

# Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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San Francisco, California, USA

## Steve Kerr

### Game 3 Postgame Media Conference



Golden State Warriors 104, Houston Rockets 93

**Q. Without Jimmy Butler, what does that tell you about where you are as a team and who goes up to take that spot?**

STEVE KERR: Yeah, it's a big-time win. You can see we're out of sorts early. With Jimmy out we changed the starting lineup. We went to some combinations that we barely played all year and it took awhile for us to find our rhythm.

I thought what kept us in the game was our defense. Got up 13 at the most. These days, 13 doesn't feel like that big of a deficit. I thought the key to the game was the way we closed the second quarter, to pull within three and get some momentum we felt pretty good at halftime as a result.

**Q. You said you tried some combinations. What do you think it is that is keeping JK out of rhythm?**

STEVE KERR: Every game's different. JK can come in next game and have a monster game, and you know, he missed three games. We didn't play him three games. That's not an easy thing to do, and I thought he came in and gave us important minutes.

Buddy, he's a guy who is one of the best shooters in the league and he's always capable of making shots and because of the constant blitzing of Steph, it opened up the floor and we finally figured out, you know, how to space the floor and get the ball in that blitz. We were much better in the second half than the first. But he got some good looks and made some big shots.

**Q. Can you give a bigger picture look at Buddy? At times he's the butt of jokes, partly because of his personality, but you mentioned he's one of the most prolific three-point shooters ever and seemed like he flipped the game tonight?**

STEVE KERR: Buddy flipped it. Gary Payton flipped it. Both those guys but everybody contributed. Quinton had

12 rebounds. We had Moses come in and make a huge three in the second half. But this is what the playoffs are about. They are about injuries and they are about guys step you go up, and we had both today, with Jimmy being out, you have to be able to withstand that and win a game here and there. We've done that for many years. We've had some of our most important guys miss multiple games in series. So this is what you have to do. You've got to find a way and our guys did that today.

**Q. How would you describe Steph's performance and then just the degree of difficulty involved with that?**

STEVE KERR: I don't know. Just whatever I've said the last 11 years after every one of these games, just copy-and-paste. He's incredible.

**Q. To feet Brooks in foul trouble early, four by halftime that, made a big difference, too, didn't it?**

STEVE KERR: Yeah, you know, I don't even pay attention to that stuff, honestly. They got a lot of good defenders. They have got a lot of good players. They are a deep team. The main thing was just hanging in there and withstanding their run in the first half. We probably went seven minutes with maybe one basket it, felt like, and that was the key stretch.

Yeah, they are going to bring in a lot of guys who can play, and I don't even pay attention honestly who is in foul trouble and who is out there. We have to respond and play.

**Q. The hustle plays down the stretch, everybody seemed to have plays that came up with loose balls that led to more shots.**

STEVE KERR: We had more second-chance points than they did, 18-11, and that's kind of stunning, given the way the first two games went. But it was an indication of our energy, our physicality, guys flying around. A lot of guys tracked the ball, chased it down, got us extra possessions. I think we had ten offensive boards. A lot of good hustle plays.

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**Q. What was the key to holding Jalen Green to nine points?**

STEVE KERR: Just thought we were a little more aggressive. I thought we gave him too much separation in Game 2. They did a good job of getting him downhill and creating space, and we did a better job tonight of taking away some of his space.

**Q. We could copy-and-paste but this was a little bit different of a Steph performance in terms of the grittiness, knowing what they were trying to do to him and just to almost have a triple-double. Can you elaborate?**

STEVE KERR: You want me to give you more than copy-and-paste? He's Steph Curry. He's one of the greatest players of all time. He's 37. He's one of the most well-conditioned athletes I've ever seen in my life.

To play 41 minutes against that kind of defense, to have a slow start and then find his rhythm, which we have seen him do countless times over the years, to hit big shots, to only turn it over twice against that kind of pressure, he was brilliant.

So I hope that was a better quote than the first one.

**Q. Just talk about Gary's roller coaster of a season and what it meant for him to give that kind of performance with Jimmy out?**

STEVE KERR: Gary, we won the Championship in 2022, and Gary flipped the whole series against Boston. You know, we were going against all those great offensive players, Jason Tatum and Jalen Brown and Derrick White, Gary misses Game 1 and then he arrives after the injury for Game 2, and we win four of the next five. Like that's not a coincidence. Gary is one of the best defensive players in the league, and he's a really dynamic roller.

So we've seen this. We've seen what Gary is capable of doing at the highest level. He knew he didn't have a great trip in Houston. Didn't play particularly well in either game and so he was kind of due, and I thought he just made massive plays in that fourth quarter and helped us close the game.

**Q. You said you finally figured out, or you guys finally figured out how to space out and get Steph open and beat the blitz. What exactly did you do to do that?**

STEVE KERR: It's just about spacing. You know, if they are going to commit to Steph, you have to be spaced. And then the guys on the perimeter have to give Steph an outlet.

I thought in the first half, we were bunched up. We had a few possessions where we had everybody on the left side of the floor, nobody on the right, and so there's no outlet for Steph. And so that's why we got scattered and we had some turnovers and near turnovers.

Once we got spaced out, now there's an outlet against the blitz, and we're fine.

**Q. Jimmy Butler seemed super engaged on the bench. What was he giving you guys?**

STEVE KERR: Well, first, he had a fantastic coat on (laughter). I thought he was going to be way too hot in that thing.

No, Jimmy is so smart. He reminds me so much of Andre Iguodala. Incredible basketball IQ and then the ability to communicate what he's seeing to his teammates on the bench. I thought Jimmy was important for us tonight in that regard. He was talking to guys throughout the game, and giving them advice, giving some help, and that was big.

**Q. When Steph is playing like this and you know you don't have Jimmy coming from the start and Steph catches fire, what does it do for you seeing him carry the team along like he did?**

STEVE KERR: This is what superstars do in playoff games; you can't win games without the great players in the league. When you go deep, the playoffs get tougher and tougher. The great players just give the whole team confidence, and that's what Steph does.

**Q. How close was Jimmy to going today, and do you expect to have him for Game 4?**

STEVE KERR: He's literally day-to-day. So you know, we have tomorrow off. It will be helpful for him to have another day, and then it's a night game. So he gets a few extra hours. So we'll see. I have no idea right now if he's going to play.

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