

Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

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Joakim Noah

Press Conference

Q. Why the number 55? And then I'd like to know, some of your colleagues have expressed the fact that they didn't want to go back to the bubble, feeling that it would take away from some of those social justice issues that they want to focus on. Why is it important for you to come back and play and what message would you like to send to society and youth about coming back to play basketball?

JOAKIM NOAH: I think that we're very blessed to be working right now. A lot of people don't have jobs right now. This is a time where there's not a lot of hope.

So hopefully being out there and playing brings hope, and we can -- this is what we -- this is what we love to do is play basketball, and this is how we inspire. So everybody has a responsibility to use I didn't remember platforms and bring positive. I think that's what it's all about, just being able to use your platforms and bring to the community.

Q. I'm just curious, you signed with the team, a ten-day contract and then they signed you for the rest of the season. How are you feeling physically and how are your skills right now since you haven't played in a while?

JOAKIM NOAH: I feel really blessed to be in this situation. You know, in September, I had a freak accident and cut my Achilles, and you know, I told myself that that's just not how I wanted to end my career.

So you know, the day after the surgery, I was in the gym working out with the hope of making this team. I knew that if I didn't keep training and if I got a call from the Clippers and I wasn't ready, I knew I would have regrets for the rest of my life.

So I kept training, and to be in this position right now, I feel very fortunate to be in this position, being with God, great players, being in a position to win a championship, it's not something that I take for granted. You know, we're away from our families right now, but this is the price that we



have to pay.

Q. What was the hiatus like for you, because you signed with the team, I believe it was two or three days officially before the league was put on pause. So what was it like for you in terms of living conditions, working out, staying in shape, and then not losing, I guess, confidence in the season coming back and continuing your career?

JOAKIM NOAH: You know, I was coming back from a pretty serious injury, so I think I had a great four months of just being able to be with my family. I think that I was able to be around my mentor, Laird Hamilton, who lived down the street from where I was and got to train a lot with him. I had some real positive influence around me.

So I just worked my ass off and stayed focused.

Q. We look at your resumé, you have an unbelievable resume, playing back with the Bulls and all the teams that you played for. What are some of the positive things that you can bring from a leadership standpoint and as well as your defensive prowess on the floor for the Clippers this season?

JOAKIM NOAH: You know, I mean, I think there was a lot of positive, but there was also some negative. I think that I'm a guy who has been through a lot in this league. I've been on the outside looking in a couple teams, as well.

I think that just being here, especially for the younger guys, is just not taking any of these opportunities for granted. You know, it's hard sometimes to be away from your family and stuff Los Angeles Lakers that, but just to be in this situation, playing against the best players in the world, competing for a living, being able to work, especially with everything that's going on right now, is something that -- those are all things that we can't take for granted.

And then, you know, I just feel like now, it's just working hard every day, competing, and whatever my role is on the team, it's just, you know, being a positive piece.

Q. Curious, as you were training and rehabbing this year kind of from afar, what were your impressions of the Clippers and the organization? What did you see and what are your initial impressions now being



together with the group?

JOAKIM NOAH: Just to be around is a blessing. It's been -- I mean, this team really gave me hope. I was supposed to work out with them in September right before the season started. I was ready. I was really excited for the opportunity, and then, you know, just from up with minute to the next, I cut my Achilles.

So to be back in this position and to have the confidence from the organization; I remember coming to L.A. from New York, and L. Frank waiting at the airport, picking me up. It's just a class organization. I just feel like very, very blessed to be in this position right now.

So now it's just grind every day and put ourselves in the best position possible to win it.

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