

Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

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Tyronn Lue

Postgame Press Conference

Los Angeles Clippers 104, Dallas Mavericks 97

Q. What do you make of Kawhi? How do you explain that performance? I know he didn't play up to his standards in Game 5 but really made up for it and more tonight.

TYRONN LUE: You know, great players perform in big moments, and he was huge, man, you know, taking the challenge, guarding Luke at whole game. I thought our coverages were great. We kept Kawhi -- throughout the course of this game. We mix it up with some switches, some shows, some blitz. Played 42 minutes and guard their best player, he was a hell of a player for the whole game. That's just shows you Kawhi, who he is. PG was great, 13 rebounds, played the last 36 minutes of the game. I thought Zu came in and gave us great minutes. Reggie Jackson was great. You know, especially in that first quarter, give our offense some scoring in the first quarter. Marcus, he only shot 1-for-10 but defensively he was great, wrestling with Boban, blitzing on the pick-and-rolls, which caused Luka to turn the ball over a little bit. It was a total team win but Kawhi and PG really good a great job of carrying us.

Q. With Kawhi, you mentioned his performance but what jumped out to you about his leadership in the huddles and on the sideline, all that?

TYRONN LUE: Just keep staying with it. You know, they got I think seven points. We got a few turnovers in the third quarter, and we just stayed calm and Kawhi just said listen, take care of the basketball, we can get any shot we want and we still haven't shot the ball well. We are getting great looks, open looks and we just can't make them right now. So we are due for a great game, great shooting game. But Kawhi, PG in the huddle they were fantastic, along with Pat Beverly and Rondo, as well.

Q. Did you see anything in Kawhi's eyes or did you say anything to him or did he say anything to you going into it the game that gave you an inkling this



was going to come?

TYRONN LUE: Kawhi saying something? (Laughing). He was disappointed he didn't shoot the ball well in Game 5. You know, we just want him to be aggressive, attack it, doing what he does, and like I said 5-for-9 from three tonight. Made some huge ones, especially when they made a run and he made two big threes to kind of secure the win for us. But to shoot 18-for-25 and have 45 points, that's pretty outstanding.

Q. Did this seem like a Game 7? If it was, how do you duplicate that now for a real Game 7?

TYRONN LUE: Well, I just think we've got to shoot the ball better. Clean up a couple of our mistakes. That's going to happen through the course of the game. If we shoot the ball well, then we are in great shape. We are in great shape, anyway, but we have to have one of those great shooting nights that we are used to and accustomed to and we'll be fine.

Q. Kawhi is no stranger to Game 7 and huge games. How much is the team going to be leaning on his experience heading into this type of a situation?

TYRONN LUE: A lot. I think with him and PG and just being able to lean on those guys, especially early on in the game, that first quarter is going to be huge, getting off to a good start at home. You know, they are going to lean on Kawhi a lot because he's been through it and he understands what it takes, so just his poise and his approach, we are going to be fine.

Q. Seemed like Kawhi took the defensive assignment on Luka more than he has. How much does that take out of him to chase that guy around and can you speak about his effectiveness defending Luka in this game?

TYRONN LUE: It takes a lot because Luka has the ball in his hands like I said 90 percent of the time, he's the head of the snake, he gets everybody involved and scores the basketball. He puts a lot of pressure on your defense. So like I said, with Kawhi taking that challenge, you know, playing 42 minutes tonight, he didn't really seem tired.

So we tried to get him out when we could and get him



back, and like I said it takes a lot out of him just looking at it but it looked like he was great with the performance he had. Got to get our rest tonight and try to recover as best as possible and get ready for Sunday at 12:30.

Q. Did he ask for that assignment or is that something you all got to that part and said, okay, it's got to be you?

TYRONN LUE: We got to that and he wanted it.

Q. There were so many times throughout the series, not just tonight, when things could have teetered and gone the other way and you guys could have packed it in for the season. Can you speak to the evolution of this team's resilience over the last year, what you've seen to come out of this thing alive for a Game 7?

TYRONN LUE: Been resilient all year. Guys have stepped up and played well for us. We just stuck through hard the Finals. We stayed together as a team. We just found ways to win when guys went down. You can kind of see this carrying over now throughout the course of the playoffs and just finding a way to come back and win games. Even we don't shoot the ball great, finding ways to win. We've done it three times on their home floor, which their crowd was amazing. We were able to fight through that and now we go home for Game 7.

Overall for the season, I love the way our guys competed and fought all season long and being resilient and it's showing again in these last four games.

Q. You mentioned that Paul played the whole second half. You did matchup Kawhi's minutes with Luka's, had him rest, you were facing a deficit in the fourth quarter. How would you assess the team being able to cut into that lead so that by the time Kawhi came back into the game, it was basically a tie game from there?

TYRONN LUE: I thought PG was great. Hit a three and a two, kind of sparked their run. I thought Zu was huge. He had some great, rebounds, offensive rebounds, as well. I thought they was able to hold the court down. Good really carried the team in the fourth quarter and it took a while for them to get back and get it together.

Like I said, PG having 13 rebounds, crashing the boards. When we talked about boxing out and hitting these guys because they crash a lot, Porzingas 7'3", Boban 7'5", Kleber is a big body and Cauley-Stein, as well. For PG to go down and get 13 rebounds says a lot about him and the way he's competing.

Q. Reggie had talked about how calm and collected

you were and how it helped him stay calm. What's it like in a do-or-die game and the offense isn't working despite it being wide open and all these wide open shots are missing? How do you keep guys composed as the coach?

TYRONN LUE: Just keep playing defense. I thought our defense kept us in this game all night long. Did a great job on Luka. He only got six or eight points down the stretch when we just tried to stay at home for threes.

But like I said, overall our defense kept us in the game and you know we made timely shots. Kawhi made two big threes down the stretch. We had a lot of shots that we didn't make but our defense was on point all night long tonight. So that kept us in the game. That's what you have to do. When you're not making shots, your defense has to be first and we've been preaching that all season long and I thought our guys did that.

Q. Was there more emphasis down the stretch to get Luka involved in the ball screen action to exhaust him?

TYRONN LUE: Yes, sir. You want me to elaborate on that? He had the ball in his hands so much; he controls the game. We could see he was wearing down and getting tired. So our last six-minute package we wanted to -- the ball better, tried to get a mismatch and they was switching so Kawhi was able to take advantage of it and PG was as well, and they started to double-team. When he's tired and worn out, that's when we are going to try to take advantage of the switching and make him -- indiscernible -- coming down that end of the court.

Q. What went into the decision to put Luke Kennard out there for his first real minutes in the series?

TYRONN LUE: Just some shot making and space the floor. I think open the floor up. They want to double-team Kawhi and PG and having another shooter on the floor. And I thought he came in, a big stop on Brunson defense, double the floor, first to the floor. Got us out in transition. He had some open shots that he didn't make but drove on and got a little floater, so just having him on the floor going into Game 7, he'll be more confident and he'll be ready to shoot the ball.

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