

Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

Wednesday, June 2, 2021
Los Angeles, California, USA

Rick Carlisle

Postgame Press Conference

Dallas Mavericks - 105, Los Angeles Clippers - 100

RICK CARLISLE: Listen, great win, obviously. Very intense up-and-down game, a lot of emotions. I thought our guys did a great job with composure. Tough series. The third quarter was huge. And I think one thing that needs to be pointed out is we really changed a lot of things game plan-wise that really changed KP's positioning in our attack and he was just super patient. He did a terrific job defending. He didn't get a lot of touches because they were hugging him the entire time when he spotted up, but the three he hit in the right corner in the fourth quarter was arguably the biggest shot of the year. So hat's off to him for being willing to make that sacrifice. It's tough. If you want to try to win in the playoffs, the sacrifices that everyone has to make are enormous and so that was obviously very important.

So anyway, that's all I got for now.

Q. I think it's safe to say that most people, including Charles Barkley, pretty much gave you guys up for dead. What is it about this team, especially on the road, that you guys keep coming through in these difficult situations when your backs are against the wall?

RICK CARLISLE: We have great people. These guys have a great belief in themselves. They have been through a lot of upheaval this year with all the different things that most teams have gone through, with COVID, with the power grid problem and eight days without games and then injury issues and, I mean, you name it, everything. It's just a group that has great, has shown great resilience really for the last two years, but we haven't done anything yet, you know? We have got to continue to keep our eye on the ball, focus on process, focus on adjustments for Game 6 and try to win the first five minutes of Game 6 and go from there.

Q. Luka didn't sit long there in the fourth quarter. Obviously, ridiculous performance by him. What went



into the decision to get him back in the game so quick, how much influence did he have on that, and what's kind of the balance between realizing this is one of the best players in the world who is just doing amazing things and being concerned about him having gas in the tank down the stretch?

RICK CARLISLE: Yeah, one thing about these games in the playoffs, national TV games during the regular season the timeouts are 3:15. These are 3:30. 15 seconds doesn't sound like much, but in an NBA game it's a eon. That along with the fact that there were multiple reviews, which are essentially extra timeouts, and you just got to look and see how guys are doing. It was my decision to put him back in. He was not asking back in, but he always wants to play. You know that. Look, we got to watch this thing very closely. Tim Hardaway ended up playing more minutes than him and his minutes have gotten very high as well. So, but this is the kind of series it is. It's to a point where the matchups are so taxing that we have got to have the right people in the game to be able to hang in. And, look, everybody understands it. Our guys are doing a great job with it so far and we have just got to keep pushing.

Q. On top of what Tim was asking with Luka, what's been the process for him these past few days with managing his injuries and what's the medical staff told you lately on what the latest is on him with that?

RICK CARLISLE: Well, he's progressed a little each day. He's getting a lot of massage, ice. I'm sure he's getting stim and interferential and all that different kind of stuff. But Luka Doncic is, he's just one of the toughest players I've ever seen, ever been around. He's just a warrior-type guy that happens to be one of the very best players in the world. So this will be a quicker turnaround. We're going to have to manage our rest and all those kind of things and get ready for Friday night.

Q. Dwight Powell in the crucial third quarter, a plus 17 and you guys ended that third quarter on a 16-0 run. Can you talk about his impact in tonight's game and what that third quarter meant for you guys as far as the rest of the game was concerned?

RICK CARLISLE: Yeah, look, everybody that went in the



... when all is said, we're done.®

game tonight did something important. It's hard to look at the minutes. Like, Josh Richardson didn't play very much but those two free throws at the end sealed the deal. I mean, he's done that five times this year. Dwight's minutes, Dwight's played meaningful minutes in the series, but not a lot of them and he's always held his own. Look, he's one of our best competitors, so I felt that we needed to get him more involved in the series tonight and he delivered, 3-3, end up being plus 10, and he's always going to bring it. So everything that everybody brought was needed, but Powell was terrific.

Q. I know we asked you about Luka and what he's doing historically pretty much every time, but how do you comprehend a performance like this where I think 32 of the 38 made baskets were made by him or assisted and he was just the driving force behind it seems like almost everything the offense was doing.

RICK CARLISLE: Yeah, look, he's the engine that drives our offense. I mean, there's no secret there. But this is a responsibility that he covets. I believe he views it as a privilege. The challenge is to manage the minutes, try to make sure we can keep him fresh, and do everything possible to lighten the load when we can. And, look, as you get deeper into the series it's much more necessary for everybody to really sit down defensively, and so I thought he and Porzingis, our two best players, sat down and really guarded tonight on a high level from start to finish and that takes energy as well.

Q. You changed your starting lineup quite a bit tonight. Did it give you what you wanted and do you think you will stay with that for Game 6 on Friday night?

RICK CARLISLE: Well, I mean, I haven't even looked at the game yet. How am I supposed to answer that now?

Q. Give it a try.

RICK CARLISLE: This is kind of a tired answer. I have given it to you guys many times before, but as we used to stay in television, stay tuned. I think a lot of things have changed very quickly in this series. The decision to start Bobby was one that took a long time to analyze to see if we felt it was the right thing. We'll look at the film closely. It's certainly an option. And, look, it's very obvious, we have got to play better basketball at home. So we'll get some rest tonight, get on the plane tomorrow, get back, get our rest, and get ready for Friday night. Thank you.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports....

