

Oklahoma City Thunder Media Conference

Sunday, September 22, 2024
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, USA

Mark Daigneault Press Conference



Q. Just what stood out about your early dealings with George Hill in terms of just his acumen and his preparedness and his ability to perhaps lead the other guys?

MARK DAIGNEAULT: I mean, the words you chose were appropriate. You know, he's acumen and he's got preparedness for sure. He's a great example. He's very verbal and active with the guys in his own way. Very subtly.

But his main source of leadership is the way that he goes about his business. You know, he practices really, really hard. He doesn't take a rep off. When we're walking through something, he's full engagement and he's kind of a walking example of a professional had a has great practice habits, and that's the type of environment that we're trying to teach and that our players are trying to learn, the ones that are younger in their career and they have somebody that is a great example that have is in George. He's been a great influence so far.

Q. A lot of and you a lot of the players have been very complimentary of the young guys both returning and new about how they are approaching training camp, and they are very hungry and ready to work hard. As a coach, what's it like for you to have a group that is really chomping at the bit ready to prove themselves and take advantage of kind of this opportunity, a clean slate ahead of them?

MARK DAIGNEAULT: Yeah, I want to be careful to not even make it younger guys and older veteran guys.

You know, one thing that we talk about a little bit is definition of leadership that we're going to use is that the leader is the person doing the right thing, and so George Hill has done a great job leading but the main reason is because he's doing the right thing.

And when I define leadership like that, it's accessible to everyone. We've gotten great moments of leadership out of everybody in the gym. When a rookie player, you know,

shows up, Josh Hall, and he's making great eye contact and paying attention during every drill, he's leading in that particular moment and so we've got a gym full of guys that are hungry and that are trying to get it right and you know, that goes from, you know, our most veteran players all the way to our guys that are just joining the team.

Q. Can you tell us a little bit more about Josh Hall and Moses Brown, the guys you signed to two-way contracts today?

MARK DAIGNEAULT: Yeah, we're excited about them. They are intriguing players. Moses obviously has a little bit of experience. Josh does not. But you know, two guys, again, like the rest of our group, really eager to learn. Both have great size for position.

Both are very rangy, athletically. So a lot of raw tools there, and then so far, you know, it's early, but so far, have shown the type of qualities of people that improve. They work hard. They pay attention. They try to get it right and they have embraced our environment and our culture so far.

Q. I know plans are still being finalized for what a G-League season might look like and whether that's in a bubble or not. Have you all sort of committed for the blue to be there, wherever that is, if the season goes on?

MARK DAIGNEAULT: I can't speak to that. I don't really know. I haven't been necessarily in those discussions. You know, all I know is that with the shortened G-League season or whenever they are going to end up doing, with 17 players, we are having a lot of conversations about how to supplement the work of the guys that maybe are not in the rotation.

We are not going to play 17 guys every night obviously. We have to figure out how to be creative and create situations where everyone on the team is developing, whether they are getting a ton of game minutes or not, and so those are the types of discussions we're having right now.

But I don't have a ton of specifics on the G-League stuff. I think the league is still trying to figure that out.



Q. One more question on two ways, if I can, it seems like the rules are going to be a little more relaxed this year as far as eliminating that 45-day limit and maybe practices not counting against their clock and playing upwards of 50 games. Obviously that would have helped a guy like Lou a little bit more last year, but for Josh and Moses, how can those new rules sort of help them sort of get more time and more experience?

MARK DAIGNEAULT: I mean, obviously they are going to end up with more time with the NBA team as a result of the rule. You know, one mentality that Sam has made clear since we implemented the two ways is that everyone is on the roster. There's really no separation. You know, these guys are Thunder players. They are going to be treated like Thunder players. They will develop like Thunder players.

They will benefit from being around the team more, and two ways, I'm not speaking specific to Josh and Moses right now but two ways around the league will suffer from having less G-League opportunities. You know, it's valuable developmental experience when those guys can play with the blue or with their G-League affiliate, and so that's missing a bit but like I said, we are looking at every possible way to supplement that so that we keep not only the two-way players but everybody on a track of development.

Q. I know that Pokuševski has an usual offensive game for his size but on the defensive end, do you have any feel for the type of players that he'll guard, like wings or bigs? Do you have any feel for that?

MARK DAIGNEAULT: Most of his practice reps have been on wings so far. That's been kind of the first approach we've taken. We think with somebody like him that probably to your point can go either way, rather than throwing two different positions at him with different responsibilities, we've decided to prioritize. And so we're starting him on the perimeter with those sorts of defensive skills.

But that's not to say that that won't change, and it's not to say that as time goes on, you know, he won't end up guarding different people but as of right now, you know, we're focusing more on the perimeter skills.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports