

LA Clippers Media Conference

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Ivica Zubac

Press Conference



Q. Zu, how you feeling today?

IVICA ZUBAC: Good, man. How about you?

Q. You know, it's different. Used to covering you guys every other day for a month, so trying to figure out what's next, right.

IVICA ZUBAC: Yes. Asking myself the same question.

Q. I guess the first thing I have to ask you, ever since you put on a Clippers uniform, you never missed a game due to injury. What was it like to have to be told that you can't play in elimination games and how close were you to actually being able to play with that knee sprain?

IVICA ZUBAC: It was tough, man. I forgot how it feels to be back in the locker room when the guys go out and when they get in the huddle and they go out on the court to warm up. You know, staying in the locker room, it was tough. I'm just used to being out there. I don't know how close I was. I mean, I gave it a try in Game 4, Game 5 in Phoenix, I was trying to run. I just couldn't do it. I gave everything I could. I really tried, and just my knee wouldn't let me do it. You know, it's tough, especially when I played in every game for the Clippers, and then probably the most important game in franchise history, I couldn't be out there.

But it is what it is. I've got to get that knee right. I've got to get healthy this summer and prepare for next year.

Q. I know you guys talked a lot last year about how you were just trying to move on from what happened in the bubble, and I know it's only been like 12 hours since you guys played yesterday, but how do you think you're going to feel about this season? How are you going to look back on it?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, our big picture was the Championship, and at the end, we didn't get it. So we're still going to be -- bad taste. We know we could have done

it and we know we were close to getting to the Finals. Even though we lost, we had great opportunities to win had some games that we lost. It's going to leave a bad taste.

But at the same time, after two weeks, when things settle, we can look back at it and realize that we're the first Clippers team that made the Conference Finals, and that even despite all the injuries and everything that happened, we still stuck together and we never gave up. We gave our best, and you know, unfortunately it wasn't enough. But proud of the guys and proud of everyone on the team how far we played, how we fought. You know, get healthy and try to do it again next year.

Q. From your perspective, what made this season so special?

IVICA ZUBAC: A lot of stuff. I think the special part of this season was how everyone despite all the injuries, despite almost missing a guy every other night, every game, just throughout the whole year, we found ways to win. We played together. We played hard no matter who was on the floor. We showed how deep we are. We showed how hard we can play, how much we care about it. A lot of teams, some guys when you miss three or four stars, a lot of teams would give up. We kept playing hard no matter who was on the court, and just being out there on the floor every single night with those guys fighting and just trying to get the win, that was a special part for me just fighting with those guys, stepping on the court every night with those guys and giving our best shot.

Q. You mentioned the injuries, and obviously looking back at the year, there was COVID and having to stay separated as individual. How did the team manage to stay together as a group throughout everything?

IVICA ZUBAC: Man, we just we had a group of guys that loved playing with each other. Everyone was on the same page. Everyone knew what was our goal and we're ready to do whatever it takes to accomplish it. Especially after last year, we realize what we did last year.

So we did a lot of team activities together. We would get together when we were at home at someone's house. It was just, you know, we were just doing stuff together. That stuff translates onto the basketball court.



Q. I wanted to ask about Nic and about Reggie, the two last additions to the team this year were so huge all year, especially in the playoffs. What did you learn about those fellas and how much would you like to play with them again in the future?

IVICA ZUBAC: I would love to play with them. They are great guys. You know, I don't think anyone expected them to do what they did this year and how much we got from them.

And you know, Nico, Nico was out there playing every position in the playoffs. He was playing 40 minutes a night.

And from a guy that signed a minimum contract and from a guy that wasn't expected to play that much, that was huge for us. He did all the little stuff for us.

Reggie has just shown up huge for us in the playoffs. I mean, he had been with us a full year, and what he did in the playoffs was really incredible. And we all knew what Reggie could do. But to see it happening every night and the way he was, you know, carrying us and the way he was -- and even in the regular season when we had injuries, he was the guy that was leading us on the floor. It was great. He was on us after losses, after going down in the series, 2-0, 3-1, he'd be like, "Okay, we're going to get the next two. We're good." He'd be almost the guy that was trying to keep everyone positive in the locker room.

He made everyone believe that we can do it. Really with those two guys, it was incredible and we couldn't do it without them.

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