

# Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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## Draymond Green

Media Conference



**Q. Last night you said that you still feel very good about the situation. What's your mindset about the team going into the off-season? Do you think some pretty big changes need to be made or do you think a little here and there and that should be enough to get you back close to where you want to be?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I think the biggest change that needed to be made was we needed someone like Jimmy Butler, and we made that change. I think the hardest part is done.

It's harder to get guys like that through trades, through free agency. It just doesn't come up often. I think that part is done. It puts us in a much better situation going into this off-season than last year where we were kind of looking for that.

That being said, we have to get better. We understand that. We lost in the second round regardless of what the circumstances were. We lost in the second round. So we need to improve.

I've always -- we've always spoke about there being 82-game players and 16-game players. At some point for us, we have to take a look at both because ideally, you don't want to be from February 8th on scrapping and clawing for every win that you could possibly get. That takes a toll after a while.

For us, we've kind of been in playoff mode for the last three months. It's not a highly effective way to win a championship.

I think we all understand that from top to bottom in the organization, and we need to put ourselves in a better position to have a great year, not finish great, if that makes sense. I hope that doesn't come off as -- yeah, we want to finish great, obviously, but the year needs to be indicative of that to allow the finish to be what we want it to be.

Having to play three months of playoff I think ultimately took its toll over the course of the last few weeks. I think

that'll be the focus. I feel very confident, very strongly that we can still make another run or two at the ultimate prize. But we definitely have to get better.

**Q. How do you view the future of the center spot for this organization, and how much it's going to be you when it comes down to it or how much you might need just more reinforcements at this stage of your career?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I am the center of the future. No, I'm just playing with you.

**Q. You might be right.**

DRAYMOND GREEN: (Laughing) No, honestly, listen, Loon has been here for 10 years and he's been incredible, was a key cog in us winning a championship in 2022.

Trayce has grown a lot over the past two years of being, what, was he the 52nd pick or something like that, 57th? The strides that he's made has been incredible.

What we do at the position, I'm not sure. That's not really my role. But what I will say is I think you always have to be looking to get better. If you're not looking to get better in this league, you're either getting better or you're getting worse because everyone else is doing the same.

I don't know what happens. I think Mike will take a deep look at all of those things. I know whenever I'm called upon to play the 5, I can. I think there was a big -- there was kind of a big worry with me playing the 5 so much this year, and I think I answered those questions. I've been strictly a 5 since Jimmy has been here until two nights ago.

I think my body held up great. I feel great. I think I'm coming out of this season as healthy as I've come out of any season, and that was with logging 35 to 37 minutes a night for three straight months at the 5 position fighting for a playoff spot.

I know I'm cut out for it. I can handle it. But as I said, we have to get better, and improving requires you to look at everything. I'll always be an option for our organization, and if they want to go that direction, I'm always going to be



... when all is said, we're done.®

right -- I wouldn't turn that down. What if it's like, oh, man, you can start at the 5 or you don't start? I'm going to start at the 5. It is what it is.

I think when you look around the league, yeah, guys are big. Joker, Sengun, Zubac, a healthy Joel, yeah. But I don't back down from anyone, and if that's what our organization decides to do, I'll be right here ready to go. And if they decide that they want to go with one of the 5s on the roster, great. If they decide they want to go after someone, great.

You know me; I'm always in favor of what's best for this organization. I can always see past myself when it comes to this organization.

**Q. We know the guarantee that you made at the All-Star break, but then you also said later that you liked your chances even more next season. How excited are you to have a full training camp with Jimmy, a full season with Jimmy, and how much did you learn in these three months about the core of you, Steph and Jimmy?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I learned that we're capable. We all believe we're capable. Then to get out there and put the product on the floor and actually prove that you are, even more so to ourselves than anyone, we're capable.

Training camp will be great for us. It's funny because I was just telling -- I was talking to Stack on the bench last night and we were talking about some things, and I'm like, man, if this group had training camp together, some of the mistakes that we make, we just wouldn't make. Especially on the defensive end. We just wouldn't make those mistakes if we had a training camp.

Like I said, I think coming back next year I think we'll be even in a better position than we were this year. Number one, because you can manage the season better, which helps when you're trying to compete for a championship, especially at the ages we're at. It helps a lot.

The utmost confidence that we can come back and do what we set out to do. It'll take some possible retooling of the roster. I don't think any roster has stayed the same from year to year in the NBA and definitely not one that lost in the second round.

I think we've got the best organization in the league. Mike Dunleavy has been nothing short of amazing since taking over for arguably one of the greatest GMs in NBA history. Come in and take over an impossible job. How do you follow that success up, and yet I can tell you as someone who's been in the weeds, he's been amazing.

Being a GM is oftentimes judged by the roster moves you make, the team you build. The part that people don't show is all the sidebar conversations and having a pulse of the team. Mike has an incredible pulse of this team. He's always in the weeds on the small stuff like Bob was. No conversation is left unturned. He's not afraid to have the tough conversations. That's special because a lot of people aren't like that.

I have the utmost confidence that Mike will do the right things, and the job that he's been doing of just keeping this thing together and moving it forward and helping it grow, collectively as an organization but also the work he does with individuals and the conversations that he's walking around having with individuals, he understands it. He gets it, which puts us in a really good spot.

**Q. There could be some stars available this summer. When you and Jimmy and Steph talk about what you guys need, do you think it's another star? Do you think it's improving on the margins, whether it be more size, more shooting? Knowing the landscape today -- I remember when last summer you guys went after stars, you said, hey, this might not work at all; we've got to be careful. Now how do you feel now?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: With us three, I think, like I said, we've shown that we'll have a good chance.

As far as stars go, you ultimately hope that what you have is enough because it's hard to get stars. Even if they're available, it's just hard to pull off and not give up something you want to give up or auction off the future of your organization. It's tough to get. You see that happen around the league often. More often than not, it usually don't work.

I think it's not worked way more often than it actually has worked. So you have to be conscious of that. You can't just go after a name because the name is -- we've won enough to know what winning looks like and how the pieces of the puzzle fit together.

So we'll operate in that manner, for as much as I can say being a player and not really making the decisions. But I've been here for 13 years; I know how this organization works. Joe won't make a desperate move, but Joe won't allow a desperate move to make, and Mike is not a desperate guy. That's just not something we do.

I don't foresee us auctioning off everything for someone. I could be wrong. But it's just not how this organization is operated.



In saying that, I think anytime the opportunity presents itself, you always have to lift up the curtain and take a peek if you want to be an organization that competes at the highest level, which we are.

Yeah, you're always going to take a peek and see what's out there and listen, but does that ultimately happen? I don't know. But what I will say is Mike has done such an incredible job that if we did want to do that, we're set up for it.

Ultimately, all you want to do is give yourself a chance, whether that's a chance in free agency, whether that's a chance in trade talks, whether that's a chance at a championship. Ultimately in this league, you just want to give yourself a chance.

I think with the great work that our front office has done, our ownership group has done, we're in a position to where we could do that, if that's something that they saw fit and wanted to do. That's ultimately what you want.

In life, we want freedom. You want financial freedom? You want cap freedom? As far as basketball goes, you want cap freedom. In life we want financial freedom.

Our organization has done a great job of that, and we're in a position to where if that's what they see fit and want to do, we can do that. I think that's the best position to be in.

**Q. You said that you were going to follow Steph and Jimmy to a championship. Looking at the postseason landscape right now, if Steph had been healthy, do you still think that you guys could have done that?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: I wholeheartedly believe if Steph was healthy we could have done that, but I once won a championship where Kyrie Irving got hurt in the NBA Finals and Kevin Love got hurt in the NBA Finals. Do I think we still would have won if they didn't get hurt? I do believe so, but we'll never know.

That's just the nature of the sport that we play. Injuries are a part of it, unfortunately. You can't take the good and be like, oh, man, we won a championship and it don't matter that somebody was hurt.

On the flipside, can't sit here and be like, we would have won had Steph not got hurt. No, you've been on the other side of that, so respect it when it don't go your way.

One thing I hate is a frontrunner. Oh, man, we won our championships because we were that good, which we were, but Kyrie Irving got hurt. Kevin Love got hurt. Robert Williams got hurt. That is the nature of the sport we

play.

Unfortunately this time, luck wasn't on our side and Steph Curry got hurt. But we've dealt with it before. Kevin Durant got hurt. Klay Thompson got hurt. So you start to take a peek. It happens every year somewhere. It may not be here, it may be another team. But when it ain't on your side, you can't be the guys that go up there and be like, oh, we would have won if...

In a perfect world, probably. But the world ain't perfect. Far from it. So take the good with the bad. The Minnesota Timberwolves ended our season. They beat us regardless of who we had on the floor. We were a playoff team and they're moving on. That's just -- it sucks for Steph that he wasn't able to be out there because you work so hard for those moments to be in that situation. So I feel for him.

But under no circumstance will I be like, oh, man, they're lucky. No, they won. Move on. We try to get better this off-season and try to do it again next year.

**Q. What is your kind of big-picture view on Kuminga and his four years here and the talent that he is, the fit that's been a roller coaster and his future, and if it's here?**

DRAYMOND GREEN: His future is bright, whether it's here or whether it's somewhere else. His future is bright. That type of talent usually figures it out.

I think he will figure it out. Like I said, I don't know where that will be. But wherever it'll be, I think he'll be just fine. When I look at his four years, I think he's grown a ton. The player he was coming in here four years ago and the player that he is today -- he made a couple plays in that game defensively yesterday, and I pulled him to the side, and I said, now you playing, because you're making reads defensively.

I think maybe Nickeil Alexander-Walker had a screen for Ant Man and got the switch on maybe Bud; could have been BP. I don't really remember who it was that switched on to him. JK starts diving down the paint with his man. Most guys in that situation go run with a man, leave that guy on an island and then hope that the next guy goes and helps.

He stopped, he ran with him, he saw that he want looking, stopped at the free-throw line and went back and double-teams that. That's a play he wouldn't have made three months ago, and to most people that's a very small play, but that is how you stop problems on the defensive end before they happen. So to see him taking those steps, I think that's more special than the offensive steps he's

taken because you're really starting to read the game now.

I think same thing I've always believed. His future is extremely bright. In this business that we're in, there's no way to be certain that'll be here or somewhere else. But the beautiful thing about it is when you're a talent like that, people usually find a way to make it work.

So whether that's the Warriors finding a way to make it work or another team finding a way to make it work, he has my utmost love and support because I want to see him do well. In an ideal world, that'll be here. But this game we play and this sport we're in and this business we're in, it ain't always ideal. We'll definitely see what happens, but wish him the best of luck with his free agency because we've all been there before. It's a very stressful place.

But that's the nature of business. I think he's taken tremendous strides, and I think he'll continue to grow.

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