

LA Clippers Media Conference

Wednesday, April 20, 2022
Los Angeles, California, USA

Lawrence Frank

Press Conference

LAWRENCE FRANK: First of all, I'd just like to thank all of you for the coverage, staying with us throughout the year. I imagine as a journalist it's challenging; the protocols have been lifted to a certain extent but also some of your access is still not what it was pre-pandemic, so we appreciate all the coverage throughout.

You know, I think we all feel in terms of -- not you guys, but us as Clippers, we feel some pain. There's some misery and a little disappointment because the group dealt with so much adversity this season and battled so hard, not just through injuries but through all different challenges that we faced.

So much just for the benefit, our players, Ty, the coaching staff, Steve, our fans, just really wanted to see the group in the Playoffs. So it's hard. We watch all these playoff games because there's a lot of learning to be done, but you do watch it with a degree of emptiness and envy. But I also think fuel for a great off-season to build great momentum into a great season next year.

With that being said, we're not going to allow two games where we came up short to overshadow that it was a special regular season. The fact that you think about Kawhi missing 84 games, Preston missing 84 games, Paul missing 52 games, Marcus missing 28 games, Norm missing 23, Nico missing 22, let alone the other games that were missed, it's pretty damned remarkable that Ty and his staff and our players -- I think you see the talent and the depth, to be able to have our 11th consecutive winning season under these circumstances, it does make it a special regular season.

I think our veterans did a terrific job of leading the way, and different guys had to take on different roles. Obviously as we started training camp, with knowing that Kawhi was going to miss significant if not all of the season, that Paul took on a bigger role, but then Paul got hurt, so that leadership, it shifts and it's shared.

You see guys like Reggie Jackson, Marcus Morris and



Nico Batum come and do their part, and then we add other veterans post-trade deadline with Norm and RoCo. And then we saw the development of call it our younger players.

When we look at younger, you're basically looking at pre-prime, guys 25 years or younger. So when you see Terance and Luke and Amir, Isaiah and Zu and Brandon, some of those guys took dramatic, dramatic gains.

I think it's really, really going to help us going forward that one of the silver linings of the season despite falling short of our goal, winning a championship, despite falling short of being in the Playoffs, that there was significant progress made that when we layer on top of this group, Kawhi and PG, we feel we're a legitimate championship contender when fully healthy.

There are silver linings through all adversity, and so we're super excited going into the off-season.

Q. (Inaudible).

LAWRENCE FRANK: Out of respect for privacy, but yeah, Paul will be fine.

Q. Sam Presti said he could see you guys winning titles and thinks your roster is the strongest. What do you make of it when you hear a peer like that talking about the kind of success you could have next year?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, I pray Sam is right. I have a lot of respect for Sam, but we also know it's all about our actions. Everyone here follows the game and understands how fragile the difference between winning and losing is. I mean, you literally can go through a bunch of teams that an injury here, injury there, how it changes everything.

But people forget it quickly. When you're going through the path, many times the champion -- everyone has to have a certain level of high-level talent, complementary talent, excellent coaching. But there is an element of good fortune and circumstances and match-ups that the winners and the guys who have won consistently, they acknowledge.

We haven't put ourselves yet -- we're not in that -- we have

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

to have great urgency to try to maximize the opportunities we have because life changes quick. I mean, let's look at really the big picture of life. Think about what life was like pre-pandemic and then like all of a sudden like that. You think of what's going on in Ukraine. Now let's boil it down to something like a sport, basketball, where one step here, one step there can be an injury or not.

Yet, like with that being said, that's life. We're going to have to earn our way. We're going to have to work extremely hard. We're going to have to look at areas of improvement, and when you're doing that it always starts with self-reflection. You have to look inward first. I have to look at all the different ways that I need to be better and how I can get better, and then everyone has to do that across the organization.

Everyone has a lot invested in what we're doing, and we want to make sure that we maximize our opportunities and be able to do something that's never been done in the history of this organization.

Q. Because you've mentioned that, this year was talked about like that bridge year where you do take that step forward with the stakes a little bit lower and the development of the younger guys and maybe a title pursuit jumps up again next season and you really have a step forward on that. What do you feel like you guys did this year that feels like that step forward this year?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, and I think it actually from a process standpoint went better than expected because not only -- because there was a little bit of, okay, you're without one of the elite players of the game, and then all of a sudden we weren't expecting Paul to have a really unfortunate injury where a 7'2" dude lands on his elbow at the exact spot to do the damage that it did, and yet we saw leadership and play of our veteran guys that we had talked about, and many times, and Ty talked about this throughout the season, we were asking guys to play roles that they hadn't played in a while or may have never played, and yet our guys, they never quit. They kept fighting. They weren't letting anything -- there was nothing that was going to get between that and our goal of winning, and still, our guys and we believed as an organization that if stars were aligned with PG coming back and Norm coming back that we had enough to make a very, very deep playoff run.

I thought the development of the young guys, obviously, huge silver lining, and all those reps and those experience, being in situations, high-pressure situations, decision-making decisions is going to help the group collectively.

You know, you can't underestimate without putting too much of an emphasis on it having a healthy Kawhi and healthy PG to this group, it allows guys to get back in their normal roles. The usage rate goes down a little bit. The efficiency goes up a little bit. Because of the talent on the roster, the depth and the fact that Ty is a magician as a coach, it gives us great optimism.

Q. Is it hard when you do your evaluations obviously as a team -- around Kawhi and PG, looking at bigger improvements that you might make, how much do you take that into account versus what you've seen in the past year without them?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, look, it's always easier to be able to evaluate when you see it, right, but you can only go with what you have. So I think you almost have to be granular with each individual in terms of what the objectives are, the goals. Like we have a player development plan for every single player, and to see, okay, which boxes did they check, because we know the goal every year is we want to win a championship, and so when you fall short of that, you have to look, okay, why did it happen.

You can't take the easy way out and just say, look, Kawhi is out for the year, but also basketball, one player especially when it's an elite player like Kawhi, it is a needle mover. We recognize that.

But I just think you look for each player's development and see, okay, going into the year these are the things that we needed you to be able to do, these were the challenges, how did you do, how did you track, where were the successes, where were the areas of improvement, because then that helps you with the off-season.

Because building a team -- look, the hardest thing to do is to get superstars. We're fortunate; we have two of them.

Then it's, okay, how are you going to build around your stars. From a roster standpoint we wanted to surround Kawhi and PG with size, length, shooting, defensive versatility and IQ.

Now, with that being said, when you take Kawhi and PG out, you're really limited by your play starters. Having them come back, you now get your two play starters, regular season, postseason, those guys are going to start 60 percent of our possessions. Reggie has some on-ball juice. He gives you that. And then Terance, as we saw after the trade, starting in that Dallas kind of back-to-back series, he had a huge bump up. There's a direct correlation. The ball was in his hands, so he has some

on-ball juice that we can continue to develop. We got some -- Isaiah from his standpoint does some different things. Norm is another on-ball engine.

So you're constantly evaluating just the balance of play starters, play finishers, connectors, and then look, to win a championship, we do need our best players to be healthy. That doesn't mean we can't win a lot of games, but to win a championship, which is the goal, we're going to need an element of good health from our best players.

Q. In telling us where Kawhi is at in his recovery, what are the steps this off-season -- how would you characterize what stage he's at in his recovery right now and what the off-season looks like?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, look, Kawhi and I know, our players have commented throughout the year, he's a maniacal worker. He puts a ton of time, effort, focus into his daily rehab, so he continues to make progress. We're encouraged by the progress he's making, and kind of the stages of the rehab, I kind of leave that up to the medical professionals.

But in terms of his total immersion in terms of trying to get healthy and get to 100 percent, he puts, like I said, a great deal of time, effort and focus, and it takes a great deal of discipline.

The other thing is that the emotional toll of not playing on players, having been around other players who have missed a year -- like it's a lot. The fact that he's been able to stay so ultra locked in to his rehab just speaks so much to the discipline you see when he's on the court, you see that carry over in his rehab, and that's a challenge. That's not easy.

Q. (On Kawhi's predicted return date.)

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I'm not going to get into timetables, and what is it, middle of April? He's going to continue to do everything that he has been doing, and we're encouraged by the progress he's making.

Q. You were very complimentary of Norm and RoCo when they got here. In the limited time they were here, did you see maybe what you expected? Was it more than what you expected? RoCo was also very vocal about wanting to come back. How do you view him being here maybe long-term?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, sure, so I think in Norm's case, unfortunately you think about his first three games, right out of the gate, outstanding. You saw like on-ball juice, three-level scorer, ability to get to the free-throw line,

ability to guard the ball. He actually made some more drive-and-kick plays right before he got injured. He got some good off-ball defensive plays, and unfortunately for him, whap, he loses all the time with the foot injury.

But he's -- you have an in-his-prime scorer, on-ball defender who gives us another on-ball engine, and we're super excited.

And then RoCo was very, very good for us. I'm excited to hear that he likes it here. We look forward to -- we'd like to be able to keep him here. But I think his defensive activity -- RoCo's great value is off the ball, the steals, the blocks, the deflections, the fact that he likes it, and yet on the ball he's not afraid of a challenge. You can put him on anyone. He gives you great versatility because he can be on the floor with different players and guard different positions, and then his shooting was a big -- he shot the ball extremely well for us.

I think he reenergized -- sometimes you change the scenery a little bit. I think the relationship him and Ty developed was really, really good. The relationship that RoCo developed with our teammates, with both those guys we were super excited at the time of the trade and we're still super excited about them.

Q. The center position is kind of ever-evolving in the NBA, you see Ty likes sort of small ball lineups, has obviously options like Zu. How do you view Zu in his development of that position moving forward with what you want to do with Kawhi and PG?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, in many areas, Zu reached career highs. It's something when I think about it is -- for us to have the eighth best defense in the league minus the two best two-way players arguably in the league, one for the whole year, one for the better part of it, you have to give a lot of credit to Zu and Isaiah. It was 48 minutes of rim protection. We don't play crazy small throughout the regular season. Ty will do it during different spurts.

Like you've got to give those guys a lot of credit. Zu again, he's 25. Like he's not even in his prime. So I still think there's a bump up for him. I think he can even become a better rebounder. He can be harder to be blocked out. I think the different times that we kind of went to him, like again, everyone has -- you can point to individual games, but like that game in Denver was to me something that should be a real motivator for him.

Look, when we're whole, he won't be the focal point, but Zu is a talented, talented player on both ends of the floor. To win a championship regardless if it's from the center position or from others, you need to have rim protection,

you have to be a competent rebounder. Zu's impact at the rim, I think he's just going to continue to get better.

We're super encouraged with Zu, and we still think he has other levels that he can definitely reach.

Q. (Indiscernible) regular season as an issue for the team and obviously with Kawhi and PG you have had some of that improve (indiscernible) rebounding wasn't necessarily an issue, but given what you saw this year, how does that from a personnel and from like maybe even more the personnel standpoint, how does that improve next season?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think you really have to analyze it. Obviously getting Kawhi and PG, we hope to retain many of our free agents, that will tell us a little bit about our rebounding in terms of what we can do, and also not only Kawhi and PG but obviously with Pat Beverley who's one of the best rebounding guards in the league, too, I think with the return of those guys, that will definitely aid in our rebounding and will make it better, and we'll have to look at different things.

Some of it may be same personnel, but we just have to be a better block-out team. I always look at, there's three different types of rebounders. The elite ones are the ones that can block out and rebound. There are other ones that just go and rebound. Some of the best rebounders in history weren't block-out guys but they just got the ball. And then there are others that they're not very good rebounders because maybe they're a little bit vertically challenged, but they're great block-out guys and someone else gets -- so I think internally we have enough to become a better rebounding team. We're not just going to solve it by going to either draft, sign or trade for like the No. 1 rebounder in the league and say, okay, we've got that problem licked. I think we can be better, and if it's strictly a personnel thing minus just getting healthy, then we'll look at that, as well.

Q. (Inaudible).

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, I'd say this. I know when we traded Bled and then Preston being hurt, we definitely were -- we were definitely short that.

Reggie did an unbelievable job. I don't think he gets enough credit probably for playing -- he played 75 games and he would have played more, and really, really did a good job.

I look at the position a little bit differently in the sense of because the game now is played a little bit differently. There are some obviously elite point guards in the league,

but a lot of teams are playing through their wings like we do. So I look at it as do we have enough play initiators between Kawhi, PG, Norm, Reggie, Terance. Like I don't know, we'll look at it. We're not averse to it, but we'll continue to evaluate and see if we have to address it.

Q. Because of the year, no Kawhi, PG missed so much time, how tough is it kind of mentally to not overreact to the season of not making the Playoffs and kind of just making moves because of that alone and trying to weigh that against the fact that you didn't have your stars?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think you have to take a deep breath. You have to really spend these next couple weeks of just really diving back in through the season, going through our preseason meetings, going through -- we basically chronicle every day of the year in terms of just going of going through kind of your thoughts during that time, your film study, eval, landscape of the league, being honest, comparing our roster to the other contending rosters, and you look at it and you say, hey, if fully healthy, where do we think we're at. Do we like where we are? Are we a championship contender? If you don't think you are, then you have to look for other ways to improve the team.

The other improvement many times comes just within. A lot of times the common thought is when say, hey, look, individual players have to get better, most people look at the younger guys, but as we've seen, not just our team but around the league, veteran guys get better, too, in all different ways, and it could be something on the court, it could be leadership skills, could be the game slows down even more, just their intelligence.

But yeah, I think you have to take the emotion out of it because it's still raw, and just really, really study it and have very candid conversations and be able to get all sort of different inputs. You always want to make sure you're getting very diverse thought, that you're not in an echo chamber and listening to a bunch of different parties, to really process -- look, a term we use virtually every day is strong convictions loosely held, meaning you do have to acknowledge anything that I just said now could be all wrong.

But you have to -- but that's how you grow. I think there's a hunger. I see that in all fashions of our organization, that all the different departments. I see hungry people that, as much as it's painful not to be playing, extremely driven to do something so special that's never been done for this organization.

Look, we've got an unbelievable chairman in Steve. He gives us all the resources. He cares so much. He cares

about the players, their families, staff, and he also wants to make a difference in the community. And our fans. Look, we have a very, very loyal fan base. It's a driving factor.

But to answer your question, I think you have to take a step back and just be honest and evaluate things and know that things are constantly evolving and changing, that a team that may not be a contender today, next year can be, and you have to be a step ahead, and other teams that are a contender, one transaction can change it. That's how delicate sometimes things are.

Q. Is there something to be learned about the team in general or a player specifically that kind of surprised you this season, that you didn't know going into the season, whether it's their play or whether it's something they did to improve or anything like that?

LAWRENCE FRANK: There's probably a bunch. I'll start, I think Amir deserves a lot of credit. You think about his journey, undrafted, going through the G-League two years, had a challenging Summer League. Comes in on a two-way, and like -- Amir has shown he's a rotation player in the NBA. For him to step in, regardless of the role of starter, off the bench, you're really happy.

I literally could pick out all the different happy moments I have for each of our guys, but we're really just proud of Amir because, like I said, it wasn't an easy path. There were things that we thought would happen didn't happen. Like he stayed the course. You love to see that.

Really you think about Luke, leading three-point shooter in the league. Ty did an unbelievable job of unlocking different parts of Luke's game. You saw Luke in more of an off-ball role, and before with Luke, heck, there were a couple years ago when he was in Detroit they were thinking about making him like a backup point guard, and he does have really good decision-making abilities, so to see the progress he's made I thought was really, really good.

Think about Isaiah's journey. Isaiah came in here in a training camp competition against Harry Giles. Isaiah had an unbelievable year and just has given us another facilitator, someone we could play through. He was really good in the pocket, decisions he made. Every time he shot a little floater, like I just looked the other way, like I thought it was going in. His rim protection numbers were very good, the chemistry he had with that second unit.

And there's a -- especially when it comes from -- we actually recruited Isaiah. He was on a non-guarantee, but there were other teams that had interest in Isaiah and we put a lot of effort into it.

Now, did we think he was going to be able to deliver at this high a level? No. But like those are cool stories, especially in a league where many times it's the stars get a lot of the attention, the financial rewards are like off the charts, and yet when you see guys like that, it's really good.

Each of our guys, Brandon Boston, 51st pick in the draft, and to be able to some of the bright lights, big moments he had, the game he had against Boston stands out. But like the G-League game he had -- at that time it may have been known as staples prior to the artist formerly known as Crypto, but pouring in, what did he have, 49, 47? But like to see how he's ascending and he's 20 years old.

And then even you look at guys that had to deal with injuries. We get the benefit of seeing what guys are like, so like to see Kawhi's rehab every day is pretty incredible, but then also to see young guys like Jason Preston and Jay Scrubb deal with injuries when their career hasn't even really started and being able to, okay, how do I attack my rehab because everyone wants to be able to -- they want to make a career out of this.

There's a lot of great stories within each team. Obviously I'm biased and privy to what goes on with our team. And then just to see -- I know it's not a player, but to see the work that Ty did, how he deals with adversity. Ty brings, as you guys see, he's just a real guy. Like you see a straight shooter, but he brings a joy and yet a professionalism to the environment every day.

As he is my partner, it brings me great pride to see how special he is, but also our players. I know how much they appreciate Ty gets right to it, he doesn't waste words, and yet he knows, he understands, he has such high emotional intelligence that he understands kind of what the room needs, and when maybe someone would think oh, you have to do this, he actually reads it differently and he will go the opposite way, and more times than not he's been right.

Yeah, I mean, I guess it's a long-winded answer for you, but we have a lot, a lot of good guys, and they're easy to root for, and that's why, like I said in my opening remarks, why it's painful not to watch them play.

Yet there are great reminders and great lessons. Play-in games, you take them as they're playoff games because they're elimination games that your margin for error is less and that everything, literally everything matters.

We learned some lessons just like in the Phoenix series last year we learned that everything matters, and going into

it, these could be teaching points and kind of launching pad opportunities going into next season.

Q. When you look at Kawhi and PG, obviously two premier players in the NBA, but they haven't been able to stay healthy in their three years here. Is there any level of concern entering year four, is there any concern or maybe a more comprehensive plan to make sure they stay healthy? How do you view their injury history and keeping them healthy?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yes, I think that we've gotten the injuries out of the way. I'm looking forward to good health. Like I think -- not to make light of it, but you look at everything in terms of how -- but like the flukiness, Paul is literally against Portland diving on the floor for a loose ball, Nurkic falls -- like the odds of that, that's not anything preventative you could do, no. Kawhi as he's going down in transition and he gets pushed and just the -- maybe if he gets pushed a little bit different way or maybe he never tears his ACL. It's nuts.

I remember Milwaukee playing Atlanta, Giannis had that horrible, horrible fall and yet, like fine. Sometimes it's like that.

For me, you examine everything, but I really do have good faith that we're going to get great health for not just those guys but for our team. We all acknowledge that injuries are part of it, but I do think that we're going to run to great fortune next year.

Q. Looking at your staff, your guys in the front office, all of you have stayed together for like five years. Ty had to reload his coaching staff a little bit but you saw how those guys supported in a pandemic years when guys weren't available some weeks. How do you anticipate everybody staying together in kind of this off-season as far as the coaching staff, front office, everybody?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, first of all, I love our staff. I'm like -- I'm talking about not just the direct front office executives and the assistant coaches and Petey, but everyone here for the Clippers is a shareholder. You see that with their actions. I love our group.

You always hope -- look, you hope for growth from within, so you always like to -- first when there's opportunities for people to grow, ideally you'd like it to be within, but if there's a better opportunity externally, you're happy for the person. There's always a loss, but generally like that's why if you look at the people, it's like, we allow people to -- we're not holding them. We want people who generally want to be all in and be invested here, and yet support

them if there's a better opportunity elsewhere.

If it was just selfishly, yeah, you'd love for everyone to stay here because we have really good folks, hopefully they feel very appreciated and valued. But to answer your question, will everyone be here? Yeah, like if it's based on the decisions like yeah, we want everyone to be here. If there's better opportunities, if there's a head coaching job out there for one of our assistants, if for someone in the front office piece, if there's an elevated position elsewhere that they can't get here, we're 100 percent supportive.

But that's it, and that's, hey, look, it's through the NBA journey, you work for different organizations, but the one thing that's been really special that we've found, and I can speak like specifically with you look at Michael, Mark, Trent, they've all had opportunities to go elsewhere, and they all have decided to stay here.

That doesn't mean that will always stay the same, and I don't want to speak for them, but there is a huge part of being able to do something that's never been done before. Like I said, everyone, regardless of title, is a stakeholder in what we're doing, and every one that you do, it does bring value.

If you think about it, even in a loss you can look in the mirror and say how did I contribute to that loss, and I guarantee you everyone who works for the organization can find, like yeah, if I would have maybe done this -- it's like that movie "Sliding Doors." Same thing in wins.

But I think we have a great group. I hope everyone stays, but if they leave for better opportunities, then you wish them nothing but great fortune.

Q. Even though Kawhi couldn't suit up this year, what are some examples of his leadership behind the scenes?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, well, I think he has such a high IQ. Him sharing wisdom with teammates, with coaches, I think even if you just observe during the games, you'll see him, he'll be in coaches' meetings and circles and he'll share what he sees. He'll share it with the players. What he says to them, what he texts to them, things that he shares with me, he's got a great, great, great brain and great, great, great mind for the game.

You just control what you can control. He can't be out there physically. Plus I think our guys see when they come in and he's here early and then he's still here late, and then they see like what he does, his process of all the time -- that matters.

Look, the best players in my experiences always unite and inspire by what they do, not by what they say. It's your actions. When people talk about culture, like culture in professional sports many times is set by your best players and by your head coach and by the leader in your front office, but the head coach and a guy like me can say this is what we're about, but if your best players aren't about that, you're not really about that.

I think our guys, it's with their actions. It's unfortunate in Kawhi's case for the whole year and for Paul's case a large part of it that they weren't able to show the fans just everything that they put into it. But I think that will also be a great motivator for them and for our group to do something that hasn't been done before.

Q. You mentioned chronicling of a season day by day. Who does that and what does it look like?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, it's as simple as every day we take notes on the day. I'm not smart -- like I'm not smart enough to call it a journal, but I'm going to give Microsoft a plug, my favorite program in the world is OneNote. OneNote, you can buy it around the world.

But to me it's a great organizer, so whether it's practice day, a game day, I'm on the road scouting, a conversation like -- you take notes throughout the day.

But it also helps because at least for me, it's once you put something on paper, on screen, one is as you know a whole lot better than I do, it takes a lot of time and effort to get your words right. I've got a great appreciation for all the work you do because it's so incredibly hard. It's so much easier just to speak and riff. But when it put it down, there also is a level -- that's how you were feeling at the time, but there's also a level of accountability. So when you go into -- like with our preseason meetings and we set forth our goals, we're putting those down on paper, like this is what we're trying to achieve.

They're granular. They're individual player goals. There's team goals. There's developmental goals. There's Agua Caliente goals, and it's not like okay, we want to win 70 games. Like I said, it's very process driven.

But it allows you to reflect on okay, how did I do, were the goals realistic, unrealistic, where did we fall short. But at least for us just a process of constantly having these reviews, because if you're a player or a coach, you're getting reviewed 82 times a year minimum. Like there's a score. You win or you lose. But there's a lot that goes into the score, there's a lot that goes into even getting the guys there.

You just want to have a healthy respect for the process. To me it's a great growth opportunity, too.

Look, you hate to make mistakes. I've made a ton of them. You just don't want to make the same pattern of mistakes, and I think by putting it down and scoring it, you have a timestamped collection of what you were thinking at the time because there are times that something turns out to be a mistake but you can go back to, well, why did we do it, because obviously decision you make your intent is to try to be right, but you're not always going to be right. Okay, was the process right, did you actually just read the situation incorrectly, or process was right, outcome was wrong, or sometimes process may have been poor but you got lucky, outcome was right, or process was right, outcome was right, and that's what you want to shoot for.

Q. What are your thoughts about how you could possibly use your second-round pick?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, now we know it's 43, so it's hard to say exactly who obviously will be there, but we're excited about a group of guys that we think will be in that range, and we're also looking forward to studying, getting over these next two months taking a deeper dive on them. We're also flexible and open to it.

We know that that pick traditionally in that area, one, we've had good fortune in that area of picking. We've had good fortune in terms of picking late in the second now that we think we can get a very good player.

But we're also flexible in that we'll listen to everything that goes around in the league, and I think we'll just learn a whole lot more over the next couple months.

Q. Do you have an idea as far as guys who are on the roster who you expect to participate in Summer League in Vegas?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, we're hopeful. Again, we're hopeful that Preston will be ready. Brandon, we look forward to. We'll see like with Jay Scrubb, with his health. It'll be close. Then I think some of our guys from Agua Caliente, we're looking forward to having those guys participate.

And then between Trent Redden and John Loyer and Matt Morales they run the whole Summer League process and they put the roster together, and then over the course of kind of how things transpire during the summer, we may say, you know what, we actually don't want you to play Summer League, we actually want you to focus more on this. So we still have a little bit more time just based on -- we'll see how these next call it six weeks transpire just with

individual training.

Q. Does some of that individual training, will there be conversations with some of the veteran guys, some of the guys like Luke or Terance, give them some things to kind of focus on for the summer?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, so the way we do it is -- we get the whole group together the day after the season. We kind of recap the season, projected what the goals are for next season, and then we say, look, we're not going to have any individual meetings, usually for -- there's a couple exceptions, but basically for seven to ten days. The reason being is we put together a really detailed development plan, not just on the court, in the performance room, in the medical space, nutrition, mental health, everything. It's a holistic plan, which takes a lot of time and effort by the staff.

Then we'll then sit down. We'll sit down, there will be members from all different of the different departments to be able to explain their piece of the plan and also get feedback from the players, and then I'll sit down and have a one-on-one with the player, Ty will have a one-on-one with the player.

But sometimes -- and again, there's no right or wrong, you've got to do what's right for you. In the past when you do the exit interviews right after the season there's a little bit of what Justin said, there's a little bit of a recency bias to it, but also sometimes you're just trying to get them over with and like everyone is out, and it gets lost a little bit.

We just want to make sure that we're getting this right because every off-season it's critical because it's like for the players it's their chance to be really selfish on their game. But you also want to make sure the stuff you're working on, it's what Ty needs from you, so it transfers to the team's game. So it's a really delicate balance. And then the other areas of growth.

So some of the meetings we'll start having this week, but most of them will start in the following weeks.

Q. (Indiscernible) make mistakes and learn. What do you project that to look like for Jason next year because obviously you guys are in a full-on title pursuit. I don't know if that necessarily means there's less opportunities for young guys, but you seem to be stepping into a much different situation. What do you anticipate his next year looking like?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think it's always you've got to have a very open mind. Sometimes, and I think the prevailing roster construction has changed I think over the

years. There was an old-school way of looking at it as oh, young player, you've just got to wait your turn. Well, that's not necessarily true. We've seen that. It's like, when guys got opportunities they did well. The team that beat us in New Orleans, they played three rookies that had meaningful impact.

I think it's just being totally open, and his game and his rate of development and improvement will show us, and I think the great thing about Ty, his loyalty is to winning that game, meaning whoever gets us the best chance to win a certain game plays. It's not based on salary, it's not based on years in the league, it's not based on anything other than can you help us win the game, which keeps everyone engaged in the process.

So we'll just kind of see with Jason. Obviously we're very high on him. He's a sponge. He asks a ton of questions. He watches ball nonstop. He loves it. We were excited to kind of see the process and also understand that you miss a year -- so what happens is especially coming off a year of no injury, when you're going to say Summer League, all those other guys, they've been going the whole year. Many of them are fresh off the college season ended but then they're working out. When you go and you haven't played -- we know there's going to be rust involved, so we'll just say, hey, let's just keep on taking steps every day to get better.

Q. The NBA's competition committee this off-season, is there anything in particular you'd like to see them take a look at?

LAWRENCE FRANK: I think with the take foul it just comes down to what the penalty is, if they kind of go with what they're doing in Europe. I guess for the -- everyone likes to see the fast break transition dunks and some of that's obviously taken away, so they'll probably, I would imagine, increase the penalty.

Personally in the instant replay, I know that's the big bone of contention in terms of like the length. I like the fact of just trying to get it right when you do have those opportunities to get it right.

This probably won't go through, but I think if you challenge and you win, you should be able to get another challenge, but the great thing about Adam and the league is their willingness and openness to all ideas and not just, hey, we just do what we do because we've always done it, and we understand it's an extremely competitive market for our fans, for our viewers, that we have to be open to discussing a lot of different things.

I mean, just as a fan of the league, one, it's great to see

that willingness and openness to different ideas, but also you see the growth even as painful as it is to watch these playoff games, you look at the amount of young players in this league and like the special -- like the league is in great, great shape, and I believe that. Not that there's room, I think for all of us to understand, we owe the game, the game doesn't owe us.

There are generations of players, coaches, executives, league execs that have done so much to pave the opportunities for all of us to benefit that we all have to remember, we owe the game and the game doesn't owe us.

But the amount of young players 25 and younger that are like big-time players, like the league is in really, really good shape going forward and we just have to all honor the league.

Q. You mentioned the fans, but there was another team across town that had a number of injuries. A lot of their fans were ready for it to be done, but your fans it seems like -- what does it mean to you people still want -- whatever happened in the first round of the Playoffs, it seems like people really appreciated this team despite the ups and downs and injuries and all that.

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think our guys, and I know Steve and us, we feel a deep connection to our fans because, I mean, being a Clipper fan, especially Lakers with all the success they've had, it's like, there's a special bond amongst all of us, and you feel there's a kinship. Especially when there's two professional basketball teams in the same city that if you're a Clipper fan, you're a Clipper fan.

I think for it, and along this journey, you just think the 180 the franchise has made in so many different regards once Steve purchased the team, you remember those magical moments and you remember the fans hanging in there. Through this long journey, you really want to reward them with something like really, really, really special. Especially being in a major city and in my opinion the best NBA city in the league, to be able to do something with Clipper fans and what we've been through, I just -- that's why I think all the experiences that our group, our core has had helps.

Like we've had some achievements, we've had some disappointments, we've had some adversity. All that is going to help us going forward into next year and to do something special for our fans.

Q. You mentioned when you look at the schedule, obviously we saw the kind of schedule y'all had this

past year, longest road trip, the way (indiscernible) played out, the building of the arena but that's going to take a couple seasons. Knowing that, how have the conversations been about pitching the NBA on a more manageable schedule somehow?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think the thing is the NBA tries to do the best possible job they can do within the restraints that they're given. You know, there's multiple tenants in Crypto.

To me I don't spend a great deal of time on it because we can't control -- all we can control is the dates we get. We can fight for other dates that we don't get. You can exert all that, but ultimately I'm not going to start the season with an excuse. Like that's our path. That's our journey. Guess what; people have had it a whole lot harder and they've found a way.

Also you build your roster so you do have depth. So if you feel like it's a total overload on certain people's bodies, okay, well, you can decide to rest them if that's the case. But things that we can't control, like the new arena is going to be off the charts, it's going to be amazing, it's going to be an incredible, incredible building and experience, but like we're not in it for a couple years, and yet there's no reason why we're not going to do something really, really special in those years prior.

Q. When you look at the guys going into this off-season (indiscernible) need more time to get ready for the following season? Do you anticipate that that's not a problem right now, like everybody will be fully healthy right now going into this off-season?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, and I think I'll wait -- as you go through -- we do a series of physicals and imaging, stuff like that. I'm really encouraged like with Marcus in terms of how strong he finished the season and where he was at and what he was able to do. Off-season training, some guys train in LA, some guys train in their home, and so typically what we do is the guys -- whether you're a veteran or younger player, and most all young players are here anyway, but just call it veteran players that don't live in LA full-time, our staff will go and visit them, and even like Ivica, who's going to be in Croatia, we'll go over there. So you're constantly monitoring the different benchmarks that we talked about, that they're meeting them and there's no surprises.

So yeah, like right now based on where we're at medically, if nothing changes, yeah, I'm super encouraged by the group being able to be really healthy for a great training camp. But there's a lot of time between now and then.

Q. Reggie talked about the changing mindset you guys have to have year over year, like this year being shorthanded consistently to being one of the favorites again next year. You guys have obviously been through this before, but from what you saw from Kawhi and PG setting the culture from the top down, what do they have to do next year, obviously being healthy, to get you guys to a championship level?

LAWRENCE FRANK: The reality is we haven't achieved anything. We're never the favorite, so to speak, because we haven't done any -- we haven't won a championship. We haven't been to the NBA Finals. It's your everyday work habits. It takes a lot. It takes a lot. From everyone. Like the amount of work, commitment, sacrifices, humility, hunger, thirst, willing to do things that make you uncomfortable. Like it takes so much.

Then with that, you also need an element of some circumstances going your way.

But I think it's our everyday habits of how we attack our job and what we do, and then you just stack them all up.

What people on the outside say about you, good or bad, like you can't control that, so underdog, favorite, one of like -- everyone is going to have an opinion. Like to me that doesn't steer you. What would steer you is your internal motivation to get the most out of individually what you bring and then as a team how it all fits together, but it's what you do on the floor, in the film room, in the weight room, in the medical space, nutrition. All those things add up. They all matter. Sleep, film study. It all matters. Priorities, what -- yeah. There's the outside noise, so to speak, but like the outside noise, whether it's good or bad, it moves on.

You even see, look, I love the game, so playoff game, a team wins, all of a sudden the team that wins, man, they're going to sweep. And then they lose. Oh, man, like -- look, there's a lot of advantages about all the access we all have to media, all the different technology. But there's a lot of first takes.

But then guess what, then like five minutes later there's a new take. To me you can't live minute by minute by what other people are saying. You have to like internally be able to monitor and be honest with each other. That's part of -- like the best teams, and this isn't just in sport, but they're really player led. Like you need a great coach, trust me. I have the highest level of respect for the coaching profession. But like what's going on in that locker room and guys holding each other accountable or women holding each other accountable like in the WNBA, but you've got to be able to tell the truth, take the truth and live the truth. Those are critical to doing something special.

Q. What you talk about the amount of injuries, year-long layoff like Kawhi for example, a lot of guys don't immediately play well off like an ACL or something like that. I'm sure he's hard on himself to play well and work hard, but how do you manage your own expectations and his expectations next year when he is able to come back?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think one is you have data and science to be able to tell you, and then also to realize that literally everyone is different when they come back. They'll ask an orthopedic surgeon for a certain surgery, okay, it will take this guy to come back this long, but he really won't be 100 percent until whenever.

Okay, well, some are based on data and a lot of it is -- some are anecdotal, but my point is each player is different, so I think you kind of keep an open mind.

The trap sometimes I think is if the expectation is whether it's Kawhi or anyone else, he's going to -- like what happens if he doesn't, what happens if he does.

To me it's just all a part of the journey, and I think over time there's been enough players with ACLs, I've coached guys with ACLs. Like the great thing about it, they can come back and be 100 percent and in some cases be better than ever because what they're able to do also, think about it, it's 84 less treads on the tire that are worn down. You're able to strengthen other muscles in your body. You're typically for an NBA player, when you go through a grueling 82-game season, you typically take time off and then use the remaining part of the off-season.

Well, not only are you rehabbing an injury, you're also able to address other things. There's silver linings to it. Obviously you don't want anyone injured, whether it's Kawhi or anyone else, but if there is, you try to make the most of it.

So I guess expectations is I just trust the process of seeing him work every day and how hard he works, that regardless of if he's like this right off the bat or it takes a little bit of time, I have great faith that he'll be back and better than ever.

Q. You mentioned the personalized plan for players in the off-season and specifically mentioned mental health as one of the things. When did you start seeing the league take it as seriously as they have now?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, I think it's always been a real thing, and in terms of mental health, I think what's fascinating for me and just a long journey is how -- call it --

this is typecasting so I'm careful, like Generation Z, like the openness and willingness to be vulnerable. When I was growing up, not to paint the picture that I'm older, but there was a little -- there was stigmas associated. Like everyone has issues; we all do. They're different in what they are, but you wanted to keep it in a little bit of a box to yourself.

What I appreciate and value so much about this group of people that -- the 20-somethings and even early 30s, people I'm around, is their willingness to be vulnerable and be open because what it does it allows everyone to acknowledge, hey, look, we all have issues we need to work through, and it's fine, and especially our players that a lot of people look to, and for some they're role models, but for others it takes strength to be vulnerable, and I have a great deal of respect for it because it wasn't necessarily that way for me like growing up.

To see our players do it and take the lead -- and mental health sometimes, it's such a broad term, but there's a lot of things because mental performance training is also part of your mental health, too, but think about what a young person or any person has to deal with, we're all going through a global pandemic, so anxiety, depression, those are sky high. You go from most people being in isolation to now I'm integrating back but I'm dealing with the pandemic. So let alone the pressures of being one of 470 players maybe including two-ways that there's a lot.

What I really love and respect about most of the people that I see on a daily basis is just their willingness to want help and be able to then make sure that the person next to them knows, no, this is a good thing.

I think the league probably has always valued it, but I think with more and more of kind of the things we learn has even done a better job of promoting it, but I just think our players have been terrific in that showing that it's healthy and it's a sign of strength to raise your hand and say, hey, look, I need to get some help.

Appreciate you guys, and I guess next time we'll see you is draft workouts. Until then.

Combine is the 16th through the 20th. Appreciate all you guys.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports