

# Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

## Chet Holmgren Press Conference



**Q. Chet, first of all, how are you recovering from your injury? What's your mindset right now?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, recovery is going great. Just trying to take it one day at a time and really maximize everything I can do each day to try and put me in a better position for the next day.

**Q. What does an average day look like for you right now?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I'm not going to go too much into detail on that, but I'm up here at the facility probably from 8:00 to 2:00 and then this week coming back for the second practice that the guys have, coming to support them and do a little extra in the afternoons for myself, as well.

**Q. What's it been like just observing how the team is operating and getting to be a part of some of those conversations and just watching the guys and supporting them?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, you know, it's great to be able to learn and get better in any capacity that I can. That's what I'm trying to do right now is kind of soak up all the knowledge of how things are done around here, how they're going to be done going forward.

When I'm ready to get back in there, I can just kind of seamlessly plug myself in.

**Q. I'd imagine that it's hard to be on the sidelines, but has anybody given you advice on how to stay active and engaged with the team?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, it's definitely hard being away from basketball. That's what I love to do. When I'm able to, I do it every day that I can. I try not to take it for granted. But I'm lucky that I have a great support system around me from everybody within the organization, everybody very thoughtful and looking out for me around here and doing what they can to help make it easier.

I also have family and coaches and friends and teammates that have been helping out a lot, as well.

**Q. When you got the initial news that you were going to be out for the season, how did you handle that emotionally? How did you just get past that and accept it and move on?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, you know, at first I wouldn't say I handled it emotionally. Definitely something that I really had to put my mind to and spend some time and think on and kind of come to some conclusions on things and really settle my mind so I could kind of start focusing on what happened and focus in on what's going to happen and what I've got to do to get to where I need to be.

**Q. What are you able to do right now from a physical standpoint in terms of workouts, so on and so forth?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I can pretty much work out everything except putting weight through my foot at this time.

**Q. Have they given you any kind of timetable or do you have a personal timetable as to when you want to start doing basketball activities?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I'm consulting with the medical team every single day on what next steps are. We have a plan laid out, and every day I talk to them if plans are staying consistent or there's some changes that are going to happen.

But as far as when things are going to happen, it's going to happen when the medical team consults me on it being the right time to do so.

**Q. When the injury happened, did you know it was serious or were you not alarmed?**

CHET HOLMGREN: You know, that was a tough one because I've never had a serious injury in my life, so I didn't really know -- like I had nothing to kind of base it off of and compare it to. When it happened, I just knew I had to get it looked at and see how serious it was.

I didn't imagine anything like this.



**Q. What are some ways that you can focus your energy, maybe learn the game, film study, those types of things in terms of learning the league at this time while you're recovering?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I think you just said a part of it. But it just comes down to putting my mental energy towards it, you know, learning how to really be a professional in areas off the court.

I've dedicated so much time to really hustling in my craft on the court. Now it's really -- this event is making me step back and kind of rework how I do things, and one of those ways is to become professional with watching film and speaking with coaches, trying to learn, watching what's happening, really being engaged on trying to get better through different avenues.

**Q. Do you take some comfort in knowing some great players have gone through this, Joel Embiid, Blake Griffin, that others miss their rookie years and have gone on to have great careers?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, it's always good to be able to look at something and know that it's been done before. It's not like this impossible feat. Even if it was, I was going to put my hardhat on and get to work.

It's great to be able to look and speak to some of those guys possibly on what I can do through this process, because like I said, it's been done before.

**Q. Have you spoken with any of the players that have been through this like Blake?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, briefly I spoke to Joel on what his experience was like, and I talked with one of his trainers a little bit on it, and I got some good words of advice.

**Q. On draft night you said that you really just try to live in the moment, not have expectations heading into each day. How have you been able to kind of maintain that mindset throughout this, which may be slightly different than what you might have been thinking about?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, you know, it all comes down to just keeping a level head, because there's so many ups and downs, and unfortunately this is a down. But I've got to keep my head level and focus on getting better. No matter what the circumstances are, that's the goal at the end of this.

**Q. What was the interaction like with the fans the**

**other day at the opening of the basketball court after the injury? That's the first time I think you interacted with the fans.**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah, it's great. The injury is kind of limiting my mobility a little bit right now, so it's great to get out and see some people, especially our great fans in our community, which I think is top one in the league.

We have great fans and had some great interactions with some kids, and it's great to see things like that being done in the community. It's good for us, it's good for the fans, it's good all around.

**Q. Is there hope maybe four or five months from now you can be back here with the team for traveling, kind of get a feel for what the NBA is like with that schedule?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah. At the end of the day, I'm going to listen to the steps that are laid out in front of me between management and medical staff here. Whatever we end up deciding on, when that time comes, it's really a day-to-day, focusing on what I can get done today and worry about tomorrow tomorrow type of deal.

**Q. We talked about the guys who have gone through this before. One of them is in the building, Nick Collison, a guy who's going to be around a lot for you. How comforting is it to know that he's here, and have you been able to talk to him at all about it?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah. He doesn't live in OKC full time, so I've talked to him a few times on the phone since, and he's down here right now, which it's great to be able to talk to him. He's just another resource I can take advantage of, and he's been extremely helpful. He has a lot of wisdom. He's done things for a long time at a high level, and he's done it the right way.

Kind of following the lead that he gives me will help me a lot.

**Q. I'm with the Japanese media, and Japanese fans are rooting for Rui Hachimura from Gonzaga, of course. Of course they also pay attention to the players from Gonzaga. I want to ask you two questions. What do you think of Rui Hachimura as a player and as a person? And then the next question is you guys got together in Vegas in July. Did you talk to him, and did he give you any advice, or what was your impression of him in person?**

CHET HOLMGREN: So I'm going to answer the first question first. I think Rui Hachimura is a great basketball



player. Obviously a Zag legend. He kind of paved the way at Gonzaga along with a lot of other guys and did a lot of great things there, and he's going to be a great player in the pros, too.

Yeah, we had like a Zag dinner out at Summer League, and now there's a lot of Zags in the NBA, so the table was pretty big, so we were on opposite sides, so I didn't speak with him too much. But whenever I ran into him briefly, he's been a great guy.

**Q. Did you talk to Domas? Because Domas was there.**

CHET HOLMGREN: Yeah.

**Q. Did he give you any information, anything about the organization here? Because he was here. Did he give you anything about the organization, the city or the fans here?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Oh, yeah, yeah. He had all great things to say. It's a business, so guys end up playing in different places and everything, but he had no hard feelings. Obviously it's a competitive thing; he doesn't play here anymore, so he's trying to beat us. But he had great things to say about the people, the fans, the organization all around.

**Q. In the same way some guys have come back from this adversity, there's a pretty good history of big men with feet problems, who were plagued by that their entire career. Is that something that you're aware of or something you just try to blank out of your mind? What steps do you take to try to avoid that?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I mean, I've had to take steps every single day to put my body in the best position for the best possible health on and off the court. I've studied my body a lot, along with people here on the medical staff, and we're taking those proper steps to prevent injury, as well.

**Q. Chet, what would you say to people who might criticize yourself or anybody else playing in some of the sanctioned events over the summer, pickup games or whatnot, and then you get hurt? What would you say to that?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I mean, there's freedom of speech, and criticism is something that comes along with anything. But at the end of the day, I feel like myself as well as other hoopsters and basketball players kind of have to make decisions that's true to themselves and who they are on whether or not they're going to play in exhibition games or whatever it might be in the summer.

At the end of the day, basketball players are going to play basketball. It's just kind of like you've got to feed the love for the game. I don't want an injury like this to kind of take away from that. I'm always going to have love for basketball, so I'm always going to take advantage of opportunities to play basketball. Just got to make sure that you do it right and you're able to kind of avoid things like this.

**Q. Who has the best hair on the team?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Best hair? I'm going to try not to overthink this, but I don't compare us.

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