

NBA Western Conference First Round: Rockets vs Warriors

Friday, May 2, 2025

San Francisco, California, USA

Houston Rockets

Fred VanVleet

Alperen Sengun

Game 6 - Postgame Media Conference

Houston Rockets 115, Golden State Warriors 107

Q. Are you surprised they are not paying as much attention to you --

FRED VANVLEET: I hope not. I'm not concerned with their game and what they are trying to do. We have to read it however it plays out,.

But one thing about this team is we've pride ourselves on our balance all season and having different guys that and step up and make shots when it's in rhythm.

Obviously we know who we are playing through. But at the end of the day, you've just got to read the game the way that they are guarding and take what the defense gives you.

Q. Everyone on your team says you are so calm in these big moments. How do you stay that way?

FRED VANVLEET: I don't know. Probably just my personality. Now as I get a little older, being able to play in enough of these games to realize a calm, steady mind is the best path forward and not getting too high or too low cannot getting too carried away, trusting the work, trust your teammates, and things usually work out in the big picture.

Q. Your game has increased up a not in the last three games in terms of being a playoff riser. Does your experience help you with the young guys?

FRED VANVLEET: Yeah, just being ready, you work all year and train all summer for these moments and I've always prided myself on trying to rise to the occasion. I've taken a different role for this team over the last two years,

and just trying to squeeze as much juice out of this group as possible. I'm ready and willing when the time comes to step up and make big plays.

Again I think we pride ourselves on being a balanced female and having a deep team and different guys were huge. Alpie was huge as usual. Steven Adams, incredible. Amen played a balanced game. I thought DB got in foul trouble so he was a little out of it. And Jalen didn't score a ton but he played a great game as well rebounding ing and defensively. So Jabari made two huge threes in one of those plays. Aaron came in and hit a big three.

So it's going to take everybody. It's not really just about me.

Q. How are you feeling yourself and the other young guys grow throughout the playoff experience? And Fred how are you seeing the young guys grow throughout the playoff experience?

ALPEREN SENGUN: You know I feel like I have to play like this. They took Jalen out of the game. They are pressuring them and they kind of are letting me play, letting me make the plays.

So I just know I have to play aggressive. So that's the mindset I go into the game and that's why I was trying to play hard.

FRED VANVLEET: Yeah, I think just not being that surprised. Obviously Game 1 was full of jitters. Game 3 was similar being on the road for the first time. Once you get that initial shock out of the way, being able to settle in and play basketball the way we've played all year and we have been one of the better teams all year. Just being able to execute and play our game at a high enough level.

And if we play our game at a high enough level we'll always have a chance to win. Trying to continue to keep guys focused and locked in, and not getting outside your body due to the moment.

Q. Obviously you just mentioned the experience, you

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always stay calm in your personality but do you feel surprised that your teammates, especially, are very young and that they can stay calm in this type of game?

FRED VANVLEET: No, not at all. I've believed in these guys since I got here from day one, and just seeing them rise to the occasion every single time.

I'm just disappointed when they don't do it because I know what they are capable of. So I'm more surprised when they don't stay calm and rise to the moment because I know how much time that we have.

As a guy that's been there, we have enough to get it done, it's just a matter of can we play at a high enough level all at the same time. We've been able to do that over the last couple games but we've got to stay focused and do it one more time.

Q. What kind of leader is Fred on and off the court?

ALPEREN SENGUN: He's amazing. We've been saying that for two years now. He's leading us on the court, off the court. We are letting him do that even he wasn't playing this year, he was still leading us.

He was saying, I don't want to talk but he was saying, I hate talking when I'm not playing. But still, we needed that, and he came back leading us the whole time and we're letting him do that. We see the followers on the court.

Q. What makes Steven Adams so effectively defensively and on the boards?

ALPEREN SENGUN: You know, they box him out with two people, and you know, I hate playing with him in the practices, so I'm sure other teams hate him, too. So he give me a lot of space when two bodies got to box him out and I go there and he does the hard job. I do the easy job out there and clean up. He's just impacting a lot for us and defensively, too.

Q. When you made the decision to sign with Houston, did you have moments like Sundays in mind where you have an opportunity to play in a Game 7 and advance to the next round?

FRED VANVLEET: Yeah, you always dream of the moment, the best possible and rising to the occasion and building up a team.

But I think first and foremost, it was hard to see that far, you know what I mean when I first got there, first practice practices, first training camp. We had so much work to do

it's just a testament to these young guy and how far they have come in such a short amount of time. I can bark all day; I me can bark all day. It's not going to matter if they didn't put the work in; if they weren't hungry; if they weren't selfless; if they weren't confident; if they weren't talented.

I mean, they get all the credit in the world. They make me look good. And again, it's not time to celebrate yet. We've got to stay focused and focus and get ready to play again.

Q. There was a moment in the fourth quarter where you held them without a field goal for nearly eight minutes. What was the key defensively in terms of staying in the zone and being aggressive?

FRED VANVLEET: Just attention to detail. Trying to find the shooters. We've been experimenting with some things in the zone and having the bigs on the back line and then just morphing and flying around. Half the time we don't even know what the hell we doing out there. I'm sure it's hard to game plan against but just flying around, having effort, being physical and we know the guys that we want to limit their touches and their shots, make it tough on them, come up with a rebound.

So that was a huge stretch for us there, kind of take the air out of the building, deflate them a little bit. And then they went to the fouling Steven and he stepped up to the line and made some big free throws. Kind of gave us a little gap there.

Q. What is it like dealing with the crowd out here?

ALPEREN SENGUN: It was like Fred said, the first game we played over here it was hard. It shocked us. But after that, now we know. He with just focus on game. We don't care about the fans what they say and what they -- how loud they are.

You know, so we just focus on the game and that's the older guys we have, that's why they are helping us. They are keeping us calm and they are trying to keep -- make us stay on the game. So they help us a lot. Like I said, third game was, I think, big impact they did. But didn't impact us any more.

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