

LA Clippers Media Conference

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Ivica Zubac Luke Kennard

Press Conference

Q. For both of you, what did it mean -- what did Patrick Beverley mean for this team and for you guys, and what's that departure going to feel like?

IVICA ZUBAC: Pat meant a lot to this team. When I got here, he was here, and he kind of -- he was a leader of the team. He was a voice in the locker room. He was on everyone every night. He was making sure everyone does their part every single day, getting their work in.

Obviously it's a tough loss, but we've got other guys who are going to pick it up. We've got other great leaders, and it's going to be tough, but we'll try to replicate what he did.

Q. Zu, last time that we see you unfortunately you were dealing with a sprained MCL. Just wanted to know when did you get to the point that you were going to be able to recover from that and play and work out normally?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, a few weeks after the season I was already pretty much 100 percent, and I've been 100 percent for like six weeks now. I've been working out, playing 5-on-5 and feel healthy, feel ready to go, and can't wait for tomorrow.

Q. Luke, this time last year you were still a member of the Pistons, so I know 2020 was really crazy for you. Coming here during the draft, not playing for almost a full year, how much different and perhaps better do you feel now compared to when you had training camp last year with the team?

LUKE KENNARD: Yeah, I mean, I feel great. It definitely feels like home now. Even last year when I got here, everybody was really welcoming, and it was a pretty easy transition. But having a year under my belt now, being here, finding a home here, just getting comfortable with all my teammates, coaches and just building relationships with everybody, it's been good. I'm feeling really good



about this year. We're excited to get started, and should be a fun year.

Q. What have the conversations been like with the coaching staff and front office about both of you taking the next step? You guys are two of the younger players on the team. What's the conversation been like about how you guys take the next step?

LUKE KENNARD: Yeah, no, it's been really good conversations. Ever since the season ended, they wanted us to get to work. They know what we're capable of. I mean, Zu had a great year last year, but we expect Zu to be a force this year, and we're excited to just see each other grow, and the coaches, they want us to keep growing, too.

We're excited to continue to build off of what we did last year. Obviously it didn't end the way that we wanted, so we kept that feeling in the back of our minds through this off-season, so we're, like I said, looking forward to getting this thing rolling and doing it together.

Q. Luke, how does your role change with Kawhi expected to miss some time?

LUKE KENNARD: I think for me it's just continuing to be aggressive and be myself. These guys have confidence in me. Coaches have confidence in me just to be aggressive. Don't be passive, just continue to work on everything that I need to work on and just compete, have fun and play hard and just compete.

Q. Zu, since you were traded here, the roster has basically turned over the entire way. A lot of guys who have come through, including Ty, talked about building on the success of last year and the continuity to have so many guys back who had playoff minutes from last year's roster. As someone who's seen this thing turn over quite a bit, what's the continuity mean in terms of getting a fast start to this year?

IVICA ZUBAC: It means a lot to have most of the guys back from the last year and kind of just continue to do what we did, same coach pretty much, all the same guys, and we know what we've got to do. We know how to do it, and it's going to be a great year. This year we're going to have



-- we've had some time to take off, to get some rest, work on our game, and it's going to be fun to start it.

I feel like we know each other pretty well now, and that's going to be really, really helpful for this year.

Q. Both of you had an interesting playoff run where you went from times of not playing to significant minutes where it felt like it was a real learning experience, and you had big moments, as well, each of you. What do you think you learned about yourselves throughout a playoff run like that where you were down 0-2 so many times and inserted into starting lineups and inserted into Game 7s?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, we all know the Playoffs are all about adjustments and about the match-ups. Not every series is going to be yours. Sometimes you're going to have a smaller role, sometimes you're going to have a bigger role, but you've always got to respond. You've always got to be ready.

I feel like our team did a great job of that, all the guys. There was a few guys that were in and out of the lineups. I think we did a great job, and when you go down 0-2 you kind of see what you're made of. You see who you've got next to you going on the floor every night, and we knew who we are, what we can do, and we never gave up, and we came back twice.

Q. Last game of the season last year you attempted and made your first three. Do you think that might start to slowly creep into your game this season, and what's your pitch to Ty for why you should be able to be taking more of those?

IVICA ZUBAC: I mean, Ty sees me every day. That's my pitch; he sees me in practice every day and workouts. It's all up to Coach. It's not up to me. I'll do whatever they ask me to do and whatever helps the team. If that's shooting threes, if Luke is not doing it well enough, I'll do it.

LUKE KENNARD: Best shooter in Clippers' history.

Q. What's the next step in your evolution as players for this team?

LUKE KENNARD: Yeah, I think for me, just the consistency part. Yeah, I feel like last year was a little bit of an up-and-down year. Sometimes, like you mentioned, not playing tons to getting some bigger minutes like in the Playoffs.

But I think it just shows a lot -- it happened to a few guys last year, and everybody stayed ready. Everybody had big

moments. Everybody had big games. That just says a lot about like the character and just the will of some guys and the heart of some guys.

For me it's just a consistency of knocking down shots, just playing my game, being aggressive. I think that's just the next step, and just continuing to be a leader and talking to these guys and making sure we're on the same page, on the same track of what we want to do, what our end goal is.

Just continuing to work hard and compete.

IVICA ZUBAC: Yeah, I agree with Luke, just trying to be more consistent and trying to -- it's year six for me now, and it's time to take the next step and bring it every night, talking on defense, helping guys on the floor, bringing the energy and being aggressive, finishing every night. I think that's the next step for me, for us as a team, just being consistent every night.

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