

Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

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Tyronn Lue

Press Conference

Q. This team this year, just kind of looking back, whenever you guys have had one of your outlier bad shooting performances, sometimes the very next game comes back with one of their better three-point shooting performances. There's a Dallas-Minnesota back-to-back, there's Denver at L.A., Detroit-Philly. As much as making shots kind of comes down to the player, are there things you as a staff try to turn to whether in walk-throughs or practices to sharpen that shooting at all?

TYRONN LUE: No, we can get shots up. I think a lot of it too is they did a good job of trying to run us off the line, so we got to do a better job of just attacking them, like driving their closeouts. And I thought we had some good shots as well, but when shots are not falling, you know, they're 31 in the league or 29th in league as far as rim protection. So we got to mix it up. We got to take our shots, but we also got to put the ball on the floor and drive it and get to the paint as well.

Q. What can you say about Kawhi's level of focus and execution coming out in Game 1?

TYRONN LUE: I thought the first half was great. I thought he expended a lot of energy to get us back in the game because we had a slow start. And in the third quarter I thought he was a little tired, might have got a little tired because he was having to play so hard and be so aggressive in that first half. But his focus is great. I like what I saw in the first half, just attacking the basket, getting downhill, getting into the paint and that's what we need him to do for 48 minutes.

Like I said, first game was a loss. So I liked what I saw, I liked the way he attacked and we just got to keep getting there.

Q. You mentioned the slow start. I'm curious after watching the film, what did you think was the cause for that 17-6 deficit by the first timeout?



TYRONN LUE: I thought a couple of them took a couple of bad shots early on. I thought a couple guys took a couple bad shots early on and they were able to get out in transition, got some easy baskets. I thought they attacked early on by getting to the basket, getting to the paint, and spreading it out to the 3s. But I thought just us easing into the game, like, not bringing that physicality was not the way I wanted to see the start of the game, and they got off to 17-6 lead, like you said. So after that we picked it up, our physicality picked up. And it's the playoffs, you can't ease into the game, we got to be physical right from the jump and have a defensive mindset. So we'll be better come Tuesday.

Q. How are you feeling this afternoon?

TYRONN LUE: Good. How are you doing?

Q. I'm doing well. Thank you. So yesterday you identified right away that there were some breakdowns defensively and that you wanted to get that extra day to review them. So next day after, how do you feel like you can address those breakdowns? Is it more personnel or is it communication-based?

TYRONN LUE: More communication. We broke it down today and we looked at what we gave up on the points and it was miscommunication, not following the game plan. So just let the guys see that and things that we can correct and take care of. And we'll be better come Tuesday when they get a chance to see and understand what we're looking for, what we're trying to do.

Q. You mentioned Kawhi playing fatigued. I think that might factor into this. But I'm wondering why we don't see him as the primary defender on Luka really hardly at all, but more often?

TYRONN LUE: Say it again. I'm sorry.

Q. Why doesn't Kawhi get the defensive assignment against Luka more often?

TYRONN LUE: Well, he has to carry a lot of the load offensively, we have three or four guys that we can put on him and mix it up. But I think you'll get what you're asking for come Tuesday.



Q. Now that you've had time to look over the film a little bit, despite the bad shooting and how many things are going against you, you guys still had the lead in the final five minutes and had a tie game in the final three minutes. What do you think went wrong in those final moments where things kind of ultimately got away?

TYRONN LUE: We had a couple of defensive breakdowns down the stretch. The one where Finney-Smith made a three to put them up 103 to 100. It was still a three-point game with two minutes to go and we took a tough shot, a tough three-point shot, coming down in transition and it was contested, instead of just playing through the game. After that, missed some free throws, which it's going to happen. Kawhi got a mid-range pull up at the free-throw line, which is his shot, which he didn't make.

So we got some shots that we liked and we just didn't make them, we didn't make our free throws and that's just part of the game.

Q. Is there anything that Zu can do differently when he gets on Doncic or is it something you want to avoid having him try to guard Luka on those switches?

TYRONN LUE: We didn't really execute it the right way of really being in the right way, of being inside the three and then being able to move the threes, we pretty much just switched a lot instead of doing the things that we were supposed to. So there's a couple things we can clean up in that regard, which the guys will see on tape, and they will understand what we're trying to do and what we're looking for as we walk through today and tomorrow as well.

Q. Not to harp on the crunch-time offense too much, but like, you guys have been at your best, in my opinion, when you guys are going to the basket to score. But like, especially in the crunch time, it looks like sometimes you guys have settled for too many shots, outside shots, maybe in semi-transition and stuff like that. Is there a way -- first, were you happy with the shots you got last night in those situations and is there a way to maybe harp to get to the basket more at all?

TYRONN LUE: Yeah, get to the paint or die trying, that's what we have to do. Like I said, they're 29th in the league in rim protection, so we got to grab the ball and get to the paint as best as we can. I thought Rondo, he had a left-hand layup that he missed. Kawhi got to the mid-range. Marcus got to the post up, which was a jump shot that he made on Hardaway. Marcus got to the free throw line and got a shot fake on Finney-Smith, got two

free throws that we didn't make. Rondo's roll one time where he got fouled, we made 1 of 2 from the free-throw line.

So you got to take what the defense is giving you but I think we can do a better job with attacking those guys and getting to the paint a little bit more often.

Q. It appeared at least in the third quarter last night that you started to have your guys pre-switch most Luka ball screens, especially with Serge and Rondo. After the game you said you thought there were some miscommunications and we asked you about it earlier, but was the pre-switching an area that you thought the team just wasn't good enough or prepared enough in?

TYRONN LUE: We what do you mean by pre-switch?

Q. So Ibaka was the low man as the rim protector and when his man came up to screen, Rondo pre-switched out instead of Serge going up to do it to defend on the screen. Is that something that the miscommunication came in or was that just more or less what you wanted?

TYRONN LUE: No, I mean, that could have happened, I think that was just guys trying to use their IQ to keep our bigs of the pick-and-roll situation. But it only happened once. That wasn't a breakdown that cost us at the end of the game, it was some things that we went over that we just didn't execute the right way and once they seen it today and we walk through it a couple more times they will get it down. So we'll be ready to go on Tuesday.

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