

LA Clippers Media Conference

Monday, September 27, 2021
Los Angeles, California, USA

Isaiah Hartenstein

Keon Johnson

Press Conference

ISAIAH HARTENSTEIN: It's been great, very interactive, helping us with every little thing we need help on, giving us confidence to play our game. I think that's been a great opportunity for us coming in, them giving me confidence and believing in me. That's been a great thing so far.

KEON JOHNSON: One thing that the coaching staff does well, it's just they give us a lot of freedom. Also on the court there, they make adjustments, and we also know that whatever they throw at us, we have to be ready and prepared for it. I feel like they do a great job of preparing us for that.

Q. Keon, after being in summer league, getting a chance to be with this organization, it's been a month since that. What has the moment been where it's clear that this isn't summer league anymore?

KEON JOHNSON: Right when summer league ended, I made that switch in my head that summer league was over with and it was time to get back to work. Just coming off of that -- coming off of summer league, I knew that I had to -- there was things I needed to get better upon, and I feel like the coaching staff and everybody around me has helped me get better and hopefully prepared me for this season.

Q. And for Isaiah, you made the decision to come here and compete for a spot. What was the thing in your mind that made you want to like come to the Clippers to compete for a spot on this team?

ISAIAH HARTENSTEIN: I came out here for a couple days, and it was great. I loved that they had confidence in me and the opportunity to play in the series and be out for a little bit and coming in and using my opportunities and just showing what I can really do.

Q. Got a question individually for both of you. I'll start with Isaiah. You played in this league, and you've had some pretty nice moments in this league. When you



come into a training camp, how do you try to showcase your skills yet understanding you've got to play team basketball? How do you do that in this environment when you come in with the Clippers?

ISAIAH HARTENSTEIN: I think it's natural. It's coming in. I played with so many great players. That's the thing. Every destination I've been on, it's always been where I had to be, a team player, and I like being a team player, especially coming from overseas. It's knowing how to get certain players involved. It's from screening, passing, and then also being able, when I get my opportunities, to show what I can do.

I think me just playing with guys like James Harden, Jamal Murray, Russell Westbrook, and all these stars that I know how to play with stars, like P.G. or Kawhi. That's definitely made it a lot easier.

Q. Keon, when summer league ended, did you take inventory and think, okay, here's my point of emphasis going forward in terms of skill set things that you want to polish up as a rookie?

Obviously, it probably feels like a mountain of things to do. Did you focus on one or two things going into training camp and this rookie season?

KEON JOHNSON: Yes. One of those things was just me making my defensive presence noticeable. I feel like, if I do that, that's what's going to help me get on the court and stay on the court and also gain trust in my teammates knowing night in and night out consistently that I'll be playing my hardest on the defensive end.

Q. I know you're a big fisherman. What are you going to buy first, a boat or a car?

KEON JOHNSON: I have to get a car first.

Q. Speaking of fishing, have you gone fishing with Paul yet?

KEON JOHNSON: No, we haven't. We almost set up a trip with the whole team, but didn't follow through.

Q. Maybe soon?



KEON JOHNSON: Hopefully.

Q. Speaking of Paul, I wanted to ask what your first impressions of him are? Any conversations you've had with him that have been helpful to you?

KEON JOHNSON: He's taken me under his wing to pick his brain as much as I can. He's a great guy to look up to, just all the accolades he's had on and off the court. Just everything that he's been through throughout his career, it's a lot for me to learn from.

I feel that being in the locker room that I'm in now, it's a lot of great guys for me to learn from, and I'm just taking advantage of it.

Q. Really, who's a better fisherman of you?

KEON JOHNSON: Me (laughter).

FastScripts by ASAP Sports