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Joe Ingles

Postgame Press Conference

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Q. Don and JC carried you guys offensively for a lot of the night and all of a sudden in that late fourth quarter stretch you step up big, Royce hits a big shot, Bojan hits a big shot. Can you just kind of take us through that big closing 14-2 run late in the fourth where the rest of you guys kind of took over?

JOE INGLES: Yeah, I mean, it's the beauty of our team, I think, and it has been all year of different possessions, not necessarily like taking turns, but just kind of, I think Donovan, and I said at one point, like, whoever Beverly is not on, bring it up and we'll get into something. Obviously he's pretty good on the ball. I think he stole that one off me one time. So just, yeah, just figuring out matchups and who is on who and who we want to attack and where we want to go at different times. So, again, the beauty of our team is that we have got a lot of guys that can handle the ball and make plays and obviously make shots and stuff like that. So, yeah, it was just, again, reading the situation, reading the play, mismatches or the matchups that we want to try and find and then being aggressive at the point of it.

Q. Can you describe just the resilience and toughness that you guys showed today in the last two games to, A, overcome a night where you shoot, where you miss 21 consecutive shots, and B, overcome a third quarter where you guys just couldn't get anything done against a zone and still be able to hit back when you guys took some haymakers.

JOE INGLES: Yeah, I mean, even when we got up 16 or whatever that lead was at one point, the whole timeout was obviously about staying focused and locked in and just knowing they are obviously going to score at some point for the rest of the game or quarter. We're not going to hold them to zero for the rest of the quarter. So just knowing that they're obviously a good team and they're going to make a little run at some point, which they did. And the zone part, I think, I mean, we haven't seen zone for a long



time. I think I said it this morning, we get better at things as kind of time goes on, and at the start of the zone, we weren't very good. I think we got a bit stagnant in it and kind of looking at Donovan to make a play each time and as the quarter went on or the time of the zone went on, we figured out some things. I think JC and Bojan hit a couple big shots to just kind of hold that lead a little bit. So, obviously, yeah, I mean, now that we kind of know they did that, there's probably a good chance they will do it again, so we'll be ready for it.

Q. Not to talk about the guy who is going to push you back to the bench, but what does it mean to get these two wins without Mike Conley?

JOE INGLES: Well, I'm going to stand my ground and refuse to go back to the bench. What about that?

Q. Good luck.

JOE INGLES: (Laughing) thank you. Yeah. No, that would be a waste of time. Yeah, I mean, it's big. It's what we have done all year. We have obviously at different times had different guys out, especially that last kind of little stretch of the year, that four, five weeks without Donovan. So, again, I think I said it this morning, too, I'm more than happy to go back to the bench for a guy like that. It's what I've done all year. I've been in and out of that starting lineup a little bit. It's what I'm almost used to at different times. And when he comes back, I'll more than happily leave my jacket on for the first few minutes and give him a handshake and support him. So, yeah, it's just almost that mentality of kind of next man up. I mean, I got in there a bit more tonight and stuff like that. So we have dealt with that. We have dealt with that for seven years since I've been here, to be honest with you. A good number of people each year that have missed time and then guys who had to start or play different roles. So coach does a good job or the coaching staff and medical staff of having everybody ready at the time that they need to, if guys need to step in and kind of pick up some load of a guy missing.

Q. You guys have the Defensive Player of the Year and I know you got that award today, before the game. It's Sixth Man of the Year, best record in the league, just held serve at home for these two really close games.



Are people starting to take you seriously now as a NBA championship contender? I mean, is this the game where we start to believe that this is your year?

JOE INGLES: I mean, you guys probably hear it all, see it more than we do. You probably don't want my honest opinion because I really, really don't care what people think or what people say or think about our team. We have put in the work. I mean, we have put in the work for seven years, since Quin took over, to be in this position and be fighting for this. So it's been a process and it's been, I think, I mean, Fav now as well but Rudy and I were the last two, and then obviously getting Fav back. So there's been a lot of different guys here, and we have kind been building every year towards this. We know it in our locker room and this organization what we have done to put ourselves in this position and the confidence we have got to keep winning games and keep pushing and, yeah, just keep kind of moving forward, step by step. I mean, whatever people want to say or write or talk about, I, like I'm going to go home tonight and have a great sleep and get up tomorrow and take my kids to school, and whatever people want to talk about, I'll will talk about. But for us, it's going to be, yeah, heading into tomorrow we'll watch some more film and keep kind of pushing forward step by step. I know that's like the oldest cliché in the book, but it is one game at a time. We can't kind of look too far ahead. And, yeah, we'll recover and get ready and, yeah, get ready for the next one.

Q. Did you know that Bojan could defend like this?

JOE INGLES: He's going to hurt himself because now every, for 82 regular season games he's going to have to pick up full court. Same with JC. JC was doing the same thing, so. Maybe he's just so much better offensively that he saves his energy to give him 30 or whatever. But, no, I mean, I think he's done a good job, what's he been here two years now, I think? His second year. So I think he's been whatever you want to call it, underrated or, I think sometimes you get, people get, like he is so good offensively that you just kind of, that's what like you think of Bojan and that's what you think. But he's been good for us for two years defensively. Everyone has slipups, like, that's from top to bottom. Maybe we can take Rudy out that list because he's three time Defensive Player of the Year. But, I mean, at times everyone's going to have a mistake or anything like that, but if the effort's there and you know the game plan and, again, like, you throw Rudy behind and put him at the, under the rim or wherever he is on the court, it helps everybody. So, yeah, I can't wait for Game 1 next year when he has to pick up full court (laughing). But, no, it's, he's played great on both ends of the floor for us and, yeah, we'll keep it going for him.

Q. What makes the difference in money time tonight?

JOE INGLES: In money time? Man, I love your questions. I mean, we have -- it kind of goes back to the earlier question of this buildup of seven years. We have done -- the amount of hours and days we have spent going through late-game situations, what we want to run in the last quarter, what matchups we want to attack in, and having guys in the right positions to attack those matchups. We have been building and working on this for seven years too, so I think we're very comfortable in those situations. It helps when you've got Donovan to make plays on the ball or with the ball. But, yeah, I mean we have been -- I think we have been good in a lot of those situations a lot of the time because we do, we work on it a lot. There's a segment at practice every day at the end that's kind of dedicated to late game situations, spacing. I mean, we talked about spacing for I don't know how long this morning at shoot around, but it's crucial in these games, close game, last possession, last shot, whatever the situation is, you need to execute and I think we generally do a pretty good job of that and I think it is the time we spend on it and then, like I said, it helps having some pretty good players in those situations.

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