

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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Lu Dort

Press Conference

Q. Since you brought it up, how much different is it going to be this year? We're not totally open but more open than last year in terms of seeing us and fans in the stands compared to last year.

LU DORT: Yeah, it will feel good. It's been so long since we had a game here with fans. I mean, it's just good. I mean, it's just better for us just because we love playing in front of fans and it's really good for the community and the city, so we're really looking forward to it.

Q. I think you probably surprised people even though you had the 30-point game in Game 7 against the Rockets, your scoring ability. That was something people saw last season. Anything they'll see this season that they didn't see last season?

LU DORT: Obviously last year I had the opportunity just because the team that we had compared to my first year, so I was able to show that to everybody. I mean, I feel like this year I'm going to just stick to the same. I know I've got some more stuff that I worked on. I right away show it, but I'm just so excited to get it back and then start the season, too.

Q. What about your role in terms of non-actual basketball stuff, non-on-court stuff, like workouts, weight room, stuff like that, leadership? What do you see yourself doing in that regard? What is your role in that area?

LU DORT: Well, I mean, just first off, always take care of my body, eat right and always be ready. I live for it. But at the same time I try to maintain my weight, so I'm not trying to get too big. I feel like I had a great off-season. Still, I lost a couple pounds, and I've been boxing, going to some jiu-jitsu, track, playing soccer and tennis. I've really been doing a lot of stuff this off-season just to get my body conditioning, so yeah.

Q. You said jiu-jitsu, soccer; that's a lot of conditioning. Would you say you worked more on your mobility and conditioning for the summer instead



of strength?

LU DORT: Yeah, yeah, that would be really -- strength, I already got. I feel like I'm already strong. I feel like I've got to work on some mobility and some other stuff, and mainly, too, footwork. I mean, it's been good. I've felt like I've put in a lot of good work this off-season, and I'm really ready for the season.

Q. How do you think that increased mobility is going to help you defensively?

LU DORT: I mean, it will help me a lot. I know I'm pretty fast, I mean, just my feet and stuff. I just feel like everything is going to be better. It's another thing that I can add to my defensive skills, so I'm always looking to learn and add some more stuff.

Q. You mentioned soccer; I know you grew up playing soccer, and I think were a goalkeeper. Someone told me that they think part of your being able to slide your feet defensively and stay in front of guys is like using some of those techniques from being a goalkeeper. Is there any truth to that, or do you see any correlation there?

LU DORT: I mean, maybe. Soccer is everything -- it's footwork, so I played soccer for a long time, just from four to ten. It probably did help, just the way that I move my feet fast, so I'm going to say yes, maybe.

Q. As one of the young core players on this team, how are you approaching this season and the next few seasons knowing that this is clearly a rebuilding situation with a young roster? How are you approaching that?

LU DORT: I'm going to say it's definitely a learning process. I mean, there's a lot of young guys, not a lot of experience. The guys that's been there before have definitely got to set the tone and be ready to compete every night, and I feel like if we do this, being a young hungry team and compete every night, whether we win or lose, at least we left it all on the court. That's what I feel like is the tone we're going to set to start out. It's not going to happen fast, it's going to take some time, and we've got to be patient. I know we're capable of doing it, too.

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Really just being competitors and really compete every night.

Q. Nobody that you have to guard in the league will be happy to hear you now are doing hand-to-hand combat; that's not good news for them. I wanted to ask you a little bit about Shai. We saw him really hit the accelerator on what he brought to you guys on the court last year, not that he didn't the year before, but I'm curious what it was like to see him doing that last year before he gets hurt, and what's your level of expectation with him continuing to be on that trajectory this season?

LU DORT: It's been great. It was definitely hard for him to show it the first year here because of the team they had, but last year that's what people wanted to see and that's what he was ready to show. I felt like he did a great job just last year when he was here, just being a leader, being able to get everybody involved, at the same time getting his and at the same time just being a leader and vocal on the court, and I feel like he's been growing to that since I got here and since I know him.

I feel like even for the past few weeks that we've been here, he's been really vocal, being a good leader, being good for the new guys. I kind of seen all the stuff he did this off-season and he works so hard on his game, so he's got way more to show.

Q. I know it didn't end the way you wanted it to, but how was the experience of playing for the Canadian basketball team, and do you feel like that helped you as a player?

LU DORT: I feel like it was great, just being with all the top Canadian players. Yeah, it didn't end up the way that we wanted. We lost, but at the same time it was a great experience, just seeing some new guys, some tough guys and being coached by some different coaches from different teams. I mean, it was fun. It was definitely a learning experience. I always learn from all the stuff that I do, so I mean, it was great. I had a fun time, and I'll level go back in the next few years.

Q. You talked about your defensive growth and conditioning, but you took a lot of steps forward in your offensive consistency last year. Looking at the team, how it's constructed, adding ball handlers like Giddey, guys like that, how excited are you for some of the opportunities you'll get as the floor spacing continues to improve and kind of let you go to work offensively, as well?

LU DORT: I mean, I'm really excited. Just going into the

year, I know what to expect now. Last year was a little new to me just at this level, but now I kind of know what to expect, so that's a lot of stuff worked on this off-season, too, and it's great to have Shai and Josh to be here on the team to help, also.

But I always keep playing and watch film and just get better.

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