

Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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Mike Dunleavy

Media Conference



MIKE DUNLEAVY: First, I guess I want to start with, the last few week, I think the sports world, between Willie Mays, a local hero, Bill Walton and Jerry West, would he have government those guys, and specifically with Jerry, you know, a member of this franchise, one of the iconic players in the NBA, Johnny, his son works with us.

So I think it's a tough loss for the NBA family and the organization and for their family. I've known the Wests since I was nine years old. So it was just tough to hear that news. Our condolences go out to the family, and Jerry will certainly be missed. He was a giant in this world, in the sports world, condolences there, and just thinking of those guys, Jerry, Bill and Willie.

Anyway, on to more basketball-related stuff. With the Draft this week coming up we are excited about it. This time of year is fun. You have got free agency; you have got trades; you've got the draft, all ways to improve your team beyond what I think is the most important, which I think is internally, player development and that stuff.

We are looking at things. I think it's a little bit different this year, not having a first-round pick. We've got 52 in the second round, which hopefully we will find a quality player, a quality addition to the franchise.

But I think in that regard, all things will be on the table. We'll explore options, and just like we do every year, kind of make the right decision and roll with it.

So I'll open up to questions. I'm sure there's quite a few things to cover but let's get through it.

Q. Is trading or free agency your best option to really change --

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Again, I'm of the belief internal development. Is I'm always a big player development guy. I think our younger players have a really big chance to grow and get better: Pots, JK, Trayce, Moses, and even our guys we've had here for a while can get better. I think that's got to be the main thing.

And then from there you look to see what else is out there, and can you make a move or couple moves and do some stuff that enhances your team.

But if that's what's, like, the one thing we're hinging everything on, I just -- it's so hard to make a trade now in the NBA. I think we've got a lot of teams that are really smart. They know what they are doing. To make a good quality trade that benefits both sides, which is what everybody is looking for, it's tough.

So we'll explore that stuff. A lot of conversations go going on but I don't want to, like, get ahead of it and just say like there's going to be some big move we're going to do and all that. Could be; if it was there, great. But if not, it's not something that must happen.

Q. With Chris Paul, is it close to pushing that --

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, it's close in the sense of, I guess less than a week away now, so it's coming up. We're looking through everything.

I think all options are still on the table in terms of keeping Chris. Obviously there's a scenario where it gets waived. But those conversations, talking it through him and his camp, we'll keep that kind of to ourselves. But I would say everything's open.

Q. When you mentioned that -- two trades last summer -- Dallas made a huge trade before the deadline bringing in guys. What's going to be the key to making a big trade?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: It's having a willing partner. I think to do that, you've got to find the right time. You've got to find the right player that works for you and just having players that are available, right.

Like I'm calling everybody, but if the player is not available and there's not a price, then there's no trade that can be made.

So I think we have to be realistic, and I don't want to like,



press and over -- overdo something. Some patience needs to take place while at the same time recognizing sort of this time horizon we have with Steph and Draymond and hopefully Klay. As those guys kind of get a little bit older, we have to be mindful at a point they are not at a level to compete for a championship. I don't think that's, like, too near but at some point it probably will be.

Q. The draft -- what makes it --

MIKE DUNLEAVY: You know, I think beyond certainly learning about our team, I think in general, I think I mentioned just before, it's just hard to do deals. I mean, I can't stress that enough. There's a lot of good teams out there that know what they are doing, whereas in the past, just seemed like you could pull a fast one on somebody, or there's different reasons for doing a trade.

Now it's hard. Like, there are salary-related trades but how often do you see a trade that's straight basketball-for-basketball? And so because of that, it's just not easy. But at the same time, we know here some good teams have been built based on getting like an Andrew Wiggins in a trade, something like that.

So you have got to keep pursuing those trades but recognizing they are not always ease.

Q. With Klay, can you describe the state of those talks? Is there on offer on the table right now for Klay?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Honestly all that stuff I think it's private. We want him back. We've said that all along. Hopefully he'll come back. But as far as the specifics and discussions and those types of things, I think it's important to keep in-house and that stuff. When we figure out a solution to all that, we'll have news for you.

Q. With the luxury tax and all that, how is that for you guys navigating?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: It's funny, as most of you guys know, Onsi Saleh moved on, our cap guy. We hired a new guy, Jon Phelps. So he's hit the ground running. And I think for us understanding the new rules and things around the cap, is something I constantly -- I had a good feel for it before and some things have change the. I hit Jon a lot on, hey, the new stuff. And it's a little tricky as the league -- here we are in June and July it changes.

So keeping all that in mind as far as a trade now versus trade after. It's a little tricky but it's not going to be like a problem.

Q. Anything jump out in the postseason?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: We talking like the hockey game tonight? That will be exciting.

I think just in terms of the postseason, like how competitive it is in terms of parity. I think you see the last five seasons, you have five different champions. I think that's exciting for the league in the sense of, everybody has a chance in a way, whether it's play-in team making the Finals or a team like Dallas, 5th seed, making the Finals.

Everybody has got a chance if you come together at the right time. I don't think there's any overwhelming teams out there. It gives us a chance, a team that didn't make the playoffs last year and ourselves, you know, how far away are we really. At times you say, man, we are quite a ways away. The way things are shaped now, there's a push for parity, I think we can turn things around pretty quickly.

Q. Joe Lacob has said Plan A is to dip under the luxury tax. In your conversations with him recently, is that still the sense that you get from him?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I think it's about being smart about it.

So from that sense, it's more like if there's a point to go over the tax, if there's a point to going into one of the aprons, like we will do it. Because the most important thing to him is winning. He's shown that. You just have to be careful under the new rules because they are so punitive. Balancing what's right for our team and right for the roles to allow us to go forward and making right decisions is the big test.

Joe may have an idea in mind about what he wants to spend, but when presented an opportunity to spend a lot of money and have a great team, I know what his answer is going to be.

Q. You've got Klay. At some point, do you have to strip away emotion from this and sentimentality, whatever else? Does it have to get cold a little bit on your side, maybe on both sides; but I'm speaking to you, so on your side?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I think, look, I think I'm reasonable, I'm rational. That's how I'm always going to operate.

But to say a guy like Klay Thompson who has meant so much to this franchise, to completely strip the emotion away from it, I think that's almost impossible.

But this is a business. We'll talk through things and continue to talk through things. Like I said, we are hopeful

but you know, we'll see. We've got to figure things out.

Q. Steve said the role changed this season for Klay. Does the salary he signs for, if it's with the Warriors, have to reflect a bench player? Does that change this negotiation?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I think it's the right thing that works for the franchise and player and the role he's in. Factoring all those things in is what's most important, and that's kind of what's taken place, what we are looking at. That's as simple as it is. There's probably going to be varying degrees of what that value is, but like that's on us and that's on me to figure out what's the might amount for our team.

Q. Whether it's you guys with Draymond or Denver with Jokic or Milwaukee with Middleton, second-round picks have been crucial parts of championship teams lately. What can you take from that issue, diving into the second round?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I mean hopefully if we can get a player like Trayce last year at 52, I think we would be really pleased, though.

It's hard, though. The second round's tough. You look at the numbers, the odds of a guy making it; a guy becoming a rotation player; a guy becoming a really good player. You mentioned players that almost, I don't want to say 1 in a million, low odds of getting that quality of player.

Because of that, to have that chance, but our scouts are pounding the pavement trying to figure out who may be at 52 could be that player and makes it fun. It makes it fun for everybody.

A little bit different than the NFL where there's multiple rounds. Only have two rounds. This year, as you know, it's over the course of two days, which I think will bring a little bit more excitement. It will be interesting, the interaction, the dynamics between Wednesday and Thursday. That will be a new thing for all of us to kind of navigate.

Because yeah, I think it's good. We would like to have a pick in the first round, but if I'm honest, if there's ever a year not to have one, I think this might be it.

Q. How quickly will you view to replace Kenny, and how do you view the coaching staff in general?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think technically, not really allowed to comment on that one. But I would say if we were to lose our lead assistant coach, we certainly need to

fill that void, and we're on it.

I think as far as like the roster goes, coaching staff, front office, everything, we're always evaluating, how do we get better, and that's kind of the lens we're looking at it through.

Q. How difficult is the fact -- we talked earlier about the Chris Paul guarantee date. Because it is where it is prior to free agency, how difficult does that make putting together this off-season?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, good question. I think it's fine. We know what it is. We planned for it. I think it's more difficult about balancing the salary versus the quality of player and taking that into account, which makes it tough.

I mean, I'm okay with the date. You know, I guess we'll see if that changes. But for now, I'm good with it. I understand the rules. We'll abide by it.

Q. Just talking about the second round of the draft, what are your thoughts just on a big two days now and what that extra day might do for a team that only has a 52 pick now?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I'm intrigued by it. I'm not quite sure how it's going to unfold. I would imagine I think it's going to be a lot less hectic. Normally the draft with the first round and kind of sprinting into the second, you just rip through it. Honestly there's times where we don't know whose pick it is, who's picking, you've got two minutes in between.

This new scenario, this new situation, I think it's four minutes on the clock in the second round. It's a whole other day. I think there will be lots of discussions going on the Thursday morning of the second round.

I just think it's going to be different in that regard, and we'll try and get ahead of it. We'll react afterward and see, how did that change and what do we have to be better at in the future. But I think it's going to be a lot less hectic.

Q. Is there part of you or all of you like to see the NBA adapt the NFL model where the free agency comes and the draft comes after?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: That's been bandied about over the years. I do think because of the NBA, I would say in general, you probably draft less for need and more for like long-term fit versus the NFL. Not that you don't do that; it just seems to me that it's more, you're drafting positionally, fit now, those types of things.

So it's a different dynamic. I don't mind it being before. It's

what we are used to. If they changed it, we'd adjust but I do think the NFL vs. NBA strategy in terms of drafting is different. So not as big of a deal for us.

Q. I know things can always change depending how it goes, but when you're talking about the future and future after whenever it is with Steph and Klay, or Steph and Draymond for sure. Safe to say it will be very, very tough for you to consider trading Kuminga, Moody, Trayce; those guys are going to be very difficult to lose for the Warriors?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: For sure. We really value those guys. We've drafted them. We've grown them. They have played really well. We are excited about them. A scenario to move them would take a lot. It's important for us to be good now and then be good also in the future.

But like the main thing is, we think those guys can contribute and help our group now. If that was not the case, we would be more open to stuff but it is. So we are excited for those guys' growth this year and I expect them to be with us.

Q. You've obviously been in negotiations with Klay. Do you have a sense of what he wants out of this negotiation? Is it respect? What have you gleaned that he would want to come back to the Warriors?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think on that one, I think that's kind of like private. Those conversations that take place between myself and his representation or Klay and whoever it is in our group, teammates and all that, that's one I'd prefer to keep private.

Q. Are you getting calls on your young players, Kuminga, specifically? Are these attractive players around the league?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think everybody is making calls right now, whether it's on, you know, future draft picks, current players. Everybody is trying to get better, and so everybody is exploring and asking. It's good that the phones are ringing and there's interest in our guys. I think that's a good sign for kind of the level and quality that they are at.

Doesn't mean we are too engaged with it, though.

Q. In regards to Klay and emotions and everything, from your position, how do you approach or react when a player negotiates through the press maybe or maybe through social media?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Probably just like everybody else. You

read it and take it in. Just like any other, you know, piece of data or social media or anything like that. I don't get any sense there's negotiating going on publicly, but that's kind of my perspective.

Q. A year ago, granted all things changed, you did say that Jordan Poole was going to be on the team about four days before you traded him. Is this different than that?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: To be clear, I said expected Jordan to be back on the team next year and I did at that point.

But this thing changes so quickly, especially when there's a deadline in place, whether it's a trade deadline, draft, free agency. Things change like that.

So I reserve the right to go back on -- or I wouldn't say go back because I said I didn't expect him to be back, and I would stick by that. I said -- I'm sorry. I said I expected him to be back, like I do all the guys we have under contract, I really do. Like, there's nothing going on right now where I'm like, man, this may not happen or whatever.

So things can always change. Draft goes on. Picks become available. Something changes. But on the whole, I feel pretty comfortable with the group that we've got.

Q. Another playoff question. Watching these playoffs, and watching Boston, in particular, and some other teams, the three-point shot is taking a leap every year it seems like, and obviously Boston is three-point happy. That's what they do. How much are you guys influenced, if at all, by what you see in the postseason and by what those successful teams do and what made them successful?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I think they are all watching. We are observing and seeing trends. We're seeing what's going on. Last year it, was, Oh, man, the game has changed. Big guys, Jokic, they won a championship. Have a dynamic guy like that.

This year, I think there's a lot of three-point shooting and really good guard play defensively from the Boston guards. So you get all these new kind of trends that are going in a certain direction.

It's good but I think you have to also be mindful of it. There's a lot of ways to skin a cat, and I think there's a lot of ways to build a team. So you've got to go with what you have and what makes sense building around your, group, and that's kind of what we'll look to do.

I don't think there's one singular way to do it but there are

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

some good concepts and ideas around it. At the core of it, it's generally good defense, competitiveness, high IQ, toughness. Those types of things are really, really important. The skill stuff and position and architect-type things can vary. I think there's a core base of things you need to win, and we'll continue to pursue those.

Q. I'm sure it will depend on who is available at 52 but are you going into the draft assuming you're going to roster the guy that you pick?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Pretty wide open honestly. You know, I think between rostering, you can two-way, you can trade. You know, could two-way with an option roster.

So I'm aware once you get into later than second round, that generally ends up being a two-way deal but there's also benefits of rostering a second-round pick. Honestly on that one, it's pretty wide open.

Q. We've talked about Moody's role with Steph with Steph, but I don't know that we've asked you. What do you foresee his role will be this coming season?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I saw with Moses growth in a lot of areas of the game.

I think the biggest thing about him you see just an unbelievable effort. When he gets put in the game, and for him, I think it was tough. His minutes wavers up and down, which for any young player is challenging. But I know any time he went into the game, he brought an A+ effort, which is huge. It's something you could -- I know Steve could really rely on and appreciated.

For us, the next step for Moses is more consistent minutes. Finding those minutes for him. We believe he can be a pretty quality wing. His ability to shoot the ball, like I said I said, he plays hard. He defends. I think his activity has gotten better, his awareness, as all young players do. I think there's a bright future. I think there's been a smaller sample size than we want. But that sample size has been good in terms of what he's able to do but we are hoping for more.

Q. Last year you were thrust into this role I believe in May after Bob had announced his departure. How are you approaching this off-season, as opposed the last one when it was kind of on the fly, and what are the similarities and differences between the two?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think last year, a lot was up in the air with Bob. So was kind of preparing for him not to be there and because of that, it wasn't that big of a transition going into the draft. Free agency, some stuff I had done

before. So we were pretty used to it.

This year, another year under your belt. I mean just a little bit more experience. A little bit more lead-up to it but honestly, not that different. Got a job to do. Multiple ways to do it between draft, trade, free agency. This is the best time of year, and that's how we'll approach it.

Q. Can you confirm Looney's guarantee, and what went into the thinking? He was out of the rotation, obviously means so much to this team and this locker room but what was the thinking on guaranteeing that 8 million?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, we had an option to waive him. I think today was the date. I just think we value him so much as a player, as a teammate, as a core piece of this organization.

So to move on without him, without anything in return or to move on without him and just not be able to fill that void just didn't make a ton of sense for us.

So we were good with picking up his contract. We're excited about it. We'll see. As the clock turns into July and free agency, you know, all things are always on the table and available but for now, we feel good about having him back, and he's a great component of this organization.

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