

LA Clippers Media Conference

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Lawrence Frank

Press Conference

LAWRENCE FRANK: A lot of different emotions. Met with the team and staff yesterday. There's disappointment, obviously, in terms of season ending, falling short of our goal.

There's also a great sense of pride in terms of how that group competed in adverse situations, being without our two best players, and those guys, maybe other than Game 2, gave ourselves an unbelievable chance to not just compete at a high level but potentially win the series.

I think it's a great reflection of the talent of the team. Ty is a terrific head coach.

But there's also a feeling, you feel really bad. I feel bad for our fans. I feel really bad for Kawhi and PG, our team, the staff, Steve, because we feel like we let our fans and that group down.

Injuries suck. They suck. But they happen. For Kawhi and PG, for everything they put into their bodies to be healthy at this time, and to be injured, it's devastating for them. They're agonized. It's painful.

But I feel for our fans who have been there every step of the way and for Steve who's given us all the resources to try to achieve our goal each and every year, which is to win a championship.

So that's hard. Yet at the same time, when you take a step back, what I don't want to do is have the injuries or how hard we fought in the postseason to mask a disappointing regular season.

We have to be honest with ourselves, and we have to look in the mirror. It starts with me. And we have to get back to honoring and respecting the regular season. We have to compete harder, more consistently, and we have to earn it. Everything has to be earned.

Regardless of who plays, I think we've shown in the Playoffs that competing, that's who we have to be about.



Like I said, you have to step back and look at it all. A lot of times there's a focus on the Playoffs because that's when everyone is watching, but we have to be honest about where we're at. We'll evaluate the season. We'll evaluate the roster. We'll get this team better. We'll explore all possibilities. We're open-minded. We're creative.

Even though the off-season came way too early, we're excited about the possibilities and how this team is going to get better.

I think sometimes, especially when you're caught up in the grief of a season being over, it's hard to see the forest from the trees. I think when you step back and you look at what we're blessed with and what we have here, we have an unbelievable chairman in Steve Ballmer, who not only does he give us all the resources to be able to achieve our goals, he's also so incredibly competitive, caring, passionate, and he's all in.

We have a great head coach in T-Lue, who continues to -- he, like very much everyone else in our organization, is driven to improve. He's obviously had to deal with a bunch of different rosters since he's been here, and he's adjusted and adapted.

We have two of the best players in the world, and like I said, when healthy, they give us a chance each and every year. We've been through -- through the years, been able to try to find players who fit best around them, and we'll continue to do that, but I think our depth and talent played out in that playoff series, that Ty was able to put a good player on the floor with every -- there are no bad players on this team. We're very fortunate that we have them.

I think about the people that work here and the care factor and what they bring every single day. Our fans: Being a Clipper fan is special. It's special. We don't take them for granted. One of the things that we discuss is we have to earn their trust every single day and earn their way, and we're committed to doing that.

We're in the best market in the NBA. So it's exciting that not only can you try to build a great infrastructure with great people and a great chairman, but you're doing it in a place where NBA players love to compete and love to live.



It's very disappointing that the season is over, yet at the same time we're excited about the possibilities of this off-season.

Q. In what ways have you guys not respected the regular season that you feel need to be addressed?

LAWRENCE FRANK: I just think we need to compete harder every single night. I think we owe it to ourselves. We owe it to the fans. We want to be a championship organization, and we have to invest deeper into the process.

The last 28 years, the NBA champion has been a top-three seed. So you have to earn it. The regular season matters.

Not that our guys don't think it matters, but I just think we, all of us, starting with me, we can compete harder every day. We can hold each other accountable every day.

That's what we have to do.

I think you think about like when you watched us in the playoff series, even if you go back to last year's team that won 42 games, the trademark of this organization has to be about competing, hard work, toughness, and it's not that we didn't do it at times this year. We did. There were some really good moments. There were some really good individual stories.

But as a team, in terms of what our goal is, we can compete harder in everything we do. We know we can.

Q. Along those lines, availability has kind of been an issue for this team with the stars. Does anything change -- if guys are hurt, guys are hurt, but does anything change about the approach medically for your stars and maybe how to improve availability at all?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, yeah, I think the thing is, look, availability -- look, injuries are real. As T-Lue said, you take away the two best players from any team, and that's a fact.

In terms of how we manage them, to me we just ask our players and they do it, and Kawhi and PG and you guys follow our team every day, like they're maniacal in terms of the work they put into their bodies. They do everything they can to make sure that they're ready for the postseason.

I think sometimes what gets lost is there's a different between being injured and then what people term "load

management." Like Kawhi had to deal with three different injuries coming off an ACL reconstruction. That's not load management.

Everyone is an expert about someone else's body. He was dealing with injuries. Same thing with PG.

The load management comes to when you're coming back from an injury, how do you manage it to prevent further injury. We'll explore everything, but I think sometimes the narrative of the load management, it's erroneous, because when a guy is injured, he's injured, and sometimes just unlucky.

Look, players throughout the history of this league, as you get older and you look at just Kawhi and Paul are both big, strong, powerful guys, and the way they play, there's always a risk of injury. Some are flukey, and I think we'll continue to explore like every which way how can we do everything we do better.

But I thought Kawhi and PG -- I mean, PG was a flukey thing, coming down, getting tangled up with Lu Dort, but Kawhi was in such a great place. Those first two games of the Playoffs, there wasn't a better player in the world.

As you guys know, the last 35 games, he was playing at a level that in the regular season he may have never played at.

But to answer your question, we'll continue to evaluate everything we do, but like I said, sometimes you just have to have some good fortune, too.

Q. Ty had said that look, the good thing is we haven't lost a series when those two guys are healthy. But because you haven't seen them together as much as you would like, is the plan still, hey, look, we just had this bad luck, but everything still circles around those two guys next season?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, and look, when we traded for Paul and signed Kawhi as a free agent in 2019, it wasn't for one or two years. It wasn't three or four. Like every year you have those guys, they give you a chance. And so it's about surrounding those guys to continue to improve your chances, and Kawhi is -- he's a ceiling raiser.

When you study past NBA champions, they have a top-5 guy on their team, and Kawhi has shown that when healthy, he can be the best player in the world. Paul is an eight-time All-Star now.

We're going to continue to build around those guys and look for every which way, just like they do. They're



devastated that not only they couldn't play but that they weren't there for -- they couldn't help their teammates, and you feel it when you're injured. There's so many emotions that you go through because it's not just your own body and emotions, but you feel like you've let people down, because we're all connected in this. Everyone is connected.

Like I said, we believe strongly in both those guys.

Q. You talk about surrounding a team around Kawhi and Paul. When we were here at this time last year, it could have been as simple as look, we're a team that went 42-40, were in the play-in tournament, and just add those two guys healthy. In what ways are you looking at this off-season as a departure from last year where you can't take for granted it's just those two? What are the tools? What are ways that you can realistically improve this team around those two guys considering where we are on the timeline?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, as you know, and it's a good question, you never come back the same player or the same team. It's not a mathematical formula in the sense, last year we'd won 42 games with Kawhi being out and Paul playing 31 games. We were the eighth ranked defense.

If you go in there, you can make some assumptions of okay, well, you're adding two of the best players in the league to that team, but everything changes. You're constantly learning in terms of what work, what doesn't work.

I think there's a lot of different possibilities to get better. I think our roster has continued to get better with each transaction period because we're learning kind of, okay, what players, what skill sets fit best next to them.

And look, Kawhi is coming off ACL; he exceeded my expectations. You just study guys who have come back from ACL and what they look like at 18 months compared to the next year, because of all the work he put into it, so he went far and above from what I thought we were going to get.

I think the different elements that the guys brought at the trade deadline, and I think we'll continue to have different opportunities, and you learn. Hey, look, sometimes your vision for what you think is going to happen, it changes, and there's so many variables that go into it.

I mean, we loaded up with wings to be able to play long ball, and some things came to fruition, some didn't. There are reasons why for different things, but you learn along

the way of, okay, what's going to be the best group that can surround these guys so we can win a championship next year.

Q. To be clear, Kawhi has a torn meniscus?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yes.

Q. Does it require surgery?

LAWRENCE FRANK: We don't know. With a torn meniscus, it's how it impacts each player. It varies, and there's a wide range of treatments. We'll just continue to explore the possibilities and see what's the best form of treatment.

Q. Is there a recovery time at all?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Well, you don't know a recovery time until you form what's the best treatment.

Q. Is your first priority to re-sign Russell?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, we want to bring Russell back. I think Russell, I give him a ton of credit, and I think it's a great example of when you have a trust in your partnership. T-Lue, PG, Kawhi advocated strongly for Russ. We sat down, we discussed it. We sat down with Russ, Ty Lue and myself.

You feel really, really good for what Russ was able to do, and you guys get to see what he brings on the floor, but he brings a great energy and spirit every single day to the team, around the building, and it's good because it filled something that we needed.

You love when guys get second chances and just knock it out of the park. We've had now, we've been very fortunate; if you think back to when we brought Reggie here, Nico and now Russ, it's great to see talented people who have a track record of high-quality play. Obviously Russ is one of the top 75 first-ballot Hall-of-Famers, and he adapted. He basically said, hey, what do you need from me; what can I give to you.

When you come in with that approach, and he had to be highly adaptable because the role that we described to him when we sat down became totally different than what it was at the end, and he was willing to adapt along the way.

I know T-Lue loved coaching him. Our guys loved having him as a teammate. We'd love to bring Russ back. But he's a free agent, and that will be obviously a choice he's earned.

Q. What have been your ultimate takeaways of how Ty has handled everything this season through the different changes and roster availability, and what are you looking for from him moving forward?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think T-Lue is a great coach. All of us, and no one feels it like the head coach, there's frustration. It's hard. It's a hard, hard, hard job. I've got unbelievable love and respect for Ty. I've known him for a long, long time. He's extremely bright. He sees the game in real time like few others. He's a terrific communicator. He has an unbelievable ability where players, staff, fate, he's a magnet to them, and there's a reason why.

This has been -- like I said, it was a disappointing regular season, and we all own it, starting with me. When you're the head coach, it's a lonely job. It's a hard job, and it's frustrating, and for all the different reasons.

But I think Ty has got a ton of strengths, and he's one of the best coaches in the league.

Q. Obviously he expects to be back next year. Is that something you guys have talked about already?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I mean, why wouldn't he be back? Of course he's back. Ty is a terrific coach, and we're excited to have him as our coach.

Q. Kawhi and PG are both eligible for extensions. Given their injury histories, is that something you guys are comfortable committing potentially four years and more than \$200 million toward those guys?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, well, our process is this: We'll sit down. Those guys are great players, and they're great partners, and we want to keep them as Clippers for a long time. So we'll look forward to those conversations.

The number one goal is how can we build a sustainable championship team, and those guys have been great partners, so at the appropriate time we'd look forward to sitting down with them.

Q. Where is PG in his recovery?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, PG is doing great. He wasn't going to be cleared medically until the first couple days of May. His goal was to make sure as soon as he was cleared, he was ready to play, and so he's had long, long days, multiple -- coming in multiple times. He was on track that if we were able to get to the second round where he'd be ready to play.

He, like Kawhi, it's agonizing not to be able to help your

team, and he was pushing all limits and boundaries to try to be ready to play, so he was going to be on the fastest of fast tracks to get back and help us.

Q. Do you see just tweaks to the roster, or do you see wholesale changes?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Look, I think what you do is you go through a process. You evaluate everything, and you have to have a very open mind and be creative about ways we can get the team better. You have a series of truth telling. We don't try to fool ourselves and try to figure out, okay, how can we get this team better.

I'm optimistic that we will get better, both internally and what the different possibilities are outside of our team.

Q. When you look at the fact that this is one of the -- if not the oldest team in the league but also because it was wing heavy earlier, you had to have that mid-season shift. In what ways do you look at how the regular season, how the team played, especially without Paul and Kawhi available, and say, okay, we need to get younger, we need to get more athletic? In what ways do you feel like there's a lack of something on this roster?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think you study everything. In terms of youth, we do have seven guys that we consider pre-prime. Terance and Zu are 26 years old, and Brandon Boston, Brandon is 21, Bones is 22, Mouss is 21, Preston is 23, Amir is 25 -- we do have a bunch of young guys. I think ideally what you do is you have a balance. Depending on how you want to define your age brackets, but you have players between 20 and 25, players between 26 and 30, players between 31 and 35, 36. I don't think you lean into any which way. But I think you want to have a balance.

So we'll continue to look. Like I said, we're excited about our young players. You think of what Terance -- the different roles he embraced over the -- opening night he barely played. He had times where he was completely out of the rotation, and then he starts, and one of the -- I think there's different moments that stand out, but the game against Phoenix right before All-Star break and how well he played.

Then we get Russ, and he embodies what a Clipper is. He's tough, he's reliable, he competes every night, and he's about all the right stuff.

Zu is still very young, and what he's done. That Indiana game where he had -- I joke he had 31 and 29 and a half. But what he did, I think the center play we got a couple

nights ago between him and Mason, and Zu in many regards exceeded career things. Because of how we were built initially leaning into long ball, it also led to him playing a lot of minutes, which is great for his development.

He makes a huge difference in our defense. He's a terrific rim protector. He's got great feel for his drop pick-and-roll defense, and his finishing continues to get better.

I think we also learned with Zu as a young player, him playing with Russ, that helped. That helped Zu. So we learned the value of someone like Russ with that skill set, how that can help Zu.

I think, like I said, Bones at 22, we're really, really proud of him because Bones initially got to play. We made the acquisition for Russ, he's basically out of the rotation. I thought T-Lue and our staff, Cam Hodges, player development staff, did a great job of communicating, keeping him engaged, and then when he got a chance, he really took advantage of it. For a 22-year-old to score 20 points in a playoff game, that's something to build on, and different things there.

Brandon in my opinion has been the best player in the G-League for two years, and we look forward -- like he's an NBA player. If he was on most NBA teams that weren't as deep as ours or weren't as wing heavy, he'd be playing.

The other guys, as I said, Moussa was all-rookie in the G-League, so we're excited about his potential, and Amir has shown that he's an NBA rotation player.

Sometimes when you have so much depth at a position, it doesn't give pathways for the younger guys to play. But youth is important. Athleticism at different positions is important.

But to me, you're building a team. You're not collecting individual talent. We've seen that even with the different roster moves we've made, that you say, okay, like you're trying to project, can this player play with this player, and if they have the same redundant weaknesses and you can't surround them with guys that can compensate for them, it makes it really tough on a coach to, hey, I've got these really, really good players, but they don't really fit together.

Obviously when your best players -- if they're injured, well, that impacts everything, and so you're trying to build a roster that both complements Kawhi and PG and also accounts for the time that injuries are going to happen, like the inevitable. How can you still have a high-functioning, high-performing roster in the event that one of your better players is injured.

There's a lot to it. I don't know if I answered your question, but I think it to me is you can look at it and say, man, these guys got to get more athletic, but if it's athletes who don't have enough skill, who can't space the floor, that can't provide -- because great players need space on the offensive end, so it has to be a really good balance of how it fits.

You can only have so many guys that aren't threats on the floor at the same time. You watch the Playoffs where all your weaknesses get exposed, and you just watch all these games, that the teams that have multiple players that don't have to be guarded from range, it's really, really hard on them unless those guys have another superpower that just like, hey, it makes sense.

So you're looking at all those things, and it's putting together a puzzle.

Now, the best part is we have two guys that they're easy to build around. They're pretty malleable, and we're constantly looking at different possibilities of who fits best.

Q. We talked about the depth coming into this year and it might be a good thing or a bad thing. Do you think you had too much depth this year?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, I think it's challenging when you have so many talented players. Like it's a good thing, the versatility. If we didn't have the depth and the versatility, what would we have looked like games 3, 4 and 5. If you go back and you -- again, very, very subjective, but if you take any team and you took their two best players, what would they look like in a playoff series. That's the benefit.

The tough thing, especially both from a playing and coaching standpoint when you have so many talented guys where it's an easy argument, hey, play this guy versus that guy. There's such a fine line. It's not even a question of who's better, because in many regards, like they're all kind of in similar buckets and tiers. They're all high-level rotation players or whatever the case may be, so as a coach it's really, really hard.

What I thought our guys did an unbelievable job of is they accepted it. You think about the guys that could have played that didn't play, like they were great pros. The locker room was terrific. A lot of times it's the credit because it's the guys who are sitting at the end of the bench. Those are the guys many times that can impact your chemistry.

I thought like Cov, Amir, those guys were unbelievably professional. When you look at our 4 position, Marcus,

Nico, Rob, like they each bring different things, and all three are very, very good players, and it's impossible if I'm T-Lue, I can't play them all. It makes it tough.

Can you have too many good players? Yeah, depth creates issues, both positive and negative, and there are times where depth becomes a strength, and there are other times where depth can be a weakness. Would you rather have too many good players or not enough? It's an honest question, and I think it requires a great deal of cooperation on everyone's part, and I think the way that we go about everything is just to have honest conversations, say, look, this is what it is, and people know what they're signing up for.

Q. Kawhi's meniscus is the same leg and knee that he's had a lot of issues before. How much concern is there just that he's had a lot going on with that leg, and do you think that impacts him being ready for the start of the season?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, well, without stepping outside my lane as a doctor, I mean, I went to some really good public schools. No, look -- regardless of the treatment, Kawhi will be ready for next year. The really encouraging thing is obviously the major injury had the ACL. The ACL is firmly intact, which is great. So this is a meniscus tear, and then over the whatever, next couple weeks, figure out what's going to be the best source of treatment.

Q. When did you guys learn that it was a meniscus tear for Kawhi?

LAWRENCE FRANK: When we got the MRI, so when we came back from Phoenix.

Q. After Game --

LAWRENCE FRANK: After Game 2.

Q. With Steve, what's been his early message as far as the level of support and patience that he has with the organization moving forward?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Oh, Steve is all in. Steve believes deeply in all the people here. He pushes us and challenges us and asks really, really good questions, but yeah, Steve is fully supportive of everyone here.

He, like I, like everyone, has a wide range of emotions, and he feels bad for our fans. He feels bad for our players, our team.

Look, everyone would have loved to have seen what would this team have looked like in the Playoffs fully healthy, and

he understands, hey, injuries are part of it. He appreciates and respects all the hard work that Kawhi and PG put into their bodies, and you can only control what you can control.

He thinks very highly of T-Lue and the staff that he has around him and the group we have.

Steve is the best chairman in sports because kind of our organizational ethos drives from him. There's competitiveness. There's honesty. There's caring. And there's the open-mindedness and that hunger to get better.

Q. You guys obviously spend a lot of money. With the new CBA, it seems like above that second tax line, it gets pretty punitive. How does that affect what you do in terms of roster building and the direction you want to go? Does it make it worth it to keep going above that second apron where you could have things taken away?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, well, I think the thing is, we're blessed to have a chairman who's all in to try to capitalize on the window we're in. At the same time, it's our job to be responsible and make responsible decisions.

The CBA, the new CBA will have implications, not just this but over the next couple years, and always hard decisions will have to be made, and we'll make those hard decisions. But we're very fortunate to have Steve and his commitment to building a championship roster.

Q. Not to be too obvious, but how would you define long ball? Why didn't we see it as much as you probably expected to when the season started, and in what ways do you think the long ball approach can be better going into next year?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, well, just having -- I call it long ball just because of the length of our wings. We obviously have a number of wings. Where things couldn't really come to fruition is when Kawhi got injured, it's tough, because we couldn't rebound the ball. You need either Kawhi or PG on the floor to complement with all the different wings we have, Nico, Marcus, RoCo. It's just to have at different times, to have four guys with size, length, shooting, IQ switching with one other player, whoever it is.

I think going in, that was the plan, but because Kawhi is such a good rebounder, PG is such a good rebounder for their positions, it limited what T-Lue could do.

Then we had guards at the -- you have John, Reggie, Norm, Luke, and it's like, okay, how many of those guys can you play together at the same time, and if you're still

playing long, it was just hard for us to rebound without having either Kawhi or PG on the floor with them and to support those guys.

Coming in with that, it changed, all right, well, obviously we need a backup big, and then do we have enough downhill juice, do we have enough creation, while still balancing out having enough off-ball spacing and gravity around Kawhi and PG.

So I'd say just -- and there's some redundancies. Our guys have some similar strengths, too, and it's just trying to figure out, okay, how do all those players work best together and on both ends, because if you look at it defensively, up until maybe January 8th, we were one of the better defensive teams in the league. I think we were probably sixth at that time. But offensively we were really, really struggling.

Then as our offense got better, our defense got worse, and we were hoping at a certain point, okay, that last month, let's get them both together. There are some very encouraging signs. I think in the games Kawhi played, we were 33-19, and you look at our offensive and defensive rating during that time. A little bit misleading I think with Kawhi and PG we were 24-14, but some of that is a ramp-up from ACL, and like guys playing 24, 26 minutes, different things.

If I look at it over the four years of -- and it's three obviously with Kawhi tearing his ACL, but you look at the total minutes that those two have played together and where we're at, it's at the highest of the high levels. So that's what gives me great optimism with both those guys, that with a little luck and surrounding them continually with players that fit them, that we're going to be able to achieve our goals.

Q. You mentioned that depth can be good and bad. You mentioned the redundancies in the lineup at times with roster construction. What have you learned within the last season in terms of roster construction to find possibly players who are more malleable with Kawhi and PG?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, look, obviously every decision you make, there's a lot that goes into it. You know, so much of the NBA is about role fit and opportunity. You see it all the time. You've seen it on our team where guys get an opportunity and take great advantage of it. Someone may be on the bench and then ultimately he gets a shot and takes advantage of it.

I really, really like our roster. I think it's a talented and deep thing. It's okay to have guys that have size, length,

can all shoot and provide some sort of defensive versatility. It's just that like you're constantly churning and looking, okay, is there a better fit. With Russ, we wanted someone who could initiate, who could make some passes that other guys on our team couldn't make, that could push the pace.

You're always trying when you're building a team, you're looking at different skill sets that not only can fit around your two best players but can also fit with other players. It's not fantasy basketball. You don't get an unlimited thing of no, I want this guy. It's also the options that you're allowed, the players that are available to you.

To me, ultimately what we lean into is you want guys that have size, that have skill, that are high IQ, and because of their size give you positional versatility, and we start with that are competitive with toughness.

Q. You mentioned spacing. Has there been, especially around Kawhi and PG, has there been any conversations or thought to Kawhi and PG possibly moving positions to where PG is a small forward, Kawhi is a power forward in some sense in order to supply more spacing for Russ or Zu or things like that?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, well, I think we showed that. Just even Russ, Eric, PG, Kawhi, Zu. To me, it's look, we're getting to a point in basketball as a whole that positions are -- like look, teams either play a point, three wings and a big, some teams just play four wings and a big. The small forward/power forward, that designation to me, it's even antiquated. You don't even build your team around, I need a 2 guard. No, I mean, even the fact that -- now in the all-NBA selections it's basically positionless.

I think the league has adapted to how teams are being built. Teams have three point guards and one big or two bigs, and for us, again, the hardest thing is to get elite talent. That's the toughest thing to do in team building when you're trying to win a championship. We have two of those guys, and it's figuring, okay, based on how T-Lue wants to play and the fit around those guys, what players fit best.

Time and time again, you see guys when given an opportunity, how they're able to deliver. It's a lot of talent in this league.

Q. I want to ask about Eric and Mason specifically. Those two guys came in mid-season. Mason had a career year, and Ty was very complimentary of Eric and the calm demeanor he brought, the veteran presence. Both those guys could be free agents depending on things. What are you looking forward to

from those guys and would you like them back, as well?

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LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, we'd like them both back. Our process is, we started it yesterday. We go back and we do an autopsy of the entire season of the roster. Eric, when we got Eric, we wanted to upgrade our top eight, and we thought he'd be a great fit along with Kawhi and PG. Unfortunately because those guys were injured we didn't see it as much, but the gravity he provides, his shooting range, he shoots fours, plus he gives you another ball handler, and because of his strength, he's able to guard up. So we like Eric very much. He's a total pro, and we'd like to have him back.

Mason, again, he's a very, very good -- he's a good facilitator. He plays with great energy. His north-south ability, he runs the floor well. He's got good vertical explosion. So we'd love to bring Mason back, as well, and like with any free agent, obviously, it's a two-way street. They've earned the ability to make those choices, but both I think just really help with our culture, the professionalism, the appreciation, because it's always nice when guys come from other organizations, they give you a perspective, so we'd love to have those guys continue in our program.

Q. You mentioned T-Mann as one of the pre-prime group of players. Is there a consensus between you and Ty about his best usage? Obviously he's really appreciative that he's valued to play every position, but he also seemed like it confused him at times or was frustrating that he would play -- he was also kind of in limbo. What's the best use for him going forward do you think?

LAWRENCE FRANK: Yeah, look, I trust explicitly in Ty. Ty makes the lineup decisions and the choice, but I think also Terance, he's versatility personified. That's a good thing, not a bad thing. The fact that he can play 1 through 4, he can take on the tougher defensive match-ups, he can show that you can start me, play me off the bench, and the more guys you have like that, it just makes it easier because it also gives you more pathways to get on the floor.

If you're just a one-position player, it makes it really, really tough for a coach to find ways to use you. I think T-Lue did a really good job with Terance, and I think Terance, give him a ton of credit. I think at one point, maybe it was after the game at Indiana, one of you guys may have asked T-Lue, what do you see Terance's role, and he said, I don't know. That's okay, it was an honest answer because of the depth that we had when we're healthy, and yet T-Mann still found a way where he was an impact player and impacted the games that we had against Phoenix.

 . . . when all is said, we're done.®