

LA Clippers Media Conference

Thursday, April 20, 2023
Los Angeles, California, USA



Russel Westbrook Norman Powell

Postgame Press Conference

Suns 129, Clippers 124

Q. All series you've been talking about how to win it, it's going to take a lot of physicality. How hard is that to execute that when they're shooting 46 free throws and the whistle is like that?

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: It's tough. Just got to stick to our game plan. It's a series. We'll stick to that.

Q. Before the game if we would have said you would shoot 54% from the field, 43% from three-point, seems like that would have been enough to get it done. Is there any part of you, What else do we need to do? If so, what is that?

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: I'd probably say just myself in the first half, too many turnovers. Five in the first half. I think that's probably a place where we self-inflicted wounds. I think they scored 16 points in the first half off turnovers. A lot of 'em was my fault.

But the second half we did a much better job of that. But I would probably say that's the only... I thought we played with good pace downhill physically, defensively. But just didn't work out for us.

Q. There are a lot of times when you're in undermanned situations like that. What is it about this team that makes it seem like you can win no matter what?

NORMAN POWELL: I just think it's the culture that we have, the effort, the belief that we have in the coaching staff, each other, in ourselves. Holding each other accountable. Laying it on the line.

I think everybody has the experience and knows what it takes to win, has the will to win. When you put out the effort the way we did tonight, the way we do consistently,

things are going to work out for us.

I just think it's the culture that's been built with T. Lu and the guys. That's the biggest thing.

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: Like I've been reiterating since I've been here, to piggyback off of what Norm said, the coaching, the guys that implement the rules, how we play the game, it's important. Next-man-up mentality is big for our group. Tonight our guys played well. Just unfortunately didn't come out with the win.

Q. Russ, what was your reaction when you learned of the Kawhi news? What is it going to take if you have to move forward without him starting Saturday?

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: I mean, I just feel sorry for him. He probably was playing his best basketball in a while, probably the best in the world honestly. It just sucks just for him mentally. That's first thing I go to.

But it was good to see him be around and communicate with us on the bench. Hopefully we can see how he feeling and see what's next.

If he's not back, we have to rally around each other, support each other, find ways to make something happen. It's a series. First to four. Get ready for Saturday afternoon.

Q. Russell, Ty told us he had a conversation with you when you learned Kawhi was going to be out today, he told you to stay aggressive. What has it been like working with him as one of the best X's and O's coaches in the NBA?

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: It has been amazing honestly. Just me and Ty had a relationship beforehand. It's really allowed me to go and be myself, put me in position to be successful, with that allow me to continue to instill confidence in myself and my teammates, finding ways to make an impact for this team.

I'm grateful for that. He's been amazing.

Q. Russ, about the conversation you had with Ty, can you take us through that? Does it help you to have a



coach that has that level of faith in you?

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: It's something that I don't take for granted as a player. I've been in this league a long time, had some unbelievable coaches. To be able to have coaches communicate, letting me know that they allow me to go be aggressive, have confidence in my abilities on the floor, it's very important to me.

It allows me to (indiscernible). I go to the drawing board, trying to find ways that I can be effective and help guys around me, which I enjoy more than anything else.

Q. With how y'all played with all of the guards, what did you learn from your team in that lineup and how the Suns played y'all in that lineup?

NORMAN POWELL: I think the biggest thing we were able to spread them out and attack, keep putting pressure on the paint, having rotations. I liked the energy and the effort T Mann did battling on the boards, being undersized.

But I think we found a little something in just being able to attack, spread the offense, make them work on defense, speeding them up on the defensive end, being able to pressure and run different blitzes and traps on them, having them swing the ball, work the ball around.

I think the biggest thing in that small lineup, we gave ourselves a chance fighting and scrapping, picking up the pace of the game.

Q. Norm, the three-pointers haven't fallen for you so far in the Playoffs. You're routine based. Anything changed in your routine to have a night like this?

NORMAN POWELL: No, I mean, you look at the first two games, I had five attempts from three in two games. The other two were halfcourt heaves. Really not getting some looks.

I can't really say my shot is not falling or broken. Haven't had a field goal attempt. The situation with Kawhi being out, talking to me about being aggressive, trying to get threes up... I'm confident in my shot. I work on it every single day.

It was just getting a chance to get them up there.

Q. Obviously tonight didn't go the way you wanted it to go. With the heart that you showed, did it give you the confidence regardless of what happens with Kawhi or BG that you can rally and pull this off?

NORMAN POWELL: Since I've been here, it's always

been next-man-up mentality and laying it on the line. I think last year we had the most comebacks in the NBA down 20. This year we have the same group of guys back, another superstar player, Hall of Fame player that knows what it takes and has the will to win.

Just continuing to believe, not let go of the rope. Just continue to fight, lay it all on the line. You can do that throughout the course of the game, we're going to give ourselves a chance, and we did that. Just a few bounces here and there, a few calls, we'd be walking out of here with a W.

Keep that mentality, keep fighting for the full 48 every single possession.

Q. Even with everything that went on today with Kawhi and BG, you were right there at the end. The fact that that is where you were at the end, do you feel that's something you can carry over into Saturday?

NORMAN POWELL: Yeah, definitely. We're right there. We got the guys to do it. Like I said, we got the experience. We got the will and want to. It's about not letting go of that rope. Coming in tomorrow, seeing the film, seeing how we can improve offensively and defensively, limiting the mistakes. We shot ourselves in the foot a little bit with turnovers.

I think we're right there. Tying it up here and there. When they're trying to pick the pace up and pressure us, staying calm and composed and still working the game.

But I think we're still in this. Every game is different. Been in a series down two, up two. It don't matter. Just figuring out what it's going to take to win and going out there and laying it on the line.

Q. Before the game Ty said pace was going to be the thing he wanted to see. How do you balance playing faster but not playing frantic?

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: Just reading. I thought we picked the pace up a little bit more in the second half. Just reading, reacting.

But even when we play fast, it allows us, activates us to be able to move, make the next play, move to the next action. It creates open shots, a lot of open looks, which we can live with.

Q. Talked a lot about Kawhi, but Devin Booker has had another great game. What is he doing that's beyond what you're seeing in film?

RUSSELL WESTBROOK: He's making some tough shots. Some easy ones early. But we got to be more aggressive on him. Lock in to him and his tendencies. We'll make sure we do that on Saturday, for sure.

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