

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

Monday, September 26, 2022
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Josh Giddey Press Conference



Q. Josh, your off-season, a long one. What did you focus on? How did you build your off-season training?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, it obviously was a long one. I spent a lot of time obviously focusing on areas I need to get better at, shooting the ball, in the weight room a lot. So put a heavy emphasis on those two things. Yeah, it's been a long time since I've played a real NBA game, so I tried to hone in on the things I needed to get better at, and it's been a long summer, and I'm looking forward to getting back into the team things tomorrow.

Q. It's pretty rare for a guard outside to be tall for your position. What do you do so well that leads to the rebounding (indiscernible)?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, well, a lot of the time, I kind of joked about it with Jeremiah, there's big guys that box out, there's big guys, and usually I'm guarding the guard, and they're probably not rebounding as much as the big guys are, so I can come in and kind of swoop in some of those rebounds.

One of the good things about it is it's a way to start a fast break. I think if you can get rebounds, kick it ahead, bring the ball up myself, it's a good way to get into offense early. I've kind of always had a knack for trying to chase down rebounds, get after it, start the break early, and with the bigs we have that box out and keep their bigs off the boards, it's easy for me and Shai and Lu and the other guys to come in and get those rebounds.

Q. You talked about shooting. You guys just brought in Chip, a well-renowned shooting coach. Can you talk about what you've done in regards to your shot and what has the relationship with Chip been like?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, I was really excited when Coach Mark called me and said that they're bringing in Chip. I had a big smile on my face. I told my agent I was with at the time, and he lit up. He was so excited for it. When I heard about his reputation and who he'd worked with and what he'd done over such a long time, I was really excited

and grateful that these guys wanted to spend resources and time into developing me as a player.

Being a better shooter wasn't something I shied away from. It was something I owned and knew I needed to get better at, and there's no one really better to work with than Chip. Ever since he's been here, we've been together pretty much two, three times a day in the gym working out.

Spend a lot of time with him, and he's a genius with what he does, and I'm really excited going forward and the things we can do with each other.

Q. How much time did you get to spend in Australia in the off-season, and is that something you want to continue to do, or is it going to be more and more difficult deeper into your career?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, obviously love anytime I get to go home. I spent probably four weeks straight off the season. I went back and was at home seeing friends and family for a little bit. Yeah, I was only there for about a month and then came back over here and straight back into workouts. It was good to get home, see everybody, but I think with OKC being here, my training being in LA, I think a lot of my off-season is better spent here. I think I can get better workouts in while I'm back here. So a quick little break back home, but then straight back over here.

Q. You only have this off-season to compare to last off-season which was pretty short. How does it feel with this longer off-season -- it was a little bit longer for you since you had the injury, but what's it like having the longer off-season?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, for me it's been a long off-season. I haven't played an NBA game since probably February, so it's been a long time, and I'm really excited to get back out there, start playing. Obviously training camp starts tomorrow, so I'm really excited for that. Just get out there with the rest of our guys. We're all back together now, so it's exciting.

Obviously the off-seasons are really important time for guys individually to get better, but then tomorrow is a time where we all come back collectively and put it all together and really hit the ground running and build some momentum going into the season.



I'm excited just as the other guys are to build this thing up, and we start playing games -- I think there's games in a week, so it's coming around really quickly, but we're all excited and ready to go.

Q. We've seen numerous examples of rookies that have had really impactful first years and then there's a significant dropoff the second year. Not saying it's going to happen, but what's the hardest part about going into your first off-season as an NBA player, staying on track mentally and physically?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, I mean, being an NBA player there's a lot of distractions, there's a lot of outside noise, things like that. I think one of the things that if you can limit that, the external noise, it really helps you as a player.

My off-season I knew what I had to focus on. Obviously everyone has their opinions on players and things they should work on and shouldn't work on, and I stuck with my small group of people that were working with me, and we knew what I had to get better at and honed in on that.

The off-season was really good for me. There's a lot of things I had to get better at, and I think we did make some jumps in different areas.

Yeah, I'm excited to hit the ground running, too, and it's coming up really fast, so can't wait to get going.

Q. You've built a really good relationship with Chet in the Summer League. When the injury happens, how much did that change or alter in your mind what the team was going to look like going forward and what your role is?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, it obviously sucks to see anybody get hurt. Loved playing with him in the Summer League, built a good connection with him. But I know what type of competitor he is, and he's going to attack the rehab the way he should. Obviously would have loved to play with him, but that's the way basketball goes sometimes.

I think we've got guys that are ready to step up and take on a big role, and I'm not -- I am confident, sorry, in our guys and what we can do as a unit, and obviously it all starts tomorrow, so I'm excited to see everybody back and what we can do as a team.

Q. You said it might be time to cut your hair. Lots of fans said "no." Are you going to cut your hair?

JOSH GIDDEY: No, it's not going anywhere.

Q. Related to Chet's injury, how did you find out or when did you find out, you being one of the few guys starter-wise from last year (indiscernible) curious about that. And then secondly, one of the things Sam has talked about is just not having a chance to see him with the whole intention of playing. You having played with him, what's your sense about fit and how that will look once he is back?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, he's going to have no problems slotting right into our team, the same way me and the other rookies did last year. These rookies this year, it's a really welcoming group from Sam all the way down to everyone in the organization. It's an easy transition.

Chet will have no problems coming back into the team when he's healthy and ready to go. Excited for that. You obviously saw him in Summer League. It's nerve-racking as a rookie coming in with such high expectations, and he handled it greatly in Summer League and was a lot of fun to play with, as were the other rookies. It's going to be a smooth transition for them into the team, and I'm excited to see when they're all on the floor playing how they go.

Q. You played in Summer League with two rookies with the same name. Have you seen crazy situations where everybody is confused or somebody is confused and it's just madness?

JOSH GIDDEY: Sometimes, yeah. Even I got confused a little bit at the start. It is rare to play with two guys with the same name. But once you're on the court with them a little bit more you kind of get a bit more familiar with them. Now it's all good, but at the start it was a bit confusing for me, as well.

Q. You've had some time since that rookie season to kind of look back at what you were able to achieve. What stood out to you about what you were able to achieve that you feel you can build on going into the season?

JOSH GIDDEY: I think the connection I built with my teammates. There was a lot of time throughout the year as it went on, we started to build just little trick plays. I think guys started understanding that there's tight windows that I'm going to try to get the ball to them, and they start understanding to be in those positions because as a guard who loves to pass, I want to get these guys the ball.

I think you saw especially with some of the out-of-bounds plays, me and Kenrich especially, we built a really good connection there. I think Lu, Wiggs, these guys who cut to the hoop hard, I started finding them easy buckets, and they were always in the right place, so they make my job

really easy.

As we can continue to grow that connection, it's going to make life easy for everybody. We've got a really unselfish group, so if I can do my job as a guard to continue to get everyone involved, make everyone around me better, I think that's going to hopefully help our team and push us in the right direction.

Q. Your rookie season was kind of shortened by injury. What words of encouragement did you have for Chet?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, obviously I understand how it is to be injured and I missed half the season. Attacking the rehab -- we've got an elite medical team who's going to do everything they can to get him right, and they will, but I know the type of guy he is and the way he's going to get after this rehab. I've already seen, he's always the first one in the gym, the last one to leave, doing things to get himself healthy. I said to him, you've got a long, long career ahead of you. Take your time with this, get healthy, and I'm there for him. We all are. He's obviously going to be a big part of what we do going forward.

I've been in his shoes. I know what it's like to be injured and miss a significant part of time, and if he needs stuff, I'm there and can relate to what he's going through. As I said, we're all in this together and we're all going to help him get through this, and when he's healthy, I can't wait to start playing with him.

Q. How much do you think it helps you having your sister here?

JOSH GIDDEY: No, it helps a lot. Obviously she lives with me now, so she's made herself a room in the house, and she's basically living with me all the time. We were always close growing up, but to have her here makes it even better. Coming from another country, I have no family or friends over, especially in Oklahoma, so to have her here is great, someone I can hang out with that obviously I know very well, and we spend a lot of time together. It's awesome having her here, and then when the rest of the family comes it's easy because both me and her are here, so yeah, I love having her around.

Q. Mark said in his comments earlier when he was asked about Chet and injury, he said part of being a really good player, you've got to deal with setbacks. I wonder from your perspective, having an injury last year, what did you learn about yourself or what skills do you think you gained going through that last year?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, that's spot on. Being a basketball

player -- anyone in any aspect of life, there's always going to be problems and adversity. You can either get hit with that adversity and fold or you can get hit with it and stand up and get through it. That's what I had to do last year. You never want to be injured. You never want to be sitting on the sideline. That's the reality of being an athlete. These things are going to happen, and you've got to bounce back from it.

Same thing that Chet will do. I know he's going to. Yeah, adversity is a part of life, and the way you react to that will determine who you are as a person and how things will go into the future.

Q. How do you feel like you handled it?

JOSH GIDDEY: I think I handled it good. It obviously sucks as I said being injured. You don't want to be.

But knowing that especially for me it was so early in my career, I knew there was a long road ahead. Just getting the rehab done, getting healthy was just a really important thing for me, and I felt like we did that.

Obviously healthy now and ready to go.

Q. It looked like you were one of the guys that went to the Oklahoma Sooners football game. What was that experience like?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, it was good. It was good to be able to go to the game, having pretty much everyone back in town. It was good to connect a bit before training camp and the season starts. I've become a big, big football fan over the last 12 months. I've been to a few Sooners games now, so definitely love football. I spent a lot of time yesterday sitting on the couch watching Sunday football, so becoming a big fan.

Q. Are you watching women's basketball (indiscernible)?

JOSH GIDDEY: Of course, Australia, doing good, and obviously Lauren Jackson, who's the GOAT, coming out of retirement, so definitely been watching them. I think they're into the quarterfinals now, so excited to see what they can do.

Q. What do you expect to see them do (indiscernible)?

JOSH GIDDEY: Obviously I know what Australians play. I know a lot of the girls on the team, so I love watching them any chance I get. To have the WNBA girls come back and play is special. It's always a big moment when you represent your country, so I can see the passion, the pride

they play with when they wear the Australian jerseys. Obviously you're all hoping Japan is going to win. I'm hoping Australia is going to win. But hoping Australia can advance as far as they can and hopefully get that gold medal.

I'm a Chiefs fan.

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Q. We've seen a lot of your teammates like J-Dub and Chet and Tre Mann on TikTok. Is that your influence at all?

JOSH GIDDEY: I don't know. Trey was on it before we knew each other. So was J-Dub. A few other guys started getting on it now. I'd like to think I had a little bit of influence on that, but I'm not sure.

Q. OU doesn't have an Australian punter but OSU does. Can you explain to me the phenomenon of Australian punters in American football?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, I think it comes from the AFL, which is a big sport in Australia where the game is predominantly based on kicking the football the way the punters do, and I think Australians are just so used to it that a lot of them kick the ball a long way. That's typically why you see a lot of punters be Australian because their background is AFL which is where you kick the ball and you have to kick it a long way.

Q. We heard over the off-season before the draft there was a lot of guys that said they wanted to be a part of the Thunder. What does it mean to you to be a part of the Thunder and know that there are other guys out there really talented that want to be part of this team?

JOSH GIDDEY: Yeah, well, that was me. Over 12 months ago, this is where I wanted to be. I think the first time I met Sam, Mark, Rob, Will, the front office people, as soon as I was done, I knew this is where I wanted to be. I'm sure those same guys had the same feeling after they met with the front office. It's such a family orientated organization. You get that feel as soon as you're in the city. The fans are second to none. You feel the love and support all around.

Yeah, I guess I can really see why guys want to be here. I wanted to be here, and I'm very happy I am here.

Yeah, obviously very happy that I am, and I can definitely understand why people do want to come to this city and this organization, because it's first class, and yeah, couldn't speak highly enough of it.

Q. Do you have a favorite NFL team?

JOSH GIDDEY: The Chiefs. Jeremiah got me on them, so

