

Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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Mike Dunleavy

Media Conference



MIKE DUNLEAVY: Good to see everybody. Hope everybody is doing well. Just getting ready to go here. I think everybody will stand up and say our team is in good shape. We love what we did this off-season. Excited for the new year. We feel the same way.

I guess from our standpoint, we get to go to Hawai'i for training camp so add that into the mix, which will be good. But on the whole, looking forward to the season, and keep it simple here. I know you guys have a lot of questions.

Q. Talk about the health status of the team.

MIKE DUNLEAVY: We're in great health, knock on wood, between now and Tuesday hopefully nobody does anything silly. But we're in good shape health-wise. Everybody is healthy, no issues.

Obviously you've got to monitor different players' ages and experience levels and all that as you go through camp, but we feel good with where we're at.

Q. With everything that transpired over the off-season with additions and stuff that didn't transpire, how close would you say you got to your plan A for the off-season?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Well, I think we feel great about the team in the sense that we improved the team. Coming off a season last year where we didn't make the playoffs, winning 46 games, we knew we had to get better. I think we certainly have done that.

I think for me, the unknown or the exciting part of the year is we know we're going to have a good team, I believe, but at the same time, we don't know how that's going to be in terms of we've got a lot of good players, got an opportunity for guys to step up, emerge, all that.

So I think how it's all going to play out is uncertain, but I think at its core we've got a good team, and as far as the other stuff goes and rumor to be in deals and things like that, we're probably as impatient as a franchise as you can

be right now given our time horizon and all that.

But there's a fine line between impatience and undisciplined. I think I feel good about the discipline that we held this summer and the roster we built and the growth from within that we're going to have.

We're in a good spot headed into this year. I know everybody is always looking for big headline breaking news and all that, but I really like this team.

Q. Is it better going into the season already knowing you are probably going to want to make some roster moves at some point, or sitting back and wanting a large sample of what this team --

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think we've got to see what this team is. It's a really talented team. I think there's a lot of ways we can be good, which is exciting. We have a generational talent in Steph Curry, got Draymond Green who's one of the more unique, all around players in the NBA, and after that we've got a ton of pieces and depth and youth and experience and just all the things you want in a team.

We'll take a look at it, see where we're at. The good news is we've got plenty of ways to get better from the outside, but right now we're fully behind this team, and we think they're going to have a great year.

Q. As far as Hawai'i goes, whose idea was that? Why Hawai'i and when did you guys first decide on doing this?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Well, I did training camp there 20 years ago, so Raymond Ridder was there, Eric Housen, the three of us got together and we were like, we need to go back to Hawai'i.

No, it's been in the works for a few years, I think especially with Steph and Draymond, those guys have always wanted to do it. Being on the West Coast, you're accessible to it. It's not an easy trip, it's not cheap, but it'll be a good bonding experience.



It'll be good for guys to get away. You get off that plane, the warm breeze blows in your face, and it's just a good place to have training camp and get better. I'm glad we're doing it. I'm not sure it's going to be a regular thing, but on the whole we're all pleased to be going.

Q. With the deadline on these rookie extensions for Kuminga and Moody, where are you right now, and would you be disappointed if you didn't get extensions with both of those done by October 31?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, we're working through that with them and their representation right now. We've got a few more weeks, good, positive conversations. Without getting into too much detail, I think regardless whether we get something done or not, we want those guys here.

Just because you don't get an extension done doesn't mean they're not going to be here for a long time. We'll still have their rights in free agency if we can't come to an agreement by the 21st.

I think for them, the most important thing is we'll get through these next few weeks with a deal or not a deal, but all that matters is they have great seasons, whether they sign an extension or not.

I think we're all operating on the same -- that same thought process. We'll see how it goes.

Q. With Jordan, who was the last one you had a decision on, he obviously had played more, had started a bunch of games. Is there a little lack of clarity with both Kuminga and Moody maybe than you've had with Jordan? Obviously there's been some previous players who have re-upped pretty quickly.

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I mean, fair question. I think the last time around with Jordan coming off an NBA Championship, I think your mindset and your feelings about other things are maybe skewed in some ways.

But in the sense of Moses and J.K., we feel good about those guys. They've been here. We know what's under the hood. We know those guys well.

Yeah, the jump you usually take from your third year to the fourth year, we want to see what that is, but I don't think we have to see what it is in order to get a deal done.

Q. What it comes to the improvements you're seeing with the team, could you share a little bit more about that? What's on paper for you and what is also just feel for this roster?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I mean, I think the biggest areas that we need to improve, we've got to get back to defending at a high level. We've got to be in the top five, six, seven in the league in defense at least. That's really been the recipe here all along. You talk about the championship years, certainly back to '22, I think we were second in the league in defense. We got off to a good start, we defended.

I think we look at this roster, go down the list, everybody can guard their position. I think guys can guard multiple positions. I don't see a lot of holes defensively in one-on-one individual matchups, which is a good place to start.

Then from there I think Steve will touch on it more, too, but we've got to be better in transition both ways, but really offensively. We want to improve our offense. One of the ways to do that is just to get out and run more. But when we do, we've got to be efficient in finishing and scoring, getting fouled, whatever it is.

We've been pretty poor the last couple years at not only the volume we've gotten outran but also how effectively we've done it. Those are the two areas I think we'd like to hone in on, and I know Steve can speak to that more.

Q. Who do you see as this team's No. 2 scorer?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Well, I think the positive of that is it's a little bit unknown. Going out every night and if you're an opponent, you say, who do we got to stop besides Steph Curry, the good news is maybe they don't know, either. But I think for us, whether that's Wiggs, whether it's J.K., Brandin can score the ball. I think we've got a lot of ways to do it. Some nights it's going to be different guys.

But as I alluded to earlier, I think a little bit of the uncertainty and the unknown is exciting in the sense that we've got some things to find out.

Q. As you go into training camp, what is the floor and the ceiling for this team as you see it?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Great question. I think it probably leads into the fact that the West is so deep. The league itself is so deep. You're probably talking 13, 14 teams in every conference that think they can be in the Play-In or Playoffs.

It's hard to predict sort of floor and ceiling off that stuff. Obviously taking injury out of it, I think this team can be really good. Hard to put a number on how good we can be. Also hard to say how that -- look, in '21 we came out, I never would have thought we would win 15 games. I know

it's a lockout year, but you just don't know. Stuff happens.

It's probably a wide range of outcomes. But if things don't go well, the good news is we've got a deep team. We've got other ways to pivot. We've got optionality.

Q. What's your sense of where Andrew Wiggins is at entering this year, kind of a big season for him? Obviously he had a personal tragedy recently. What's your sense on where he's at?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I think he's highly motivated coming off of last year. I think he'd be the first to admit he didn't have his best season. Been in the gym all summer. Can just sense a little bit different vibe from him this time of year. His body looks great. He's in good shape, ready to go.

Yeah, he's been through a lot personally, but as far as the basketball part of it, I think he's in a good spot, and we're optimistic he's going to have a great season.

Q. One of the reasons that you guys finished where you did last year was Draymond's availability during the season. Have you seen him taking strides this off-season to maybe give you confidence that that won't be an issue this year?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think he's taken strides since last season, the incidents that occurred, to remedy that. I don't have any doubt or hesitation as far as Draymond being available for those reasons. Certainly other stuff comes up, there's injuries, things like that. He's not getting any younger.

But he's in a good mindset. He's in a good place physically. He's a leader of our team, and we'll be relying on him a lot. At the same time, I think there's a reasonable expectation to take some load off of him with some of the guys we've signed this off-season with the depth we have.

Hopefully we're not putting too much on his plate. It's a long season, and all these guys, you go through a lot, but I think from Draymond's standpoint, having the depth to be able to afford -- if he's playing less minutes one night or missing a game or whatever, I think we can withstand that.

Q. Steph did sign the one-year extension. I'm sure there's various negotiations going on with that one. How comforting is it to know that he did want to go another year, that he does believe in what he's seeing? Were there conversations about that? What was the way that worked?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think anytime you have an opportunity to sign, extend Steph Curry and have him here

longer with our organization, it's a no-brainer. We've done that, and I think it comes with an agreement that we'll continue to push the envelope and try and win at the highest level. Honestly that's probably not going to change whether Steph's here or not. That's just the makeup of Joe and our ownership group and the entire organization.

He's probably the -- he is the greatest, call it, face of the franchise really in all of sports. So to have him here, you saw what he did in Paris, you've seen different moments in this building. I think for all of us to appreciate it, come out, view it, watch it, enjoy it, because you don't know how long these things last. But we're thrilled and excited to have him here for at least three more years.

Q. You mentioned just depth and optionality and all of those things. A lot of that, do you feel you guys need to have a little bit more of an urgency? Sometimes those things have a tendency to take time through a season to figure out. Do you feel you need to have more urgency to win games early in the year to not find yourself in a position where it's, say, March and then you're scrambling to get in the Play-In tournament or avoid the Play-In tournament?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, make no mistake about it, we want to get off to a good start. Do we have some things to figure out in terms of lineups and roles and all that, sure, but coming out of the gates, we've got to come out good.

That worked really well for us in '22, and you just don't want to get behind the 8-ball, especially in this league with the depth and giving other teams confidence and all that. So getting off to a good start is a really high priority for us.

Q. What's it like to not be in an apron? I know you edged back into the tax by a little bit, but do you feel a little different knowing you're not as stuck as you've been the last few years?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think overall we do. When I look at the payroll spend and our revenue and all that, yeah, we feel better about that. That's good.

We do have this first apron, though, there's a little bit inhibitive in terms of our roster spots, so I don't want to say we're clean and free. It does impact us a little bit still. These new rules we're all kind of getting used to and adjusted to, but yeah, it's nice not to be super deep in the tax and just out of control.

Q. How flexible do you feel to make an in-season trade, and the apron that you talked about, how much of an inhibit do you feel that will be? Do you plan to be aggressive?



MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, that's the deal here. You're always looking to get better, improve your team. I think we've got a lot of ways to do that. We've got a lot of good basketball players, and then on top of it, we've got most of our assets. We've got ways to improve. We'll be aggressive. That's kind of always been the deal here, at least as long as I've been here.

Does that mean we're definitely going to do something? No. We were super aggressive last year around the deadline. Didn't do a whole lot. You've got to have a partner; making deals in this league can be tough. But the effort and the urgency will always be there.

Q. There's the narrative out there that you guys need to do everything possible to maximize Steph's remaining years to play for championships. How much conversation have you had to have with him to sort of share the vision of what you're trying to do and make him and everybody comfortable with the idea that you're actually trying to do that?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I mean, we have a lot of dialogue about it. We unequivocally are trying to maximize his greatness, Draymond's greatness, and all the resources that we have.

Those conversations are really positive, productive. They know the drill. We'll keep pursuing that. But as I said before, there's a level of discipline that you have to have, and I'm not going to -- there's no point in going all in to be slightly above average. To go all in, you've got to feel like you're all in. That's how we'll kind of judge and evaluate things, and we'll see what's there.

Q. I guess that's the part I should have said is with the reality of the cap and a lot of the new rules, there's what you'd like to do and then what you're able to do in a sensible way. How much do you have to get into the details or have you gotten into the details to explain that to Steph or anybody else who wants to know exactly how hard are you going?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I don't think any of the decisions lately have been related to being inhibited by spend or cap or apron or any of that. Fortunately it's not a lot of salary cap mechanics discussions with those guys. It's just straight-up does this player or players make us better if we're losing these players, and what does this do with our assets and all that. They're good conversations in the sense they're mostly about basketball and improving our team. I don't have to cover too much on limitations as it relates to Joe won't spend this amount of money because I've never heard him say that.

Q. Could you just really quickly walk us through the decision-making process with signing Plowden to a two-way deal and then waiving him?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, he was part of our program this summer, Summer League. Really liked what we saw out of him. Our G-League scouted him pretty well throughout the prior couple years. We knew him in college, brought him in, had a really good Summer League and was part of our player development program this off-season, and when it came time to figure out a roster spot, whether it was a two-way or a full 15-man roster spot for Quentin, we came up a little short and had to make room for that, and he was the guy we decided to waive.

It doesn't mean there's a possibility we wouldn't bring him back along those terms or something, but right now because you're only allowed to have three two-ways we had to make a decision.

Q. Just in terms of the player development, how pleased are you with the way the young guys came along this summer so far from what you've seen?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Well, we like what they've done. We like the commitment they've made. Obviously you've got to see how it translates on the court. Ask me in a few months or a couple years, but on the whole I think the effort has been there. The organization has been great. Through pre-draft, Summer League, we do a lot of stuff here in August and September, and it's been really well run. Our player development crew has done a great job, and I think that's one of the main things that leads to long-term sustainability, what we're looking for.

I think hopefully you'll have some young players that are going to be out there this year that have taken some big jumps and can really impact winning.

Q. Jonathan Kuminga looks different physically just via pictures that he's posted online. Have you seen him? Have you seen some of those gains and how do you feel like he's coming into camp?

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Maybe it's the hair?

Q. That too.

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, JK is a guy that puts a lot of time in, loves the game and really works at it. No surprise to see him showing up in September ready for camp, ready to go and all that. That's probably one of the last things you worry about with a guy like that is just his commitment to the game.

I think we'll see as it plays out with our roster and our team, but his progress of the first few years of his career has been terrific. We're pleased with that. Last year he had a really nice jump, and if he can take another one this year it'll be great. We've pleased with his growth, his progress, and we're excited to see what he can do this year.

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