

Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

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Ivica Zubac

Press Conference

Q. It seems like just like last series, one of the biggest factors in how many minutes you'll get to see in these series is how well you do on these switches against bigger guards. Obviously Luka is not small but the lead ball handler on the switches. How much have you been working on that? In practices are you guarding point guards, shooting guards just on dealing with switches or is that something that you guys have focused on lately?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, I'm not switching on guards this series, so it's completely different for me than last series.

Q. You're more dropping than switching?

IVICA ZUBAC: Yes.

Q. Do you feel like that means that you can have more of an impact in this series than the last series?

IVICA ZUBAC: For sure. For sure I feel more comfortable being in a drop than switching on guards up top.

Q. Ty has talked ever since postgame and then just now about owning your own space and being physical in that way offensively. I'm guessing that's something you've talked about as a group quite a bit. What does that look like to you when you're out on the court to play more physical and own that space?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, just can't let them knock us off our spots. We've got to be the team that initiates the physicality. We've got to start out more physical than them. I mean, that's about it. Just hit-first mentality. We can't be the -- we've got to initiate that from the jump.

That's how we're going to give ourselves a better chance for a win.

Q. I thought what was interesting about Nick playing the 5 so much over the last week was how much Ty was saying the offense is kind of limited because he



doesn't necessarily understand the plays. It's different when you're kind of jumped into a series and you can't run your full offense. I think that's something that DeMarcus is kind of challenged with, as well. From someone like you who's been on the team all year long, what are the kind of things that you need to keep in mind offensively playing your position for your team this year?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, offensively I feel like the most important thing is to get the guys open, to set good picks. When you go small, it's not as easy to set those picks. As we've said, Utah was more physical last night. They were getting through all the picks that we set.

I feel like my biggest role on the offense is just to get guys open, and when I'm out there and when I'm on the offensive end, I always -- I'm always thinking how to get Kawhi open, how to get PG open, Reggie or whoever got the ball, and I'm always thinking about angle of the picks, should I hold, should I slip. That's I would say the biggest key of our position on offense.

Q. A few games ago Ty Lue was saying that you're one of his all-time favorite players that he's coached. I kind of wondered how would you describe your relationship and how that's developed in the last couple years?

IVICA ZUBAC: Man, it's been great. Ty Lue, he's honest with you. He lets you know how it is. As long as you're honest with me and you keep it straight, I'm going to give my 100 percent. I'm going to return that trust and honesty. I'm going to play hard and I'm going to work what my role is no matter what I do, and I'm not going to complain, and hopefully Ty and the coaches appreciate that.

Q. You were just talking about how Ty is with you. Do you also see him -- is part of the reason you guys respect him so much because he also treats Kawhi and PG maybe the same as everybody else on the team?

IVICA ZUBAC: Yes, he treats everyone the same. He plays with a lot of big-time players, and I think that's why he's able, he knows how to hold everyone accountable, how to get them going. There's no -- he's not going to let



someone off the hook in a film session or when we do scouting or whatever just because of their name. He treats everyone the same, and that's the great thing about this team.

Q. You've seen this team kind of really come back from down 0-2 and then win the last two games. Being in these holes, what was it like last game after down Game 1, basically how did the players respond?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, it's a next-game mentality. We've got to make our adjustments. Obviously we missed a great opportunity to take a Game 1 on the road. We wish we could have turned back time and do something differently, but it's a next-game mentality right now. We know what we're capable of, and it's a long series, and we know what we can do. But obviously going down 1-0 is not ideal. That's not what we wanted, and every series is different. This time we can't let ourselves go down 2-0 again. We've got to have the mentality to win every game.

Q. Just want to know, when you mention like you guys need to be the strike-first team, what happens in games that you guys aren't the more physical team? Is it a fatigue thing or is it they got to their spots before you? You being on the court, what can you attribute that to?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, it's just setting a tone. It's just a mentality I feel like. We've got to be mentally prepared to play hard from the jump. Sometimes this year we didn't do that when we came out not with that mentality, and I feel like in the Playoffs you've got to have that mindset going into every game just to hit first and be physical. I don't think it has to do anything with fatigue or anything like that. It's just a mindset.

If I'm out there, man, one of the things I can contribute with is just setting hard picks, crashing the offensive boards, boxing out, protecting the rim. I feel like all those things contribute to us being physical, and those things help us win the games.

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