

# LA Clippers Media Conference

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## Lawrence Frank

### Press Conference

**Q. As far as the guys that you drafted, I was curious, how many of them did you have in for personal workouts with the team?**

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, so we had Jason Preston in twice. There's someone I can't talk about that was also in the gym twice. We didn't have the opportunity to have Keon in but we've been tracking Keon for a while. We have a lot of ties to University of Tennessee. Keon's assistant coach is someone that myself and John Loyer coached in Detroit, Kim English who recruited him and Rick Barnes is a long-time friend.

So we had eyes on him throughout the process, saw him in high school, and word-of-mouth, made a good trade-up to get him.

**Q. What was so enticing to trade up to nab him?**

LAWRENCE FRANK: He's one of the highest-level athletes in the draft. He's a defensive first guy, has a great competitive strength, motor, likes being in the gym, likes being coached hard. Very driven by winning. Very ironic that the guy he looks up to is Kawhi. He knows PG. So those are always good starts to have veteran mentors like that.

Just feel like -- he played point in high school, we don't see him as a point guard. He's a wing who can hopefully guard two if not three possessions and I think his offensive game will continue to grow with him. Our player development staff has done a great job with our young players as we saw with Terance and Mook and Amir and Daniel.

So we are really confident that he has a really good base to start with. I think athletically, he just -- he just increases our overall versatility and he was one of those guys we had ranked very, very high on our board and we're trying to target him as we saw as the picks kept on running down. I thought we were really fortunate to trade up to get him.

**Q. You mentioned you had Jason in twice. What made**



**you want to invite him the first time, and what did you see from him that was so appealing both trips?**

LAWRENCE FRANK: I think Trent Redden did an unbelievable job with Jason in terms of identifying early. Jason, if you guys don't know the story, it's worth learning about. He's an incredible story. Senior year, he averaged about as many points as I did and I got cut from my high school team, okay. He played I think 56 minutes, averaged a couple points, basically, you know, like he was literally going to your Central Florida as a normal student; and he was part of your community. He was a journalist. He wrote an article for Piston Power, an article on Reggie Jackson.

A friend says, "I'm playing after AU tournament, would you like to play"; he plays. They basically only had five guys and he was really impressive and the coach said, would love to get you at prep school. Goes to prep school. Well, the coach winds up leaving and goes to another prep school. He follows him to that prep school in Tennessee. The coach within a couple weeks leaves, so there he is, they have 6-0 guys on the team. He's on the third team. The third team. He then works his way up to the first team. He had two scholarship offers, one of which was Ohio-u. The coach of Ohio-U Trent has known a long, long time from his days at Ohio State when Trent was with Cleveland and you see his extension.

We saw him a bunch last year, and then this year, I think everyone took notice when his game at Illinois, the going in there and beating -- playing 31 and 11. MAC Player of the Year. They win a MAC conference tournament. They defeat Virginia in the first round, and when we brought him in, even though he's 22, we're like, wait a minute, like he has so much growth, we think we can get his body a lot stronger. We think we can continue to improve his shot, even though the percentage looks good.

But we thought he was the second-best catch in this draft behind Giddey. He has unbelievable vision, terrific pick-and-roll player. Guys are really going to enjoy playing with him. Can make passes with either hand. And for a guy who is not -- even vertically, he's actually a pretty good athlete. He doesn't have great speed but he has unbelievable feel, and his ability to get to spots, he has an unorthodox game. And we just really felt like it was a

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quality we wanted to add to the group.

**Q. When a guy comes in with a story like that, does that do anything for you guys? Is it hard to not let that find its place into your heart a little?**

LAWRENCE FRANK: The thing is, we recruit people, not just players. They obviously have to be good enough, but it is about people, and you're placing, you know, for lack of a better term, you're placing bets on guys to have NBA careers. You know, you guys know the odds when you're picked late in the first or if you're picked in the second round, invariably, 20 guys in a draft, you know, make it in terms of playing beyond three to five years.

So you're betting on the person and with all the guys that we drafted, we obviously value competitiveness and high work rate, a love of the game and the ability to keep what's important, make sure it's important. And these guys are young guys, but we're really, really enthusiastic about the type of people we added to the group.

**Q. We don't normally get to see you, last time was trade deadline in March. This was obviously a very strange season. How do you feel like everything that went down from the end of March till the end of June with the playoffs kind of influenced how you're going to approach not just this draft but this off-season?**

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I mean, this has been like a blur. This has been -- think about it. We've had three drafts and free agency in a period of 19 months. Heck, it's my anniversary today, right, thanks. Unfortunately my wife and kids are in jersey, but tips to a good marriage -- stay away.

But to answer your question, the season ended bittersweet. Obviously the goal is to win a championship. We fell short. We took a great deal of pride of watching how resilient our group was in the playoffs down 2-0, twice, coming back; then with Kawhi's injury, Serge's injury, Zu's injury, to put us in a position, we're really, really proud of the group. It's no consolation; we felt even with the injuries that we had enough. We had opportunities in that Phoenix series to advance. To see different guys step up on different nights; I thought Ty, not just in the playoffs but throughout the season did an unbelievable job this season, and when you look at it, the condensed season -- we had a condensed playoff schedule, playing every other day.

And for Ty to be able to manage all the different things, who is in the lineup, who is out of the lineup, and then masterful, masterful in-game coaching throughout the playoffs. I there are very few coaches who I say have the courage and smarts to make some of the different moves

he made to win that game. Really proud of our players. We identified different things going into the year in regards to chemistry and guys fitting together and guys pulling for each other, not being a front-running group, responding to adversity, and adapting throughout different circumstances, and I felt our guys really, really responded well.

So I give our players, Ty and the coaching staff credit, despite us not reaching our goals, I thought there were some real silver linings throughout the season.

**Q. Last year's roster, an older roster; you go out and get three young guys tonight. What do you feel like is the timetable especially with Kawhi's injury for next season in terms of really feeling like you can contend like you want to for a title? Has that changed with Kawhi's injury and the potential of him being out and how you view expectations and as a contender?**

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, I think we look at it as we're still going to be very, very competitive just like we have been the previous years. And the goal is, not just to be good for a one-year cycle.

The goal is to be good for a long time, and in order to do that, you have to have a really good mix of guys at different stages in their career, and we really take a great deal of pride that we have really good veterans, we have some young guys now that have shown that they are quality NBA rotation players with an upside to be even better and we just want to be both not just short term but long term have a continuous cycle of talented players that fit our DNA.

**Q. Do you have any expectation of how free agency will go? Obviously you want Reggie and Kawhi back but how do you feel about bringing everybody back for another run?**

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think in a general sense without a doubt, and you respect the fact that they are free agents. We want them back as Clippers. We respect that they have a choice to make. But we also hope to have in Kawhi's case, a very long-term relationship with him. I know that he has a process, and right now our focus like Kawhi like his is, is on his health. He had major surgery. He tore his ACL. That's going to require a great deal of time and we want to support him in that.

With Reggie, Reggie was terrific and Reggie is such a great, great story when you think about how things changed for him in 12 months after the bubble to then come in in the different roles and then eventually starting, and then what he did in the playoffs and the run he had; it makes you really, really happy for him.

We'd like to bring Reggie back. We would like to bring Nico back. Serge is a free agent and we hope he opts in. We have other free agents as well. We will continue to go through it. Obviously once August 2 hits, we can start the free agent process but we are hopeful that we can continue continuity and guys want to be here.

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