

# Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

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Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

## Lu Dort

### Press Conference

**Q. Lu, being able to decompress and think back on it, how fun was the season?**

LU DORT: It was really fun, just how close we were and the group of guys we had. It was just fun. We had so much fun in everything that we did together, and overall I feel like we had a good season. There's a lot to be happy about about the season.

**Q. Were you able to learn anything about yourself in particular going through these play-in games?**

LU DORT: About myself? Just to really stay going mean and to always be tough and compete. In those type of games that's a do or die. Obviously we want to win those type of games and I want to win those type of games, so it's really just give it all.

**Q. Can you describe what prepared you to play so well? You've been in three elimination games with the Thunder so far, Game 7 and these two play-in games. Obviously you showed up in a big way in all three. What prepared you to play to well in those games?**

LU DORT: I want to say just everything. Just first, just learning about the opponents first, just watching film, and also the fact that if we don't win this game, it might be over. It's really just to give it all, and it's like you've just got to give everything you've got really for those type of games, and that's my mindset and that's the mentality I have going into those games.

**Q. Do you plan on playing in the World Cup this summer?**

LU DORT: Yeah, definitely. I feel like that will be fun. You know I've been a part of Team Canada for the past two summers and it's been great, the stuff that we've been building. I'll probably be there.

**Q. Just with you and Shai in Canada, teammates, and obviously here, what's it been like as both of you guys have sort of grown alongside each other the last few**



years?

LU DORT: Yeah, it's been good. Shai is my brother, obviously, and spending some more time with him during the off-season, it's always fun. Some of the stuff we're building here with OKC, and at the same time representing our country, it's pretty huge. It'll be fun to just be with him again.

**Q. What would it mean to play for Team Canada with Shai, who you just called your brother, and if Ben plays, who you've also called your brother?**

LU DORT: It would be huge. Well, just the fact that one, just representing our country, and then we have a lot of good players now that we can do something real big and really shock a lot of people.

So that will be good to be a part of that with some real friends that I have, just even outside of basketball that I met. It'll be fun to just go out there and compete with them.

**Q. Everybody knows how close you and Shai are. What was it like for you to see the success he had this year? He's up there with some of the greats of all time.**

LU DORT: Yeah, it was great. I seen it coming, honestly, just the work that he's put in in the off-season and just all the conversations that we had, just in the bubble and all that. I was just really happy and proud of him really.

I just knew it. I saw it coming, just from the work he was putting in in the off-season.

**Q. Obviously a lot of his offense is the reason a lot of people paid attention to what he did this year, but he made such big strides on defense. What did you attribute that to, and did you see that coming out of him?**

LU DORT: I actually did see it coming. I was watching him play this off-season with Team Canada, and he was just really like putting a lot of efforts on defense. I was actually shocked, like yeah.

But no, he can be really -- he can be real effective defensively at the same time just because of his body type and all that. He made a big jump in that, too. And at the

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same time just seeing me sacrificing my body every night to take some players out, just him seeing that, I feel like it kind of touched him at the same time.

**Q. He talked about a lot of defense being want-to. Did you see that? Was that the primary thing with him, he wanted to be a better defensive player, or did you sense him doing some other things defensively to make that leap?**

LU DORT: Honestly all the players know what they've got better at, and that was one thing for him, and he really took it and he did it. He put the work in, and then he came back and showed everybody that he could do it on that end, too. That was big.

**Q. What are some of the main things that you want to work on this off-season?**

LU DORT: A little bit of everything. Off-season is the time to just work on your overall game. Obviously being more efficient, that's one of the priorities, but I'm going to say a little bit of everything.

**Q. Is it going to be the same regimen, track and boxing that you were doing --**

LU DORT: Yeah, I couldn't do it last summer because I was hurt, but I feel like there's so many ways to stay in shape and work on my conditioning, so doing all the running track and boxing, it's fun at the same time and I'm getting my work, so yeah, I'm looking to do that.

**Q. What's it like from your perspective to be a part of this group? You're all really young, all have kind of high ceilings. It seems like you're given liberty to go get it.**

LU DORT: Yeah. It's huge. It was definitely a process to get to this point, and we got so much more, and we've still got to get better. Even though we had a good season, we just got so much more in our tank, and we've just got to keep getting better and really keep stretching the process. I feel like we've been doing a good job of that the past three years, and we've just got more coming.

**Q. You mentioned efficiency. What are some of the keys of kind of improving your efficiency around the rim?**

LU DORT: Honestly, just picking the right shots and just reading the defense. Sometimes it can get a little heated in a game where I force a little bit, and that's some of the stuff I've just got to watch film and see what I could have done better in some type of position. Really that's the main

thing, really taking better shots.

**Q. You talked about foreseeing things happening, and this time last year you told us this team would be in the postseason. How did you see that a year out?**

LU DORT: Just the process, the work that we put in and the vision that we have. But at the same time we've just got to take everything day by day and game by game. Nothing is promised for next season, so we've just got to approach it the same way.

**Q. As this team has developed, I assume your head coach is developing, as well. What have you seen out of Mark's growth, and is there anything that he's done or brought into the team impressed you?**

LU DORT: One thing that Coach Mark has really done a great job of is really pushing us to play hard and compete. That was the main thing always. Even though we're a younger team, less experienced, the main thing is always to go out there and compete and play hard and live with the result. That's one of the things that he's been doing a good job at, and also just the team, some of the players we just grew through experience. We've played more games, been in tougher situations. I feel like that's good for us to go through those type of experiences just to get better.

**Q. Obviously he and his staff have set a pretty good defensive foundation, but offensively you guys took such big strides. What role did he play in getting you guys the evolution that you've been on offense?**

LU DORT: The first thing was to play fast. We're a young team, we have a lot of energy, we can run. We've got really good athletes that can run and play above the rim. That was one of the biggest things that we just -- I feel like just us playing fast made a big jump.

**Q. What's the excitement level of the team to get Chet on the court with you guys next year?**

LU DORT: We're really excited just to see him doing his rehab and even him doing his workouts, he's looking real good, and that's something that we can use definitely, his size and all he can do. We're looking forward for him to be with us, and he's still -- a couple months and he'll be with us.

**Q. What's he like off the court?**

LU DORT: He's a great guy. Real funny guy. Even though he wasn't playing, he was real vocal on the team. He was watching everything that we was doing and he was still involved. That's big from our first year, just the type of

voice like that, and you see he can't wait to go out there with us, but at the same time he's out there with us and he's learning.

**Q. A lot of young teams aren't as focused and don't listen to their head coach as much as you guys did. What was it about Mark that allowed you guys to take leadership from him? Shai and Dub called him the head of the snake. What was it about him that allowed that?**

LU DORT: Yeah, just the foundation that he sets and the way he's getting us ready for big games or anything. You know, Mark is a great coach, and he knows what he's doing at the same time. Just us being young, we have no choice, one, to listen to him, and at the same time we just trust him, everything that he's been telling us to do.

I'm real happy. I feel like I'm getting better as a player just playing under Mark. I'm looking forward for the next year to come.

**Q. Did it help at all that the G-League (indiscernible)?**

LU DORT: Yeah, definitely. Just the fact that he knows about the players that's going through that type of phase, guys that played in the G-League that's trying to make it to the NBA and trying to get better, and just me my first year, just being on a two-way under him as an assistant coach, I feel like me and him spent a lot of time together, and he could really understand me the way that I was fighting just to get a spot.

**Q. Do you think it also helped that he was also a young coach coaching a young team?**

LU DORT: Yeah, I feel like everybody was learning at the same time, just him -- he spent a long time in the G-League, so I felt like he definitely knew what he was doing, but just the fact that he's been with some guys that was trying to figure it out, and that's really a young team, us just trying to figure it out. He really knew what to do.

**Q. Mark has often described you as the catalyst for this defense. We talked about Chet earlier, but what would it mean for you as a defender to have him on the back line; will that change how you operate?**

LU DORT: Yeah, that would be great. I'm doing everything I can do on the ball, but sometimes I'm defending great players and sometimes it happens you get beat. J-Will did a great job having my back, taking all those charges he did. But Chet being a rim protector, you know he's going to clean a lot of stuff at the rim, and that's one thing I'm really looking forward to.

**Q. There were a lot of ups and downs for you personally this season, as well, but from the start of that season to where you are right now, where do you feel like have been your area of growth?**

LU DORT: Honestly, really being patient. Really being patient and letting the game come to me. We really made a big jump and it was kind of hard for me to adjust at first.

But just watching film and having talked with the coaches, I feel like I just had to stay patient and let the game come to me, and I feel like seeing it was way easier and towards the end of the season just for me to really dig into that.

**Q. Do you have any goals as far as accolades go, whether it be all-defense or being top 5 Defensive Player of the Year or any of that on your radar?**

LU DORT: I just want to do anything to help my team win, honestly, and then whatever comes with that comes with that. I mean, if it's all-defensive team or whatever it is, it comes with that. But my main focus is really just to do anything to help my team win.

**Q. Some of the best scorers in the league have mentioned you as one of the best defenders, like Dame said you're top 3. What does it mean to you that those guys think you're that good on that end of the floor?**

LU DORT: It's definitely cool just hearing those type of players say that about me, and I feel like it's just the work I've put in really. My job is to try to take those type of guys out, and I really take pride in it, so hearing them saying stuff like that is nice.

**Q. You guys played in two extremely different play-in games in terms of highs and lows. How can you capitalize on that over the summer?**

LU DORT: Yeah, it was definitely a great experience, but next season we've just got to do everything over again. We're not coming back with 40 wins, we're coming back and it's going to be a (indiscernible) mentality, so we've got to do it all over again, and that's really our approach. It was great that we made it to the play-in, that we got to compete in those type of environment, but we've just got to do everything all over again.

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