

# LA Clippers Media Conference

Sunday, April 16, 2023

Los Angeles, California, USA

## Ty Lue

### Postgame Press Conference

Los Angeles Clippers 115, Phoenix Suns 110

#### Q. What did you see out of Russell tonight?

TY LUE: I told him during the game, I'm not sure if was second or third quarter, maybe late second, that you're scoring, not that important. Like don't get frustrated with missing shots. Take good shots. Take the right shots but you bring us way more than just scoring the basketball. So don't let that affect your game. And you know, defensively, he was great on KD. I thought his physicality was good. He got a few offensive rebounds at the ends of the game that kept the ball alive and got some more possessions and the big stop on Book at the end.

So don't get discouraged about making shots or missing shots because you bring way more to this team than just making shots and I thought he was phenomenal tonight.

#### Q. That 15-0 run in the third quarter, seem like a backbreaker? You went from up six to down seven to something like that. How did you guys recover from that?

TY LUE: Was it 15 or 13?

#### Q. I think it was 15.

TY LUE: But six or seven is not -- okay.

#### Q. The run from Phoenix, how did you guys bounce back?

TY LUE: Just, you know, a couple time-outs, the coaching staff just staying positive, and just cleaning up some of our mistakes, you know, and so you can't turn the ball over against this team. They are too good in transition.

KD and Book, it's hard to get bodies in front of them when you turn the basketball over, so we had to be strong with that. But just keeping our head and just staying composed and nobody got rattled.



We knew this was a great team over here, well-coached; Monty is a hell of a coach. So they are going to make a run at home and we understood that. That was our main focus in the time-outs. Like we built the lead, they made a run and now we have to keep our composure, and they will be ready to fight back.

I thought our whole group, everybody that played tonight was great. Our bench, the guys that didn't play, was phenomenal tonight, was that's what we've got to have. You know, and like I say, I like our fight tonight, I really did, just our energy, I loved our physicality, and we did a good job.

#### Q. When Russ went out with four minutes left, was it a guarantee he would come back in at some point? Did you think he would at some point?

TY LUE: Yeah, for sure, but Kawhi ended up starting the fourth quarter and playing those two minutes and gave us a good burst and then we brought Russell in for Kawhi.

But yeah, he definitely was going back in.

#### Q. What did you think of just the physicality? That's something you talked about all week on Durant from start to finish.

TY LUE: When you're physical, you're going to foul. We've just got to be smart, not fouling when they are in the bonus. Getting cheap fouls when they are 35 feet way from the basket, things like that.

But when he's driving and when he's cutting through the lane we have to be physical. He's too great of a player for us to let him roam free. I loved our physicality. I thought we did a good job, and we've got to be even better on Tuesday, is it?

Yeah, we've got to be even better on Tuesday. It's one game. It's one win. I'm sure they will make some adjustments. But you know, I like what we did tonight and so we've just got to come back and repeat that on Tuesday.

#### Q. Do you have any thoughts, Russell shooting the

... when all is said, we're done.®



**ball and the lead dwindled in that stretch was there any thought of pulling Russ and not shaking his confidence or pulling the team out of a rhythm?**

TY LUE: No, I wasn't thinking about that. I mean, he was too good for us defensively tonight.

So you're not going to make shots for us every night. He's shot the ball well since he's been with us. So you never want to penalize a guy for missing shots. But you can penalize a guy for not playing hard when they miss assignments and things like that.

Defensively he was on point tonight, and so like I said before, his shot doesn't mean that much to us. If he's making shots ok great, but everything else he brings with his passing, his defense, his pace, his toughness, things like that, that's what we need from him every night. So that's what he was able to do outside, you know, without making shots that's what he was able to do tonight.

**Q. What's it like to win the first game of the series?**

TY LUE: It feels good. I told you, we don't have a lot of margin for error with PG being out, you know, so we've got to hit the ground running, no easing into the game, easing into the series. We've got to be locked in and we've got to be physical and we've got to attack and, I thought we did a good job of that.

**Q. Does it give you an advantage at all, the complexion of things? Does it put pressure?**

TY LUE: No advantage until you win four, you know, but it's a good start for us. Like I said, great team, great coach over there. So they are going to be ready to play Game 2. So we have to bring the same intensity come Tuesday.

**Q. Have you ever seen a player go through -- still impact -- busting the glass defensively?**

TY LUE: I just saw it tonight. You missed it because you were late (laughter) no, no.

But just talking to Russ, I think late second, I think, maybe early third, I can't remember, he was mad about missing shots. And I said, "Listen, your shot is not important. Take good shots, take the right shots, but what you bring to our team is way more valuable, and that's rebounding the basketball. That's the three offensive rebounds at the end of game against the extra possession; the defense on KD; the stop on Book at the end, and defensively he was locked in.

So don't worry about the missed shots. Like, you bring

more to this team than that. And that's why tonight like I said in that big stop on Book at the end was huge for us.

**Q. How much did he harass KD, chasing him on the side, trailing him and Book coming from behind?**

TY LUE: He did a great job, pursuing the basketball, not melting on screens. Continuing to keep coming. And I've never seen a block KD's shot, but a point guard block KD's shot tells you hard he's playing and how locked in he is.

**Q. Kawhi was locked into this game, and to play the game through, how do you judge do you he did offensively?**

TY LUE: He was great. Seen some things tonight that we can take advantage of, and so we have got to make sure that we can lock into.

That but I thought he did a good job of getting to his spots, taking what the defense gives him, did he double team, making the right pass and right play, but he did a good job just getting to his spots to the paint.

**Q. What about Zu?**

TY LUE: What did Zu do tonight?

**Q. He had a night.**

TY LUE: Yeah, Zu was good. I think we got to get better with him firing back to Ayton because Ayton can make the little 15-foot shot and those little floaters in the paint.

But I thought he did a good job being on Craig, changing the game up and he did a good job. But now we have to do a better job with Ayton, just firing back to him on those little floaters and pull-up jumpshots. But I thought he was good.

I think being more physical around the basket, because they are going to be fouling, so we can't flop and flail. We have to finish those around the rim, and I think he'll be better with that Game 2.

**Q. Torrey Craig, got it going, what did you see specifically that he was able to get going? Was it the attention you gave the other guys?**

TY LUE: I mean, we know CP, we know Book and we know KD, what they can do, and Craig has been playing great; nothing to take away from him. We want him taking more shots. You know, just try to keep the ball out of KD and Book's hands.

But like I said Torrey played great tonight and hats off to him. You want to see guys play well, not win, but I want to -- like I said he played well, and they did a good job of just running actions for him and getting a couple shots, and he played well, but trying to take the ball out of KD and Book's hands as much as possible.

**Q. Kawhi, I'm not sure how many times he's played 40 this season; were you watching him, monitoring him?**

TY LUE: I thought he got a little winded when he first came out in the fourth quarter, like around the ten-minute mark on the free throw line, he was a little tired. So we got him out for three minutes I think and brought him back, and he said he was ready to go. That's what we've been saving up for. This moment here in the playoffs, we have to play heavy minutes, especially with PG being out, being short-handed, and like I said, he was great tonight.

**Q. The free throws that Russ stepped up and hit, that's one of the areas he has not shot the ball great with you guys from the line. But what does it say about him to step up and make those two?**

TY LUE: It's crazy because he's just a competitor. He's not afraid of the moment, even taking the big three at the end they missed. He's not scared, and that's half the battle, not being scared and being afraid. But like I said, to drive the basketball, get your foul, two big free throws to put us up three, that's huge, and that's who he is.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports