

Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

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Tyronn Lue

Press Conference



Q. In these playoffs, you have a plus-26 point differential. You're losing a lot of close games but you're winning games by a big margin. What does that tell you in the losses even when you don't play well and you're only losing by a couple points, and in the wins you're capable of winning big?

TYRONN LUE: I think when we're playing the right way, when we're locked in on one side of the basketball, like you said, we beat teams by double figures. Last night we made some mistakes, but I think we played so hard for 48 minutes, we was able to recover and cover for one another; we didn't make mistakes. We were attacking the paint, attacking the basket and shooting the ball at a high clip and we defended the way we did last night, we're a tough team to beat and we understand that.

Q. With Nico, his spacing and defensive versatility and numbers on the floor are good, but what have you seen from him as a communicator on the defensive end in these playoffs?

TYRONN LUE: He's gotten better. I think his physicality in the center, we had to push him up and our guards get under him, switch him one through five. I think blocking shots on the weak side and being low man and being able to just protect he's been really good.

I just think his physicality has picked up, and that's what we need, especially when we put him in the four- or five-position when we need a physicality and he's been going a great job with that.

So we just got to continue to keep building. We did made some mistakes last night. Like I said, we wasn't able to cover for one another because we were playing so hard but we've just got to continue to keep getting better.

Q. Can you discuss what Chauncey has brought to your staff this year? And what was your transition like, I know when you became assistant to the head coach, you were thrown into the fire. The progress

from retirement to player to assistant coach to head coach what was that process like for you, and can you kind of relate that to what Chauncey is going through?

TYRONN LUE: Well, my situation was a lot tougher. I think our situation, we had just went to the Finals the year before. When I a chance to take over in Cleveland, Coach Blatt had No. 1 team in the East at the time. So to come in midway through the season when we were playing pretty good basketball, and then to hire me, it was a tough situation because a lot of people say a lot of different things about, you know, did we still have him in the bag, certain different things and which was not the case.

To be thrown in the fire where you have to absolutely win a championship at that point, those are tough things to face. You know, you go into the Championship the finals the year before, you go to Game 6; so now if you don't go to the Finals the year that I took over and at least go to Game 7 it was a failure. So it was a lot of stress in that regard.

I just tried to perform and do the job I knew I was capable of doing, but I had never sat in that head seat before. Not having training camp, not being able to stand before the team in what I wanted to do, I thought it was a tough situation.

Chauncey's situation, he's assistant coach, he's learning. He's come a long way interest last sum tore now and he's put the work in and now he's going to have a chance to go to a team from fresh start having his own blueprint on the team, what he wants and not a team that's already built and already going midway through the season. That's a big difference.

As far as being a coach, just his poise, I think he relates to the players. Him being able to communicate and being able to teach PG at the point guard position how to make plays, what he's looking for in different situations, and he's been working with PG all year. So the work he's put in and to see what he's done now and how he's developed is great to see. He's definitely ready.

Q. I asked Nic about the starts to the first and third quarters and how they are not as quick as you might have wanted in terms of the offense and defense. Because you have recovered so well the whole



postseason, to what extent do you really concern yourself with the starts to your games? Is that something you think needs to be fixed dramatically or are you more impressed with the recovery?

TYRONN LUE: I'm impressed with the recovery but we have to get off to good starts. We can't go down 10-0, 14-3. We can't continue to keep doing that and dig ourselves a hole and you can't expect someone to try to get you back in the game.

We understand -- when we come out, we don't want to start slow. We're not getting stops early in the game to get out in transition and trying to get some easy baskets. We've been talking about it all playoffs and we've got to do a better job at that.

But you know, coming out in the third quarter, that's the one that we really have to establish. All championship teams, they have great third quarters. They come out of the locker room with the adjustments and understand what they need to do and they execute.

Q. Last night Marcus did not play in the fourth. You've talked about confidence in him, but did you talk about that last night, what you saw and why you wanted him not to finish that game? How did he take it? What do you expect from him in Game 4?

TYRONN LUE: We didn't talk about it. It was a decision. It wasn't really anything he did. He comes out at the end of the third quarter, and then go on a run -- so for a minute and a half, we was taking PG and Kawhi out anyway, so didn't make sense to put him back in the game. I thought T-Mann and Luke came in and the guys stepped in and did a great job. Once we got the lead by 20, there wasn't a need to bring him back, anyway.

Q. Curious about the Chauncey thing, too because you guys spent time under the same roof during quarantine and whatnot. I know how close you are with him. When you guys made the decision that you wanted to bring him into your staff, would that have happened regardless or was this kind of a mastermind between the two of you because you wanted him to work with Paul and what are the ways that you have seen him really help him specifically with directing him at the point guard spot?

TYRONN LUE: Well, I think our whole -- my vision, because I was close with him when I was in Cleveland and he just didn't want to coach. He wanted to be in the front office and making those decisions. I wanted him in Cleveland a long time ago. I tease him all the time, I tell him he missed out on 15-, \$18 million because he would

have been a head coach for three to four years by now.

Then this summer, had nothing to do PG because I didn't know I was going to be a coach for the Clippers. I mean, during quarantine, I didn't know I was going to be the coach for the Clippers.

So when I was in Denver for seven weeks, really dove into it, and he had been working already this whole past year just learning ATOs how to draw up on the board situations, and then when the break came with the COVID situation, I went to Denver several weeks and we dove into it for four or five hours a day, and he's really locked into drawing up plays, what plays to run, knowing the system, knowing the play calls, and he's done a tremendous job.

And now just seeing him on the floor coaching a five-on-five game, steadily improved and he's done a great job. Just his poise, he's able to hold guys accountable and the things he's done for PG this year has been great reading pick-and-roll situations what pass to make, what he's looking for, what reads, and through the season, PG has gotten better and better.

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