

# Golden State Warriors

## Media Conference

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## Mike Dunleavy

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MIKE DUNLEAVY: I actually want to start by congratulating the Valkyries on the win last night and their start to the season. It's been fun to watch, Ohemaa, Natalie, the players have done a great job. I think they're kind of like our sibling in this organization. It's been fun to support them and going to check out games, and really excited for the Bay Area.

Anyway, we turn to the draft, our stuff right now. We're getting ready for that. 41, I will say on that pick, there has been a multitime MVP picked there, so anything can happen.

But we're going through the stuff right now, looking at things, and come Thursday night, we'll be ready to select if that's where we're at. We'll obviously look at other options, trades, trade up, trade back, trade out. Anything's possible. But feel pretty good with where we're at, getting to know the draft pretty well, and hopefully we can grab ourselves another good player and move forward, grow them, develop them, and add them to the program.

I'll open it up to questions for anybody that has them. Happy to discuss anything.

**Q. At 41 or otherwise if you trade up or down, how valuable would it be to add a player in the draft that can impact the team right away, given where you're at as a roster?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Well, that would be great, but I always say, it's really hard to do. We've been fortunate in the last couple years between QP and Trayce, guys that have been able to come in and play right away a little bit has been great.

I just never bank on that. I just think it's hard. You'd be lucky to draft a guy in the second round that can make it at all.

I think we have to be realistic about what it is, but sure, we're going to analyze this thing, look at it, and try and find

the best player we can find that'll be able to contribute to this franchise. That's the goal.

**Q. How much does seeing what Oklahoma City and Indiana did in the Finals, how young they are, fast paced, does that impact how you're going to build the team going forward this summer?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Well, I think you've got to run your own race. In our case we've got three players in their 30s that are really good, and that's the hand we're playing. It's certainly admirable what the Pacers and the Thunder and some of these other teams have done in the league, but we have our group. We're committed to that, and we've got to build with it and around it, and that's kind of what we'll do.

As time goes on, maybe that changes, but multiple different ways to build a team, and I think the way we're going about doing ours is what's right for us.

**Q. I've had a few scouts over recent years say that a 21-year-old draft pick is old. I'm wondering, you guys have gone the other way a little bit lately with guys like Trayce and QP. What's your feeling on this draft in terms of the 18-, 19-year-old guys versus the guys who have been around in college for a while and how they might fit with your team?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, it's really interesting this year with the draft. Going through all the different players and looking at their pages, the amount of guys that are 22, 23, 24 is startling. Obviously we have not been afraid to take older players, but I think with the NIL stuff, you're seeing more and more. You have more underclassmen who have gone back to school, so there's less younger players particularly in our range where we're picking.

It's fascinating. I think it's a little bit different feel. We're trying to grasp how that models out with these older guys. Now, we've had some success with them, but there's so many of them this year. But it does lend itself to the older guys generally can play sooner than later, and if that's the way it goes, maybe that happens.



But again, not going to bank on it. These guys are all coming in, starting from zero, with no NBA experience. You just never know how they adjust.

**Q. Obviously Tyrese Haliburton's injury was devastating last night, but you had to commend the Pacers for how much they kept fighting. When it comes to roster building, how do you know that character-wise you have those guys who are never going to give up, who are going to compete no matter what? I think that's what everyone is taking from that Pacers group.**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think you can take it from our group, too. We've got a group that battles. It's a huge priority for us. Anytime we sign, draft or trade for a player, knowing that player, who they are, how competitive they are, those things really matter. They're super important, as displayed here in the Playoffs, the Finals, whether it's Indiana, Oklahoma City, the relentlessness, the persistence of those players.

I feel like we've got a lot of those guys on our roster. We're in good shape there, and we want to continue to add more of them.

**Q. Is there any trait you're prioritizing in the draft more than others?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: As far as trade, we'll look at stuff. I think most likely in the second round, it's probably looking at moving up or back within that round. Is there a possibility we could move into the first round? Sure. I wouldn't put it at highly likely, but you never know. On draft night you get calls, you explore things, you look at stuff, and we'll continue to do that.

**Q. How about roster trait?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: That's my comment on trade.

As far as trait, I think we look for multiple traits, both intangibles in terms of character and approach and all that, and then there are some skill traits we're looking for, and I think that's pretty consistent with the things that I've identified between shooting, defense, passing, those types of things that generally fit well within our system of how Coach Kerr wants to play, and the players we have on our team with Steph, Draymond, Jimmy, those guys. Those kind of traits are something that we look for.

I also think you have to be mindful just in general when you're picking in the second round and the later you go, you're almost just trying to pick somebody that's going to make it, so you have to be a little careful about being too

particular. But in general, those are the traits we like.

**Q. Do you go best player available, or if there's an upside pick, maybe a 41 that you might not expect to be there, how do you weigh those two things?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I think generally the later you go, the higher probability of the guy making it. That's what we lean towards.

Usually those guys have a nice rounded skill set. They have some maybe glaring deficiency with size or athleticism or one blatant thing they're missing but they do a lot of other things really well, and maybe that's how you can beat the system a little bit and get a guy in here that can survive.

**Q. I know speaking of trades, once the draft is over, we've seen some action before, we've seen some action the last few days. Have you gotten a measure of what the trade market is? Do you feel like there's going to be a lot of action around the league that you can maybe jump into or are you kind of approaching it as we're going to be aggressive in this trade market?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think there's a lot of different ways we can go. We've got some free agents that are priorities. We've got to handle that. But some of that stuff may lead into trades and other things.

Obviously we got wound up into a big deal last summer, multi-team trade. Anytime you get into the free agent stuff and you start looking at exceptions and cap space, it lends itself to we'll be opportunistic.

I think with our cap and strategy group, those guys are really good. It's hard to say, though, now honestly as far as what's out there and what could happen. But we'll definitely be in the mix. I think we've shown a history of doing that.

**Q. You guys have gone from participant to observer in the last four or five weeks of the Playoffs. As you've watched these games play out, what have you taken about watching the way the teams operate, the way the rosters are built that might influence you going forward, if anything?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I mean, I think it just is bared out that defense is still really important, and then the offensive end, to be able to have space on the floor to combat these defenses. Certainly Indiana had that with some of the floor-spacing bigs they had.

Then I think obviously you go back to further rounds with

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®

the Knicks, Minnesota, yeah, you've got to -- but honestly to go deep in the Playoffs you've got to have a little bit of everything. You've got to play offense, you've got to play defense, you've got to have size, you've got to be able to defend on the perimeter. Man, you've got to put together a really good team, and that's what Oklahoma City has done. Sam did a great job.

And credit to Indiana, as well. Those guys had a heck of a year. Kevin Pritchard did an amazing job; Rick Carlisle, what a coach. Just need really good players.

**Q. Quality depth, you saw that especially in the Finals where guys were coming off the bench and putting in production. How much is that a factor versus what the Knicks did with four, five, six guys?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think there's multiple ways to do it. Last year going into the season we really leaned into the depth, and it was good for us in some ways, and I think in some ways you can create some issues with lineups and playing time and puts a lot of stress on Steve and the coaching staff in terms of who to play.

I do think there's a level of depth you have to have. If you can have seven, eight, nine guys that are NBA rotation players, you're going to be in business. Obviously that helps prevent issues with injuries where a guy or two goes down. But just to make it through, it's a long haul, two months of postseason basketball where it's at your highest limit. You've got to have that depth, and that's something that we'll -- it matters to us.

I feel really good about our roster. If you look at guys 10 to 14, 10 to 15, that's part of having depth. I think we can get better in the middle. I think we can get better and add some depth there, and then we're really talking.

**Q. Seems like every off-season someone has been traded for three, four, five first-round picks. In your mind has the draft been devalued or draft picks been devalued in recent years, and where do you see the draft when it comes to building a team in terms of importance?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I mean, I think it's a little bit the eye of the beholder with the draft picks. Certain teams value picks differently, they value draft pick swaps differently, and I think for your own team, when you're sending them out, it's important to evaluate where you're at. If you're a younger team that has a longer runway, then you're probably going to be more inclined to send draft picks out. If you're an older team that has a shorter runway you've got to be a little bit more protective of those picks, and no doubt you should use them when the time comes

when you're really trying to win, but you've got to be selective about it and think it through of the value of your own picks because once you lose them, the path to not being good and sort of doing a little rebuild or anything like that goes out the window because you don't control your picks.

**Q. Where are you at with Kuminga and his restricted free agency, and how do you hope that situation plays out?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, so we can start -- with the Finals ending last night, we can start pursuing that right now, leading up into free agency, and I think we're in a good spot with it, honestly. We had the ability to bring him back. He's restricted.

I think there will be good dialogue. I'd like to figure something out sooner than later. That would be great. But I also acknowledge with restricted free agency these things can drag out a little bit and take some time.

I think we feel pretty comfortable with who JK is as a player and what he can do for our organization, and we'll continue -- it's a main priority going into free agency.

**Q. What would be the benefits of getting something done sooner than later?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think just clarity, roster clarity in terms of what else we need to add in free agency, also what we have to spend in terms of minimums, exceptions, those different types of things.

I think the sooner the better for everyone. His sake, too, I believe. But like I said, restricted free agency can be a little different, so we may have to be patient.

**Q. How much do you have to declare what his role is going to be in your minds or even in discussions with him before you can get to a number, before you can decide whether it's better for him to move? Do you have to fix in your mind -- I know things can change, but obviously with Steve and everyone else, what his role is going to be and what do you imagine it is right now?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, I think it's important to have those discussions. Anytime, whether it's your own guy you're bringing back or signing a new player, I talk with the players, sometimes Steve does. Sometimes he connects with our players on our roster, too. You have all these conversations.

In JK's position being an incumbent player, it's a little bit



more known, but yeah, I think some of those conversations will need to happen, especially the way the season kind of unfolded last year where there were some moments where he wasn't playing as much and then the role is bigger, then he was injured, all this up and down. Sure, that's something that will probably be necessary to clarify.

**Q. How does free agency look different now when you have just the sheer number of trades? Do you see it any differently? I know it's draft week, but that's right on the horizon, too, and maybe that affects the draft, too?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, a couple things. I think first off, teams are less reliant on cap space and saving up for big free agency. You see a lot more extensions of players already on the roster. So there's probably less players out there.

I think the other caveat to it is there's a few mechanisms that will hard cap you to these different aprons that we have to be aware of, and that can restrict some moves and some trades and things like that, and when those trades do happen, it creates those hard caps at times.

So being leery of those things, because for us, a team that's willing to spend a lot of money, you have to be careful about limiting yourself. We did that a little bit last summer with the first apron. Fortunately we were able to move some things around and acquire a player like Jimmy Butler halfway through the season. But it can make it hard. So to be mindful of that stuff I think is important.

**Q. Does more scouting come into play when you're looking at potential trade options and things? Maybe that sounds --**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: I mean, I think we're on it, regardless, whether it's guys that are going to be free agents, guys that potentially could be eligible for trade or players that we want to trade for. We've got a pro scouting staff that's out there all year long looking at players.

I don't think much has changed in that regard. Maybe just some different mechanisms to maybe it happen.

**Q. Obviously Oklahoma City winning this championship, still a very young team. Is it as simple as saying, to get out of the west you've got to find a way to get past those guys, and if so, how do you compete with their youth, their size, their athleticism, all of that?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, well, they'll be the defending champs next year going into the season, and they'll be the

team that we've got to knock off for sure. The good news is, though, there's been an incredible amount of parity the last six, seven years, multiple different champions, multiple different finalists.

I don't want to say it's wide open. But I don't think it's to the point where it was in 2016, '17 with this organization where it was really, really hard to oust a team.

Oklahoma City is really good. They're going to -- they play their cards right, they're going to be really good for a long time. Health is a part of that and certain other things. But no doubt, the regular season they had this year was incredible, and obviously making the playoff run to win the championship this year, they're going to be the team to beat.

**Q. Obviously anything can happen and you're going to be open to everything as you always are, but last summer we know the big names that you guys were discussing and came close to or however that went. Does adding Jimmy Butler, maybe one of the names that was coming up last summer, kind of put a little bit of a ceiling on the kinds of names you're talking about? You never know, but that \$50 million player, whatever, is that kind of not going to be in sight this time?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Only because just of our salary structure and the way it works with the amount of money you can use underneath the second apron. That probably restricts it more than anything for us in terms of pursuing the best roster we can.

I think we'll look at stuff. We'll look at players that we really like that may -- we've just got to be -- it's just almost impossible for us to add players in the salary range of guys we were looking at last summer since we've added Jimmy.

That would be the only limiter. But in terms of finding talent, improving this team, we're going to look under every rock to try and do that.

**Q. This is more out of curiosity than anything, but when you have the 41st pick in a draft and you're working on draft prep, how high up does your board go? Do you do the top 10?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, we do the whole thing, just from a process standpoint, to be able to look back, to see how we're evaluating players. Since I've been here, we've drafted almost at every level. We've drafted 2, we've drafted 7, we've drafted 19, we've drafted multiple picks in the second round, last pick of the first round, that type of stuff.



You've got to be ready for anything, and I think it's just a good exercise to go through for us to have a whole complete board. You never know; draft night something happens, you trade up. So we've got to be ready for everything. It's a fun week and exercise to go through all that and lock it in, and then you can look back and see how you did.

**Q. Obviously everybody was looking for a 16-win player in the Playoffs, but I remember Draymond on exit interviews was bringing up 82-game players, and obviously we know Steph, Jimmy, Draymond's ages and everything. What is it going to take to get those 82-win players so you guys aren't in playoff mode in February already? How do you create that kind of roster so you have a little more comfort in March and April?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, hopefully we can get some 96-win players. I think I did the math right there.

Yeah, I think it's a great point. This isn't a team that we can just say, hey, let's get through the regular season and have a roster ready to go for the postseason. The west is really tough. The league is really tough. I mentioned the parity before. So in that regard -- we won 48 games this year and we were in the play-in, so we've got to be able to have a really good team that can sustain their regular season through some nights of rest, through some injuries, all that may come about.

So yeah, we've got to have -- we're taking all that into account, guys that can -- we look at trades in free agency, we're going to look at guys, how healthy they are, how many games they play. That stuff is important.

We'll factor it all in, and hopefully we can also put together a roster that we feel once the regular season turns over to the postseason, that team can be really good, too.

**Q. Wanted to check in on two younger guys, Brandin and Moses. I know they went through surgeries this off-season. Just your expectations for them getting ready for training camp, et cetera?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Yeah, on the health front there, for sure. Those guys had successful procedures, and nothing major, which is good, and they'll be able to get back and definitely be ready by training camp and even have a good portion of their summer for a player development program and all that. They're doing well, and hopefully those are things, get knocked out, put it behind you and move on.

**Q. Whether it's free agency or the draft, where do you**

**prioritize point-of-attack defense versus rim protection defense?**

MIKE DUNLEAVY: Great question. I feel like that's a big debate throughout the league right now. Generally the rim protection is more valuable, at least that's the way guys are paid and guys are sought after in trades.

But you ask any coach, point of attack is pretty important, being able to control the ball handling, these pick-and-rolls.

Some of these guys in this league right now, they can guard on the ball. Big guards have been highly effective with teams that have gone deep in the Playoffs.

Both are really important. With having a guy on our team like Draymond, we're elite with a guy like that, and I think we can be better on the ball.

I don't want to say that means it's more important on the ball for us. I would say both are extremely important, and we'll look to handle both those in free agency, but to me you can't have enough. It's like shooting. If you can have a bunch of guys out there that can guard, that can switch, and then most importantly protect the backside, you're in business.

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