

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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Kenrich Williams

Press Conference



Q. A lot of young guys this season. What did you think of the way this group was able to come together from the start of the season to now?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, I was definitely proud of our growth. You can kind of see it, especially if you was a fan of the game and you watched us play, I think you could tell that we got better throughout the season, just from first game to the last. We made kind of jumps in every category I feel like, and we grew as a team together. That was huge for us.

Q. What was it like for you seeing the amount of developmental strides that guys took throughout the season?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: I mean, it was amazing to watch, to be honest. I haven't been on a young team like this in my career, so kind of for me to see it kind of face on from the beginning of the season, like I said, to the last game of the season, you can tell guys got more comfortable, a lot of the young guys kind of got used to -- they got some routines in, and they kind of knew what to expect now. Just looking forward to next season.

Q. Can you take us inside that? Was there maybe a guy that you worked with or talked to a lot that maybe there was something early in the year you kept talking about or knew he was working on and there was a point he broke through in the year?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: I think probably the biggest one was Tre Mann. Early in the year he kind of struggled a little bit. He struggled a little bit. Just a part of the game, especially a rookie. He had some struggles early, and then later on in the year you kind of seen like this kid is special. He can really do some things with the ball that nobody else can do. That's just one example.

Q. How is your knee, and how are you doing physically?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: My knee is good. I feel great

physically. I just appreciate the training staff for allowing me to get to 100 percent. So I feel great.

Q. Mark Daigneault called you and Lu Dort 1A and 1B in the defense. Darius Bazley was someone this whole season that was definitely making -- he wanted to have the tougher covers. What did you see from his defensive progression this season?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Man, it was huge. I think that what he was able to do on the court defensively, he has a chance to be one of the best in the league I feel like, just because he has the right mindset, like you said. He wants to guard the best guys every night, and just his tools. He's long, he's 6'9", he can move his feet, he can guard basically every position. When you can do that in this league, you have a bright future, man. So Baze defensively he took a lot of strides this year.

Q. Speaking of defense, you guys were really strong this year and you were full tilt, top 10 defense in the league. What led to that and what did it take within the group to accomplish something like that?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Just pretty much competing together, kind of trusting what the coaches had for us, trusting the game plan they set out for us. Just taking it serious, studying your scouting report. Just a lot of little things that go into the game that you have to be good defensively that you have to do. We did those things this year, and I'm looking forward to kind of the progression that we can make next year.

Q. You established yourself as a wing that can shoot threes and play defense and distribute a little bit and around the trade deadline you were a name that was being floated a lot. Whether or not they were real talks or not, other teams could use you. What does it mean to still be a part of this Thunder group?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: It means a lot, man. Like I said earlier in the season, I love being here. I would like to retire here. It means a lot to me just to be able to kind of be appreciated for what I do on the court. It means a lot.

Q. What is it about Oklahoma City or the organization that makes you want to retire here? You still have a long time --



KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, I know, right? I know. Just being here, just from top to bottom, everybody in the organization, even you guys, coaches, teammates, everything. Just the culture, kind of the identity, the city. It's a lot.

Q. You've got my interest up. What is it about us (laughter)?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: You guys ask great questions. You ask great questions.

Q. That's a first right there. You've clearly made a niche here, created a presence for yourself, value. As this development goes, when are you going to be ready to win? How do you fight that frustration?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Well, I feel like as a whole we're a competitive group, so anytime we step on the court, we want to win. Things will be different next year. I'm sure they'll be different. But as a whole, competitive, we want to compete from the start. We want to win games. I'm not just speaking for myself, I'm speaking for the whole team. We want to win just because we've got a competitive group.

Q. Because you guys as a team were below the salary cap minimum, the Players' Association is going to decide if you guys will get some sort of bonuses because of that. Is that something you've talked about at all? It's kind of a cool reward for you guys.

KENRICH WILLIAMS: Yeah, it's something we spoke about together as a team. Definitely just going to say that we're definitely excited and grateful for that. We're thankful for that. That's pretty much all I can say about that.

Q. Was it something that Sam came to you guys and gave you a heads up that this might happen because knowing that you still could have brought in more players that would have cut into that, were you aware of that?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: I wasn't aware because I wasn't on the trip, but the guys did a good job of kind of reiterating that to me, letting me know that we were probably going to get a bonus this year, and I was all smiles.

Q. For you what is the biggest excitement about next season, and how do you see the future ahead of next season and the next season, as well?

KENRICH WILLIAMS: For me, just kind of being able to be with the guys again. I know we're going to go away for

a few months and all kind of do things to improve our game and improve our team as a whole, so I'm just looking forward to getting back, being with the guys, building that chemistry on the court and off the court. That's pretty much it, man.

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