

# LA Clippers Media Conference

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Los Angeles, California, USA

## Minnesota Timberwolves D'Angelo Russell

Postgame Press Conference

Timberwolves 109, Clippers 104

**Q. D'Angelo, can you give us a little idea of what it's like to play a game like that with so many emotional swings, so many things that get in the way and being able to overcome and outlast and come out on top there?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: Yeah, I mean, you go into a game like that and you know all the preparation, you build up all the pressure in your own head. You want to perform. It's our first TV games, it's all or nothing. You put your own pressure on yourself. I don't know, I try to treat it like I've been there before and attack that situation, like tonight, like just trusting my preparation, just putting my all into my preparation, knowing that I can fall back on my preparation.

It's almost like faith, you know? You've got your own faith, but when it comes to being a professional, you've got to trust your craft. It's going to be ups, there's going to be downs, there's going to be whatever, but if you trust it and you commit to it and lock in, it comes back. It returns the favor.

**Q. Did you know just with the way the game was going, with KAT in foul trouble and things, did you just have to step up even more aggressively offensively?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: I mean, I was coming into the game with the mentality of being aggressive. I was going to run out of bullets before I felt like I didn't play a part in it.

I think teams try to do that. They try to take KAT out. We knew that going into the game, so our preparation was all about how we're going to pull it out, how we're going to play off of him, utilized him, denying him and making things tough for him, and I thought our group responded well.

**Q. The pull-up three that you hit in the fourth, that hasn't always fallen for you this year. Do you just keep trusting yourself and just wait for those moments and**



**let it fly without hesitation?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: Yeah, that's a prime example. You take a pregame nap and you think about all the shots you're going to get, you think about all the defensive assignments, you think about all the shots you're going to take and make, and you dream about it, but then when you get out there it might not go that way. It's what you're going to do next.

Obviously shots don't fall every game, so how are you going to impact winning now. I try to control that effort throughout the whole season, if it was defensively, if it was coaching guys. I was still trying to impact winning even if the shot is not falling.

**Q. Defense was up and down for this team down the stretch, some good, some bad. Is there a confidence when you need to you're going to sit down and guard like you did tonight?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: I mean, you play so many games, it's hard to get up for every game and lock into that. But I always say we've got a young group, so the things that we're going through that may seem easy to do is all a part of the process. Our group has been up and down. We want to guard some nights, some nights we don't, but when we do, we impact the game. Offense is just two times easier than it is if we're not guarding. It's just a commitment and knowing that teams have trouble scoring on us if we come ready to play.

**Q. Is tonight a prime example of why it's so valuable to have three guys that can take a game over offensively?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: Yeah, yeah, huge. I was just talking to KAT, I was saying, all season you've got to realize, all season you've been dominating these teams, so if a team gets one chance to beat us, they're going to say what can we take away, and they did a good job of doing that. Throughout the season, we had just a few laps on how we're going to play with the identity of KAT. Our preparation going into this game was huge, a lot of film, a lot of focus on the details, on what we were going to do, what continuity we were going to still have when teams try to do that. Like I said, our group responded well. Our

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whole group, everybody played a part.

**Q. In the second half they went small at times taking their centers off the floor and that's when you guys went on your run there at the end of the game. Why were you able to take advantage of the smaller unit?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: Like I said, our preparation. I feel like we had an idea what they were going to do. I don't recall playing in any of the games we played them, so they didn't see us with me, and we've seen a lot of what they were trying to do. So it was kind of an advantage on our side.

**Q. How do you balance out between taking what the defense gives you and providing what your team needs at the time? You had five dimes in the first quarter and one point. I think it was like 27 points, just maybe one time or two after that. Is it a matter of seeing what your team needs or is it a matter of seeing what the defense gives you and sometimes you have to force your way through one or the other?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: I never try to force it. I feel like I consider myself a hybrid when it comes to the game, playing guard, shooting guard, whatever you want to say. I'm a hybrid because I might be better than your point guard and I might be better than your shooting guard, so throughout that night you're going to realize what it's going to be, and a lot of teams guarded us and made us play -- we put up points all year. We scored at a high rate. But when teams made us play in the half court, how are we going to affect the game, and I feel like that's my strength. When a team slows the game down, you've got to think it and you've got to capitalize on their mistakes and let the game come.

Like I said, I don't want to force it because I can pass out of a bad shooting night and I can shoot myself out of a big turnover game, so it's just like taking what they give me, recognizing it, the sooner the better.

**Q. Especially early in the season we talked a lot about you, Ant and KAT developing chemistry together. Tonight you and Ant kind of had to take it to the finish line here. How has your chemistry just with him grown over the course of the season?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: Oh, it's amazing. He's coachable. He's a freak when it comes to the game. What he brings to the game I think has been on display just a little bit this season. It's just inconsistency as a young player, that's what you do, but I can't imagine what he's going to look like when he has that consistency under his belt, he knows how to prepare and he knows how to be consistent within

his preparation. Our chemistry has grown. If it's me, him and Pat, if it's Pat, KAT and Ant, if it's any three of our guys, Coach does an amazing job of putting a system around us to where we can just play. You don't have to really think, you just play.

We're just utilizing what we have. I think we have got a lot of pieces that complement each other, and like I said, Coach and his staff do a great job of putting us into those places.

**Q. Did you see that woman run on to the court and did you know that she was gluing herself to the court?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: No.

**Q. Did anybody explain that to you or did you know?**

D'ANGELO RUSSELL: I didn't ask.

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