

Golden State Warriors Media Conference

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Gary Payton

Media Conference



Q. How do you view the season?

GARY PAYTON: Interesting. Interesting season. Fun season but interesting. Experienced some new things this season. It was eventful.

Q. How much do you think basically playing playoff games ever since February spurred this team, but did it also take something out of the team down the stretch?

GARY PAYTON: Yeah. It was just a lot on the back side of the season. Took a lot out of everybody. First round going seven and then trying to battle back this series, it was just a lot.

Trying to fight back in position to even get in the play-in at the back end of the season, it just took a lot out of us.

Q. We've been here before with you, even three years ago where you were walking into free agency. You played out your contract now with the Warriors. How do you view your future here, your desire to be here, and just your future in general in the league?

GARY PAYTON: Hopefully I can run off a couple more years in the league. It would be great to do it here. I love this organization. I love playing for Steve. Love the guys they bring in to try to help win. They know how I feel. We'll take it one day at a time.

Q. It felt like the latter part of the year you got much more aggressive offensively, a lot of ball handling. What was the genesis of that, and do you expect more of that for you?

GARY PAYTON: I just think whatever was needed. I think BP went down for a minute, so we needed to have a backup point guard, and Steve wanted me to play backup point guard, so I was like, okay. That's what I used to do in the G anyway. So just stepped back into my Oakland native point guard and go out there and just hoop. Whatever Steve needs or the team needs, I try to do.

Q. You've matched up against a lot of the best players in the league. What made Ant a tough cover?

GARY PAYTON: Ant is a fun cover. It's always fun with Ant. It's his size, his ability, how he plays. He's just talking and just makes it fun and competitive basketball.

But he's super talented. He's young. He's going to be doing it for a while. But it was just good bump.

Q. Gary, what did you like about how the group came together when Jimmy got here and just whoever played on the day or didn't play or had a role or diminished role, sort of the unselfishness and the depth of this roster, it meant some guys had to sit at times?

GARY PAYTON: Yeah, absolutely. After that trade, we all got together and was like, this is the time. This was it. We had to start winning and throw everything else out the window. Don't think about yourself. Don't do it for yourself. Do it for everybody else in this room. And more or less do it for Steph and Dray. However many years they've got left, let's not waste their years left in this league.

So everybody locked in and did it for them and did it for the next person, next guy next to him. We locked in and tried to make something happen.

Q. Along those lines, Steph was up here a bit ago and he actually used the word "sad" because he knows that these moments, Playoffs aren't guaranteed and he's in the twilight stage of his career. Maybe that's not easy to fathom right now, but how do you think it was for him? How did you observe him over the last few games where he couldn't do anything?

GARY PAYTON: Yeah, he was just helpless. You can see it. You saw it. I know everybody on this team is sad, disappointed that we couldn't even give him a chance to come back and help out and do what he does.

But I think that's the biggest thing that we're disappointed and that we didn't give him a shot.

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Q. When you mentioned the word this was an interesting season when you started out a minute ago, any specifics you want to share? Just all the ups and downs?

GARY PAYTON: Yeah, ups and downs and losing a big piece like Wiggs with the trade and everything and all that, it was just -- you don't expect it. But it's a part of the business. You've just got to take what comes in the season.

Q. You played more games this year than last year, more minutes. How do you feel like your body held up? You're not 22 anymore.

GARY PAYTON: I am not. But no, it held up pretty good, besides the freak accidents, the nose and the thumb. But other than that, just an off-season. Steve was just telling me about the availability. Just got my body right, did extra things, did more things, different things with my body in the summer, just withheld the whole season and did play more minutes.

You never know what's going to happen with injuries, you might have to step up and do what you're going to do. But just being available for him, and he already knows whenever he needs me for however long, I'm on go. That's what I told him, and happy that was more available this year than next year. Next year hopefully I can keep adding games and try to get to 82.

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