

Los Angeles Clippers

Media Conference

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Orlando, Florida, USA

Ivica Zubic

Postgame Press Conference



Nuggets 110, Clippers 101

Q. Tough game tonight but why do you feel you guys kind of allowed them to get off to a big lead? What did you see out there and what didn't enable you guys to mount a comeback as you tried in the fourth quarter but you couldn't quite get over the hump. Can you talk about that?

IVICA ZUBAC: We started the game with not a lot of energy. They came out with energy. They hit us first and, you know, we just didn't allow a team to start a game with 44 points in the first quarter. After that, we tried, but you know, it was hard. Like some shots weren't falling. We missed the free throws and that first quarter really killed us, that 44 points.

Q. Seemed like they mixed things up defensively against Kawhi, packing the paint on his drives. What did you see as an adjustment as to what they did against Kawhi?

IVICA ZUBAC: Like what you said. They were putting two people on him every time he got into his stuff (ph) and they really just crowded the paint a lot. They made an adjustment and we're going to watch our film tomorrow. We're going to see how we can get better, where we can make adjustments, and get back at it in the third game.

Q. Mike Malone of Denver had talked about how much more physical the Clippers had been against Denver this year and he wanted to change that. Did you feel like there was a change in who was the aggressor tonight?

IVICA ZUBAC: Yeah, definitely. They started the game being more aggressive. They hit us first and you know, we got -- we just got to be ready for that. We got to be the team that hits first and we've got to be the team that brings the energy from the start, and you know, we didn't do that tonight.

Later, like I said, we tried but you know, we just, you know, allowed too many points in the first quarter to get ourselves back in the game.

Q. You won three of the four quarters but they really punched you guys in the mouth the first quarter. Why was it so hard to come back and take the lead in this game?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, I think we had to be a little better on offense, share the ball more, and you know, we missed some good shots and we missed a lot of free throws in the third quarter.

I think that's one of the main reasons we didn't -- you know, we weren't -- like we couldn't get back in the game. You know, it was hard because we played -- I think we played a good defense after that first quarter. I mean, really in the second half, you know, our shots weren't falling. We didn't move the ball like we usually do, and we didn't make our free throws and offensive rebounds.

Q. Usually when you guys play good defense like that, it turns into good offense for you. Was it just a matter of not knocking down the shots and the free throws, but the easy shots you normally do, or what kept you guys from turning that into good offense?

IVICA ZUBAC: We just didn't make shots later. Missed a lot of free throws and just didn't move the ball like we usually move, and you know, we got to be better at that in the third game and you know, we will. We're going to make adjustments. We're going to share the ball more. You know, got to play -- got to start out games better with more energy. We got to be a team that brings it every night and we're going to do that in the third game.

Q. You know Jokic as well as anyone in the league, and you know his game obviously, too. How difficult is that matchup even when you know what he can do inside and out, just trying to contain his creativity?

IVICA ZUBAC: It's tough. He's one of the better offensive players in this league, and you know, he got a lot of moves and can shoot it from outside. But you know, I didn't start out the game right defensively. I allowed them to get the ball easy in the post. I was not physical with him like I'm supposed to, and you know, I got to get to his body when

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they are running pick-and-roll for him and I've got to do a better job getting over the pin-downs and cross-screens.

Overall, I didn't do a good job defensively tonight, and you know, I'm going to watch the film and see where I can get better and I'm going to bring it next game.

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