

Golden State Warriors

Media Conference

Friday, May 16, 2025

San Francisco, California, USA

Steve Kerr

Media Conference



Q. I remember this time last year, when you did these, you kind of maybe did an audit on what you think you guys did and didn't do. You were talking about like pace and various things. I'm just curious, as you relook at the season as a whole or how you were eliminated, how do you look at like how it went bad from a schematic standpoint? Things you want to do better.

STEVE KERR: First of all, pretty good run. We're .500 midseason, floundering, clearly weren't going anywhere. Then Mike makes the trade for Jimmy, and our fortunes changed entirely. That's how good Jimmy is. From that point on, we had the No. 1 ranked defense in the league. We were 8th on offense.

I would say, when we started the season in Hawaii, in training camp, the big focus offensively was shooting a lot of 3s, and I believe we finished in the top three or four in the league in 3-point attempts, and that's with multiple versions of our team -- before the trade, after the trade, everything in between.

So I think we accomplished a lot of what we wanted from the beginning of the year in terms of how we played. I think the defense really picked up after we got Jimmy for obvious reasons. We get to the Conference Semis and win Game 1, I think we put ourselves in a great spot.

Obviously Steph's injury changed things and Minnesota was great, but all in all, are there things we could do better? Absolutely. But this was a season where we accomplished a lot, a lot of good things happened, and it's important to celebrate that.

Q. When you talk about the way you played offensively, do you think the offensive style, system, whatever you want to call it, was the best way to maximize the personnel on the roster this year?

STEVE KERR: Well, here's what I know. We have Steph Curry on our team, who's one of the greatest players of all

time. He's also maybe the most unique superstar of all time. What makes him special is his on and off ball prowess. The best way to maximize Steph is to put him in pick-and-roll and then to have him fly off screens. I think that's been proven over the last decade how powerful that can be.

He is, he's our sun. This is the solar system, he's our sun. You're not going to duplicate Steph any time soon. So any talk of do we need to change our offensive system, to me is kind of laughable. What does that mean? So let's not run Steph off screens? Let's not put Steph in pick-and-roll? I'm not even sure how to respond to that honestly.

It's like what we've done has been incredibly powerful. Steph is, again, one of the all time greatest players, playing at the peak of his power still, I think, or very close to it. We're going to keep doing what we're doing. Anything else would be a disservice to our team.

Q. When you look at, I guess, the growth that Moses and Brandin had this year, when you kind of reflect on their development, what did you think about how they, I guess, changed from the beginning of the year to the end of the year?

STEVE KERR: Moses and Brandin? I thought both had really good years. I thought the picture became much clearer for Moses after the trade. I thought the last couple years there was a clear overlap with Wiggins, JK, Moses. The trade sort of solidified Moses' spot as on-ball defender, 3-point shooter, playing off of other guys. I thought for the first time in his 3 1/2, 4 years here, everything became simpler and was clarified, and he did a great job within that.

Brandin, it's been well documented, you know, the early season struggles. The trade for Jimmy also clarified everything for him. He became the secondary ball handler where he's at his best, connected the game. Any time you put high IQ guys together on the floor, which we did with Draymond, Jimmy, Steph, BP -- I mean, you can see the results. Brandin had a huge role in our late season run.

We're excited about both guys. I mean, really, really good young players who are getting better all the time.



Q. Steve, Steph and Draymond spoke to this a little bit yesterday that getting Jimmy was the big move. Maybe in the past you guys have been looking for the big move. Do you feel exactly the same way that this off-season doesn't need to be -- I mean, you're always going to try to get the best players possible. I know you're not the general manager, but do you feel a little different going into off-season than you have the last previous?

STEVE KERR: The last two -- I mean, we didn't even make the playoffs last year. So the whole focus this year was getting back to the playoffs. We were heading for another 11th place, 10th place finish midseason.

Jimmy Butler is one of the best players in the NBA. You put him next to Steph, next to Draymond, you saw the results. Whatever the record -- 23-8, 24-8, something like that.

Q. 24-8, yeah.

STEVE KERR: All the data supports that -- the offensive rating, the defensive rating, the impact on other players, what Brandon and Moses did QP after we got Jimmy. The game just made sense again when we got Jimmy.

He comes back next year, we got Steph healthy, we feel like we can pick up where we left off. We definitely have to make some improvement both internally just with the way we're doing things as a staff, and also roster-wise can we find a little more balance? I'm really excited about next year.

Q. Kuminga's future will be the big ticket item of your summer. I know that's kind of a Mike decision and process, but if he were to come back, do you feel like it can work in a way maybe better than it has even?

STEVE KERR: Yeah. If JK comes back, we will for sure spend the early part of the season playing him with Jimmy, Draymond, Steph. To me, that would be a no brainer.

We didn't have that luxury this year. We're fighting. We've basically been in the playoffs from the minute we got Jimmy, and that was also when JK got hurt. We spent whatever it was, 25 games or so, without JK and went on that run. We found a formula that worked.

When he did come back, it was a tough fit, but we also didn't have the luxury of just experimenting and giving that more of a runway. So if JK comes back next year, we have to look at that for sure.

Q. (No microphone)?

STEVE KERR: JK? I thought he had a really good year. He was really coming into his own before he got hurt. The injury really hurt him. When he came back from the injury, he was not in rhythm. He was not the same player he was when he got hurt. So that put kind of a little bit of an obstacle in our way as we're trying to get to the playoffs and advance in the playoffs.

It felt square peg, round hole for us. We obviously went away from JK as part of the rotation, and he handled it really well. For him to stay ready, stay positive, and then get his chance and play well in those last four games of the Minnesota series speaks highly of JK and his approach.

All in all, he's a guy who's got a lot of talent and a lot of ability. Still growing, still raw in many ways, but a lot of what we have to figure out is roster construction and the combination. Basketball is always a five-man game, and combinations were tricky, they just were.

Within all that, we've got to do a better job as a staff of figuring out some things, how we're going about our business. JK's got things to improve on. We've got to improve our roster all in all. Those are all the things that we're thinking about right now.

Q. As you think about roster balance and combos, how much in the off-season is adding size a priority? Not just in center, but I know positional height was one of Bob Myers' favorite term, and I know that still applies now. How important is that, I guess, as you look forward?

STEVE KERR: It's important if those guys of positional size are good basketball players. You can't just add size for size's sake, and the pieces need to fit together.

We have a really unique puzzle. Draymond and Steph, each of them, are incredibly unique players and have learned how to play together at an incredibly high level.

So whatever we do -- you add Jimmy to the mix, who is also a unique superstar, very dominant isolation player, but you can see the last few games of that series we didn't have shooting around him. So he had nowhere to go with the ball. These are all things we're thinking about.

I have high hopes for Quinten Post. I thought Quinten had a great rookie season. He showed the impact he can make, and I think he'll make a lot of improvement. He gives us positional size shooting. Those are the kinds of things we need.

But you could see, when Steph went out, the lack of shooting was an issue, and that impacted Draymond, it impacted Jimmy, impacted JK. So those are things that we have to figure out for sure.

Q. Before the trade deadline, before you guys got Jimmy, you, Steph, and Draymond were on the same page of we don't want to mortgage our future for any desperate moves. You were able to get Jimmy without having to do that. Has Jimmy changed the equation of that feeling entering the offseason as far as not trading younger, future pieces for maybe another star or a bigger piece?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, I think it always just depends on what and who you're talking about. Mike, Jon Phelps, front office, those guys are really, really good at what they do. I will leave that in their hands.

It's difficult. These are difficult equations. You look around the league, and you see some teams that have mortgaged their future, and they're in some trouble. There are other teams that have done so, and they're championship contenders. We didn't think we were that far, but there's a lot of luck involved with injuries.

You have to factor in the age of our three best players, you have to, if you're Mike and his group. So some kind of balance within that conversation is definitely necessary, and it's not an easy question to answer.

Q. Is the lack of shooting, is that specifically 3-point shooting, or is it more players willing to take those shots, and can it come internally with the development of a Brandin, of a Moses?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, for sure it comes internally, so we will continue to address that, and our players will continue to work on that. You see it, the modern game is about can you create shots, and then can you make shots? Can you surround those shot creators with spacing and at multiple positions? So that's kind of the name of the game in the modern NBA.

Look at Minnesota. I thought we did a pretty decent job at times in the series of defending them, but they've got guys, both Randle and Edwards, who were able to break us down, and then all of a sudden they're kicking out to three or four 3-point shooters, including a center in Naz Reid. That makes defense really, really tricky.

We have to think about it in terms of what it means for our defense. Do we need to switch more and try to stay in front and not be in so many rotations like we were the other night?

Then that also factors into the offense. Can we put more lineups together that can kind of feature that both shot creation and shot-making and spacing? It's obviously a lot tougher to do than to say.

Q. Then with Draymond, obviously he became pretty much a full-time center when Jimmy got here. Are you comfortable with that going forward for a full season?

STEVE KERR: No, I'm not. I don't want to start next season with Draymond as our starting 5. I think it's doable for the last 30 games like we did this year, but you see the toll it takes on him. He's talked about it too.

That's why we started out this past season starting Trayce and Draymond, and we started out the first three or four games with JK at the 3 with those guys. To me, that was instantly not doable given everything I just talked about with shot creation and spacing, trying to survive in the modern NBA.

So these are all things we have to consider. Like I said, I have great faith in Mike and Jon and their work this summer, but also in our coaching staff and our players and the work that they're going to put in.

Look, we're talking about all this stuff, but a week ago we're up 1-0 in the Conference Semis, we feel like we've got a real shot at winning a championship. I still felt that way after the fact. So I don't think we're that far away, put it that way.

Q. Size has been asked about. Shooting's been asked about. Where are you just in terms of the guard play that you have in terms of playmaking? Do you feel like you guys need another playmaking guard specifically, maybe as opposed to a wing or a big?

STEVE KERR: You guys know me, I'm a huge proponent of passing, of the ability to pass the ball. I think it unlocks everything. You watch some of the teams doing well, you look at Indiana right now, they're passing from four or five different spots. They've got three point guards that are constantly attacking and breaking down the defense and moving the ball.

So I'm always -- that's why Brandin, even in his shooting struggles -- I got asked several times during the series why I was staying with Brandin. Passing, playmaking, running through the catch, creating a rotation, and moving the ball, that's the game. Otherwise you end up with five guys all standing around just staring at each other. Even if all five guys can shoot, if they can't pass, it doesn't matter. You're not breaking the defense down.



I'm a huge believer in playmaking, IQ. We've won multiple championships with that formula. So it doesn't matter what position it is, we need guys who see the game, can make plays, and can connect the game and create easier opportunities for their teammates.

Brandin is one of those guys, which is why he's so important to us going forward.

Q. How much importance do you place on adding athleticism to the roster, especially with how Minnesota, like you said, was able to kind of break you guys down off the dribble with Edwards and Randle? But also how do you balance that with finding guys, like you said, that can pass the ball and just kind of know how to play within the offense?

STEVE KERR: Yeah, those are the hardest guys to find, and then can those guys play defense? That's why it's so hard to win a championship, and that's why what Bob Myers and Joe and the front office were able to do over the last decade has been so impressive. We just had a lot of two-way players and two-way rosters, and that's why we've had so much success.

Really hard to find those guys, but that's always the goal.

Q. Do you want to see Quinten Post play Summer League? What about someone like maybe Taran Armstrong, who had obviously a unique story for you guys?

STEVE KERR: Taran will be in Summer League, that's the plan. Quinten will be out there as well. Like I said, I'm excited about a lot of our young guys and the internal development.

So many players in this league come seemingly out of nowhere. We were just talking about Naz Reid. I think he was a second round pick. There's always guys -- Fred VanVleet wasn't even drafted. What he was able to do in our series, completing flipping the series with his play, a guy undrafted.

There's a lot of stories out there of finding players who may not be on people's radar, whether it's in the Draft or free agency, and then it's our job to help develop those guys to see if he can take that next step. I think some of our young guys can do that.

Q. I know your son is part of this, but was this the best integration from Santa Cruz to Golden State that you've seen? You see Kevin Knox, obviously Quinten, Pat Spencer, all these guys, it seems like they kind of

seamlessly fit in with you once they arrive?

STEVE KERR: I think we've done a better job the last few years of integrating the player development system. Seth Cooper has done an amazing job with that, in terms of what we're teaching there, what we're teaching here, and then the flow of players.

I think that's been a pretty good theme of ours for years. We've had a lot of success stories going back to Juan, to Kyle Anderson, Quinn Cook, players like that. I do think the two organizations are more aligned and connected than ever, and I think it's showing in our player development.

Q. How do you view your own future and how tied do you think it is to kind of Steph and riding out this era?

STEVE KERR: At this point, just year to year. It's so much fun. I love this season. This was a really gratifying year in terms of the players' commitment to each other, their ability to get through individual adversity.

I mentioned JK. I thought Moses, I was so happy for him the other day. The playoffs kind of went wrong for him a little bit based on the Houston series, and we kind of turned to Buddy. Then Moses comes back and has that great fourth quarter, showing exactly who he is.

I just think up and down the roster we had guys who were committed. When you're a coach, that's all you can really ask for. I loved every second of this year. I love my job. But I know where the team is, I know where the organization is, so I'm perfectly comfortable just going year by year at this point.

Q. Kevon and Gary, obviously free agents that play key roles here for a significant period of time. How do you view their seasons, and what do you expect with free agency with them and just kind of the change in general that's coming up that you anticipate?

STEVE KERR: I love those guys. Loon is everything I talked about in terms of committing to the team and sacrifice and getting through adversity. He is in many ways our moral compass in that regard.

Gary's been phenomenal. I love coaching him, I love seeing him every day. He's been really impactful.

I really want those guys back. I'm hopeful they will be. You just never know how those things play out.

Q. How did you like your coaching staff? You mentioned that some things can be improved

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

internally, but I was wondering with Stotts and Stack, what did you think this season?

STEVE KERR: We had a great staff this year, the collaboration, the growth through the year as Stack and Terry got comfortable with our style and the rest of the coaches got comfortable with them and the way we all communicated. I thought there was a lot of great stuff within the staff.

I also believe that you're constantly evolving in this business, and the young coaches are the ones with the new ideas and the fresh ideas. So I lean heavily on our young guys, guys like Laim Wilson and Jacob Rubin, Anthony Vereen. These guys come in every day -- Will Sheehy. They all come in with great ideas, good thoughts, and it's up to us as older coaches to find that balance between mentoring them and listening to them because adapt or die, it's the truth.

We have to rethink everything year after year, and I'm already putting a lot of thought into how I want to approach, not just player development, but practice scheduling next year -- not scheduling, but the content of practice. The league is so different now. You have a game every other day.

So it's not like the old days where you could scrimmage because you'd have four days between games sometimes. So there's very little of on court five-on-five work. So we have to be thinking all the time about ways to improve the players' ability to process the game and recognize what's happening and seeing things on the floor without any live stuff during the season.

It's tricky, but this is where the young guys really come into play on our staff.

Q. Valkyries have their home opener tonight, season opener, first WNBA regular season game. Any thoughts on that?

STEVE KERR: I'll be here. I couldn't be more excited. I think watching everything unfold over the last year, year and a half since the franchise was formed, it's been incredible to watch. I think the branding has been amazing, the name, the colors, just kind of the unveiling of the team.

I've gotten to know Natalie really well, her staff, Ohemaa. The fact that they're training in our old Oakland facility, it's awesome. I know tonight is going to be packed. This is just an incredible story.

We have a lot of people here in this building who deserve a

lot of credit for what's about to unfold, so a lot of fun.

Thank you, everybody. Enjoyed working with all of you, and we'll see you soon.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

