

LA Clippers Media Conference

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Tyronn Lue

Press Conference



Q. I think coming into the Jazz series, you guys only had one day of rest. You ran 10, 11 guys out there. Do you anticipate now maybe sort of another one of those test out who can play, who can't play and run an 11-man rotation again tomorrow?

TYRONN LUE: Yeah, considering we only have 36 hours to come down from our game. I mean, playing a 12:30 game, which is kind of crazy. We can't run our guys into the ground Game 1. We understand that. PG played 46 minutes. Reggie played the whole second half. Nic Batum played 41 minutes.

So we've got to be smart about it, approach it the right way. But we are going to have to play multiple guys, especially that first half, trying to get ten guys in there just kind of see how we feel so guys can kind of recover best as we can.

Q. What is it about this team that whenever a Kawhi or PG is out, guys like Terance, Marcus or Reggie are able to put up big numbers, play on both ends and come up big for you guys?

TYRONN LUE: I just think the preparation all year. We've had the experience of guys being out and guys having to step up, and they had to play in big moments. Luke Kennard, Terance Mann, of course Marcus, but Reggie with Pat going down for all those games this season and becoming a starter, we played some big games and they produced. So they are used to it. So they don't shy away from the moment.

I think all our guys are up for the challenge and they performed well. You know, we know we have to do it by committee more so than having Kawhi who can do it on his own. But with Kawhi being out, we know we have to do it by committee and do it the right way.

Q. To clarify with Kawhi, is there a window to rejoin you guys at some point in the trip or should we pencil him out for Game 1 and 2?

TYRONN LUE: I'm not sure. I know Game 1 for sure. Right now he's back home getting treatment. We're not sure about Game 2 yet.

Q. With that, how do you prepare for this series? Is your mindset almost having to deal with the possibility that he won't be available at all during this series or how do you approach that overall?

TYRONN LUE: That's how I approach it, not until he gets back, we can't, you know, do hypotheticals if he's coming back, what game. We have to prepare like he's not playing. You know, just kind of go from there.

Q. Five years ago, you were on the bench when the Cavs completed that comeback against Golden State. Just wondering what from that series did you learn or that has served you well maybe in this year's playoff run overcoming the 2-0 deficits or when it comes managing a team when its back is against the wall?

TYRONN LUE: I think poise and I think adjustments and I just think believing. You know, the first team to four, no matter how many games you get down, I know it sounds cliché in a lot of looms when you are down but you have to win four games and that's what the playoffs is all about.

Sometimes you have rough starts or you have a couple bad games, but you've got to just learn from it. You have to be able to adjust and do the right thing as far as attacking offensively and defensively what you see, and try to exploit those mismatches.

So I never really get down and out, like I said, until it's over. You never know what happens. Like look at the Brooklyn series, had a great series going and Kyrie goes town or injuries play a part in it. You never know what happens. You just have to keep fighting till the end. That's kind of my motto.

Q. On the broadcast yesterday, Mark Jackson said you were in a zone as a coach and I wondered, is that a thing? Do you feel that? Is every call you make going to go right, kind of thing?

TYRONN LUE: Ah, no, I don't know about that (chuckles). It's just what you think about like going into the series,



going into the game, you know, if a team does something, how you want to adjust to it and just try to stay two or three steps ahead. I think my coaching staff does a great job with that. They have been phenomenal for me all season long.

We just want to make sure when they make adjustments we already know the adjustments they are going to make and we have a counter for it. Just trying to prepare before they do it and understand what they are trying to do and what they might adjust to, what their adjustment might be and try to stay a step ahead of them.

Q. The 'ole chess match?

TYRONN LUE: Yes, ma'am.

Q. When you think about this series, going into the playoffs, obviously sort of the knock on Phoenix was, well, they don't have the experience. Obviously they have handled the moment pretty well. What have you seen from the guys not named Chris Paul who have been doing this for the first time in the playoffs and what impresses you about those guys?

TYRONN LUE: I just think, you know, Booker, he's a stud. He's a star in this league. Doesn't matter if you've been in the playoffs or not. If you're an All-Star or perennial All-Star and play the way he does, it doesn't matter about being in the playoffs or not. I think the young guy, Bridges; Crowder, he's an experienced guy who has been to the Eastern Conference Finals with Boston.

So the young guys, they are not afraid of the moment. Kind of like our young guys with Terance Mann and Luke Kennard and young guys are ready to step up. I just watched the two series they played and their young guys were phenomenal. They didn't shy away from the moment. Sometimes it's overblown, overhyped about the playoffs and guys being nervous or not playing the same way. I just think you should go out there and play as hard as you can and just enjoy the moment.

Q. Speaking of enjoying the moment, do you feel like now with these two comebacks, do you feel like your team takes a deep breath right now?

TYRONN LUE: We play at 12 o'clock tomorrow, I mean, it's crazy. But like I said, we enjoyed it last night, and now we've just got to turn the page and get ready for Phoenix tomorrow.

Q. When it comes Deandre Ayton, you saw the first round, Dallas wasn't really interested in posting their bigs outside of Boban, and then in the second round,

Utah really wasn't trying to dump the ball down to Rudy Gobert. So Deandre is a different kind of player. How do you kind of prepare for that given how you've been playing the last couple of series?

TYRONN LUE: I think when he does a mismatch down low, we have to do a good job of trying to front the post so he doesn't have easy catches and have out back side help on the back side. We have to be physical with him. Like he really dunks in and he really crashes the offensive boards.

You know, he's a strong, physical guy underneath the glass, on the glass. And he hurt us in Game 3 up here. Down the stretch the we played small, and I think he got four offensive rebounds down the stretch that sealed the game for those guys. We understand he's a physical specimen. We understand he's going to rebound the basketball and we understand they are going to look to post him, too. We have to be prepared for all three of those things.

Q. What do you feel like you learned the most about this team over the last two games? Obviously you've seen what everyone's capable of over the course of the whole season, but the last two games specifically, what do you feel like you've learned the very most?

TYRONN LUE: Just a Next Man Up mentality. I think it could be anyone's night. Any guy could step up. Marcus Morris, Terance Mann, Luke Kennard, Reggie, PG, Pat-Bev made two, big huge shots. So like our team, anyone can step up. We try to play the right way of get into the paint, making the extra pass and the right play. Nic Batum, he's a part of that, as well.

If you lose your best player, Kawhi, other guys pick up the slack, but doing it the right way, and I think that's what those guys thrive in, when PG is and Kawhi is out, those guys play the right way, continue to move the basketball and not try to just do it all by themselves.

Q. On the topic of Deandre, you guys did play small in the first two rounds and we doesn't see much of Zu because you wanted to switch everything. With Ayton, could this be a series in which we see Zu a little bit more so or is it primarily, let's stick with the small ball; it's what got us here?

TYRONN LUE: I think it's just more of a few adjustments. I think Zu is definitely going to play and everybody is going to have an opportunity to play especially tomorrow. I'll just kind of play a lot of guys and just kind of see who can play in this series and how they try to attack the guys we play and how those guys play offensively, as well.

Zu is definitely going to get opportunities to play, and you know, he's been great for us all year. You know, they have done a good -- they did a good job in Dallas, trying to play him off the floor. And then we went small but then they tried to get him back on the floor.

But I think Dallas helped us out going into that Utah series. We was able to find something with our small ball lineup and understand we just switch, we can fire, we can trap, we can fly around defensively. I talked about it after the Dallas series, like, you know, that series really helped us get ready for that Utah series, which it did.

So back to Zu, I think he's definitely going to play a big part and a big role because Ayton, he is a big force down low, and we understand we are going to have a physical body on his body at all times.

Q. Utah tried to stick Rudy on Terance in the corner and have him dig down and help on drives. In this series, is the mantra for Terance just let it fly, especially after Game 6 if Deandre is in the paint and helping off of you?

TYRONN LUE: Yeah, I mean, he has to take his shots, be confident with it. All the work he's put in over this season and last season, summer, he's really improved his shooting.

He's a 40 percent three-point shooter, and they are going to leave you open and just trust your work. Like I said, Game 6 was huge for him. He's very confident. Like I said, our coaching staff and our players kept encouraging him, just take his shots and he had a huge game for us, which we needed.

Q. The games against Phoenix this season were really competitive and there was a lot of extracurricular stuff. Do you sense something building between these two teams and do you prep your team in case they are like, hey, things could come up again in this Game 1 because now we are in the playoffs and it's going to just heighten that much more?

TYRONN LUE: Well, I think just two teams competing for a championship, and I think being two of the best teams in the West throughout the course of the season, you're going to have some chippiness. That's part of it. Two teams fighting for the same thing, it's going to happen.

So I don't think I have to tell our guys anything. We understand attacks are going to happen and what we want to do and what we have to do. All the other stuff doesn't really matter.

Q. I'm wondering for PG, he's accomplished a lot in his career and he's a great player, but being able to pull a team to the Western Conference Finals when Kawhi goes out for the last two games, what does that do for somebody like PG as he heads into the Western Conference Finals? Does that elevate him more had anyway, confidence or anything like that?

TYRONN LUE: He's already been elevated. Like I said, he was on the Indiana Pacers team when they went to two Eastern Conference Finals and played at a high level against the Miami Heat. It's nothing new for him.

I think he's in a great place right now. Like I said in Game 5 in Utah, having 37 points and 16 rebounds was huge and then coming back last night and making big shots down the stretch of that game to solidify the win for us; he's in a great place and playing at a high level all season, and we look forward to him doing that again starting tomorrow.

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