the court. It wasn't always the easiest, but I feel like -- towards the end of the year I didn't play that much minutes, but I feel like I was still able to be part of the team. So definitely it was different.

Q. How do you see your future here?

KEVON LOONEY: I mean, I'm not always in control of my future here. Like, I always would love to come back, be part of this team, part of this organization. That's all I kind of know. But it's the NBA. When you don't make the playoffs, you lose, stuff usually happens. So I don't know what's going to happen, but I should be prepared for the next step.

Q. Did they give you any indication today?

KEVON LOONEY: Not really. It's kind of too early. We got a lot of things we got to figure out first. I don't think I'm top of the list. I'm going to just keep working and keep evolving my game and keep trying to get better and be able to help our team win.

Q. It seemed like Steve stuck with that starting lineup with you and Draymond from last year for much of the first half. What do you think -- just looking back at it now, what do you think went wrong with that lineup?

KEVON LOONEY: I mean, it's kind of hard to say. I probably didn't play with that lineup since like December,

so that seems like a long time ago. So I don't really kind of know. We never got on the right page. We didn't really get our chemistry right. Draymond not being there for training camp, we was all kind of off to a slow start, different things like that. Guys wasn't playing their best all at the same time. Things weren't working, so kind of went away from it and never kind of went back to it. So, you know, it was just tough.

Q. You guys went 22-32 against teams with winning records. What do you think was the biggest difference between you guys and some of the better teams, some of the contending teams in the League?

KEVON LOONEY: We just played good -- in those games, we always played a good game for 42 minutes or 43 minutes. We never put together a full game. There were times against the best teams that we would be up most of the game or even take a lead and then other team would just make a run and we couldn't close it out at the end. I think that's probably our biggest struggle in our record. We lost a lot of games at the buzzer, a lot of games where we had a lead. It could have changed the season, but you live and you learn and we wasn't -- I think we just didn't execute good enough sometimes to close games.

Q. Despite some of the struggles, guys pretty consistently talked about the camaraderie that this group had. How do you plan on remembering this particular season?

KEVON LOONEY: This is a crazy season. It's a season that will probably always stick out in my mind. It reminded me of how much we had to go through, how much we experienced as a team together. Some of the things that we went through was not normal in the NBA season, despite just the losing and different things like that, but coming to work every day was always fun. It was always a safe place, even though having a loss like we did with coach in the middle of the season, it was still able to come to work and feel the love from our teammates, the staff, the training staff, the other workers. It just made, you know, every day a little bit brighter.

So the camaraderie was great. Wish we would have had a



chance to make a run in the playoffs together as a group, but the way things fell it didn't go that way.

Q. Despite your role fluctuating sometimes, your leadership was still obviously very much accounted for. What's the challenge in that and who are maybe some of the veterans you've learned about that in the past even when times are going up and down?

KEVON LOONEY: It was definitely -- it was challenging sometimes, just because it's easy to lead when you're out there on the court and they feel more comfortable leading when you're playing well, you're feeling really good about yourself. But I learned from a lot of guys, from Andre. He didn't probably play -- last year he didn't really play, but he was one of our biggest leaders of our team. I talk to Zaza. He's still with the organization. Sometimes when I needed somebody to talk to, I was able to talk to him. D West. Some of the former players that I played with they taught me a lot about leading from the back, not always being in the front, but being able to be a voice and being able to talk to guys and be able to connect the team. So I just remember everything that they taught me and try to do the same things.

Q. Whether it was Steve, Steph, or Draymond last night, there's still a lot of confidence in this group still making -- being able to make a run. What's your trust factor as far as that group still being able to contend with you?

KEVON LOONEY: I mean, I trust it all the way. As long as you got those three and a coach like Steve, there's always a chance that we can do something special. You got to have pieces, change the pieces around, but that three has shown that they can get it done with a different cast. Steph's still playing at a high level, Draymond is playing at a high level, Klay's been playing at a high level. So as long as those guys are healthy and are still wanting to do it at the level they want to, I think they can make a run. Like I said, pieces might have to change, but they don't shown that they can do it with different groups.

Q. We talked a few times about you sort of mentoring Trayce. You've played in this league a long time. You study centers. What about his game and his personality, his makeup, make you think he's going to be -- what do you sort of see as his future, I guess?

KEVON LOONEY: I think he can be a really, really good player. His feel for the game, his athleticism, his touch around the rim is all things that you can't like just teach. I think he finished like 80 percent around the rim. That's elite as a rookie. So I think he's only going to get better, he's only going to get smarter, he's only going to get

stronger. So I think he has a chance to be a really, really good player, have a long career. Get to practice against him every day. I see his potential and what he can do and I was just glad to see him out there doing it at a high level.

Q. Where do you see his need for improvement or his chance -- what can he do much better next year to take another step?

KEVON LOONEY: For him, I think just being a better talker, communicate more on defensive end. I think this year he knew the coverages, but to be able to talk and be able to coach your teammates through is a different level. It's something that we talk about all year as a team, not just him, but everybody just being more talkative on the court.

I'd also just like to see him just be a little meaner on the court. He has the strength and the power to be able to push guys around and he does that. He shows flashes of it, so I would like to see him just push guys around and be more physical sometimes. I think he has the capability of doing that.

Q. It looks like from our perspective a lot of things that has always worked with you guys didn't work as well. There's a lot of talk about parity in the league being better. Did you feel like is the league better, are teams more athletic, or what's different now with the rest of the league?

KEVON LOONEY: I feel like the league definitely got better. I feel like -- I guess you could say it got more athletic, but I just think guys are -- the schemes are a little different, guys are playing a lot faster, everybody's shooting more threes, and people are shooting the ball a lot better. That's probably the biggest difference. I wouldn't say -- yeah, I would probably say that. Teams shot the ball a lot better. I think last year 46 wins would have got us a lot higher in the playoffs. So teams were a lot better, a lot more competitive. I think the play-in made guys play for a lot longer. People were really trying to win. So I would say that was the biggest difference.

Q. I know you are one of the least emotional guys on the team, but is there a part of you that watched Klay go through that and feel it, knowing all he's been through, or are you put some touch on it and you'll be all right?

KEVON LOONEY: In the moment, I didn't really think about it. I didn't really realize it. I really wasn't thinking about his game. We was trying to win, and I feel like it wasn't just -- I feel like we all wasn't playing our best game, so it wasn't like, oh, this guy is killing us. He needs to play better. We feel like as a unit we wasn't competing to the

level that we needed to compete at. I feel like we all played hard, but we didn't really execute the game plan like we was supposed to. We wasn't playing with that joy and that intensity that we needed to to win that game.

So after the game, I thought about like, man, that's -- I wish Klay could have played better and you never know what's going to happen, so I thought about it after that, but during the game it was like, man, whatever. Klay's going to make the next one. He always do. So that's kind of how we was thinking.

Q. Can you imagine him playing elsewhere?

KEVON LOONEY: No. No. He's been here his whole career. When you think about the Warriors you think Steph, you think him, you think Draymond, and so it would be weird seeing him put on another jersey or competing for somebody else. But the NBA, guys switch more than stay on the same team nowadays. It would be hard for me to imagine that.

Q. It felt like it was 2022, right? And even some of last year in the playoffs, where you were the man. Your jersey was in the crowd. People were talking about your statue. Is it crazy to you like how fast things changed or does that feel like how it's been in your career?

KEVON LOONEY: It's just normal to me. That's how it's been in my career, it's how this team has been covered. We were the greatest one day and the next day we're all through, get rid of everybody. So I kind of seen that before. I kind of knew that. So it's not like surprising or shocking. My first couple years it was just, you just take all the noise and try to block it out and just keep believing in the work, believing in yourself, and believing what you can do. I got the ultimate faith in myself and my teammates and so I feel like I'm going to still be around this league for a long time, for a while.

Q. I was going to go down that line, you're 28 still. How much good basketball do you think you have left?

KEVON LOONEY: I think I have a lot. I feel like I can get better. I didn't play -- after the first couple months or two I don't feel like I played a lot of minutes. I didn't try to take advantage of the opportunity that I was given. I feel like I can still develop. I feel like I can continue to get better, help guys on the team get better, and I feel like I'm still learning the game and growing. I feel like I got a lot more to give, a lot more to contribute. Just a few bad games here and there doesn't define my whole basketball legacy or what I got left. I feel like I got a lot left to give.

Q. We've asked you this before over the years, but this year you seemed to pull out the mid-range jumper a little bit more. You know what I'm going to ask. Does anything about how this year played out make you want to get behind the three-point line because you have some shooting ability?

KEVON LOONEY: For sure. Yes, definitely. I know I can shoot it. It's something I haven't been asked to do. It's something that they never needed me to do. But they might not ask me to do that next year, but I feel like to get on the court pretty long in my career the next step for me is to be able to evolve my game and be more offensive minded and be able to effect the game more than just one way. So something I've been working on, even since the towards the end of the season I've been working on it more, working out with Dario, picking his brain, he's a guy that kind of plays that way. Trying to learn as much as I can learn from different players. Just watching the way the League is going I know I have to add more stuff and I'm excited for that process this summer just to continue to work on my game and I'll get better.

Q. Talking all the way out to three, right?

KEVON LOONEY: Yeah, yeah. I can make a three. Yeah.

Q. Would you have like a percent in mind that you would want to shoot if you were ever --

KEVON LOONEY: When I look around the League, for a big, if I can shoot 35, 36 percent, I think that's serviceable for all the other stuff I bring to the court. So, that's probably about the goal right there.

Q. When you guys won the championship in Boston you were kind of almost thanking Steve for sticking with you for through the ups and downs throughout your career. What's your guys' communication like this season through the ups and downs as well?

KEVON LOONEY: Yeah, always got to an open line of communication with Steve. He's always pretty honest and he let's me know what he's thinking, what he's going to do, the next step in the process of why he's doing different lineups, why he's doing this. So he always up front and that's what makes my job a lot easier to handle and to move forward and continue to do my job at the level that I want to. So, yeah, he's always pretty open and he's still open, yeah.

Q. You said 35, 36?

KEVON LOONEY: Yeah.

Q. Looks like Draymond was at 39.5. You okay with Draymond shooting better than you?

KEVON LOONEY: I mean, he's a power forward, I'm a center, so he should beat me at something.

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