

how to improve jumpshot drill Lakers/Nets quotes 6/6/02

Posted by s_knight8 - 2008/05/04 18:06

<http://sports.yahoo.com/nba/news/ap/20020607/ap-nets-lakers-nbafinals...> If we go back to Jersey 0-2, there's a lot of pressure on us to win all three games at home," he said Thursday. Against a team like that, this is going to be very tough." I know we're going to play a much better game," said New Jersey's Keith Van Horn, who typified his team's effort, shooting 1-of-6 for two points in the first half before scoring 10 in the second half. I wouldn't say we were necessarily in awe," Van Horn said. I think that collectively as a team, we tried to calm ourselves down and tried to get off that high. I think we calmed ourselves down a little too much and sometimes that happens. But I thought we responded well after the first quarter, and we're going to respond well the rest of the series." All the pressure's on LA to sweep or, you know, win this series," Kidd said. Shaq is like a modern Wilt Chamberlain. What he does, you don't see anybody else doing in the history of the game," teammate Kobe Bryant said. It's ridiculous." You just have to try to be physical with him, give him different looks," Collins said. The first time I played against him, I wasn't happy with my performance. I felt I did a better job against him, but you know he's going to score his points. You just don't want him to get dunks." Shaq and Kobe, if they get their 50 to 55 points, close to 60 points, I can live with that," the Nets' coach said. My main objective is to make sure the other guys don't hurt us. Rick Fox had 14 (points) and eight (rebounds), that hurt us. Shaq is going to score, Kobe is going to score. We've got to make sure we keep their role players to a minimum." One thing that's magnified in this team is the effectiveness of Shaquille O'Neal," Lakers coach Phil Jackson said. Incredible ability to overmatch and overplay and overdominate the other team's centers." <http://sports.yahoo.com/nba/news/20020606/benchesfr.html> Last night was one of those nights where they didn't give us a whole lot, admitted Scott, who watched New Jersey's bench muster a measly 19 points in the opener. Jackson took it a step further, addressing the issue in practice Thursday after watching his Lakers total nine points in increasingly limited action Wednesday. We're going to have to have a lot of help all the way through, he said. Today was specifically a practice that we tried to work with our second unit and our bench group to come out and give us some punch. We watched film and we realized that we're not giving enough spark, Lakers reserve forward Devean George said. Our bench is very important to us, Scott said. They've been a very important part of our success all season long. So if our guys are coming off the bench and providing points and rebounds and steals and doing the things that they've done 75 to 80 percent of the time, then we'll be successful. It's the NBA Finals, Jefferson said. It would be silly to shorten the rotation now. You could mess up a whole lot of things. We're down to the basic crew that's been playing the most minutes for this championship team the last two years and hopefully can win a third championship, Jackson said. That group is now starting. So there's a drop-off when we go to our bench and I think that's hurt us. Our bench was pretty depleted toward the end of the season because Robert was put into the starting lineup, Lakers reserve guard Brian Shaw said. He was the guy that came in off the bench and gave great game for us. That's another reason why our bench rotation is a little shorter. There's times where Phil tightens up the rotation and keep Kobe and Shaq in as long as we possibly can, Shaw said. If we come in and we're not effective, he's going to go back to the starters pretty fast. Our production has not been as good as theirs has been throughout the playoffs, George said. I think we'll be fine if we can match their bench play. That's one thing we're trying to focus on, trying to give our starters a break because they're playing so many minutes, George said. This team (Nets) is a running team, a high-energy team, and they (Lakers starters) need a break. That's something we need to work on. Harris thought he and the rest of the reserves were a bit anxious. A shooter who can heat up quickly, he was averaging 9.1 points per game during the playoffs but made just 1-of-5 shots in 25 minutes, missing both of his 3-pointers. We tried to hit the home run early and took a lot of threes trying to get the lead down, he said. There's always a sense of urgency, because whenever you come in the game and the game is tied or you're up two or down two, you have to maintain that type of intensity, Jefferson said. In Game One, we had to try and raise it a little bit. Jefferson was averaging seven points per game but managed just four in 22 minutes, missing two free throws. He did grab six rebounds and displayed aggressiveness at both ends. We did some good things, he said. We don't have to score 35, 40 points to outplay another team's bench. We have to go out there and play good defense and rebound. A lot of times we score points because we're just trying to maintain with the other team. We can do it, without a doubt. We've been doing it all year long. That's something they have to do just to stay in the game, Walker said. Their bench has to play well in order for them to be in the game. <http://sports.yahoo.com/nba/news/ap/20020606/ap-nbafinals-nets.html> I can make those shots," the always self-assured Martin said Thursday. They give me the same shots tomorrow I am going to take them. I am going to be aggressive. I made those shots all year. I'll keep shooting." That's normal, you miss a few that you normally make, you start thinking about it," Martin said. But I am going to keep shooting. If it goes in, it goes in. If it doesn't, I am going to keep shooting." That was something I was just trying to do," Horry said. Coaches got mad at me because I wasn't on him. That was something I just wanted to do because I was so worried about him getting his dunks. I would prefer him shooting jumpers than to getting dunks." Los Angeles assistant coach Jim Clemons said the Lakers are learning about the Nets, so veterans like Horry experiment. If you don't have to guard a guy, or you can give him a shot or find out what his tendencies, that's important," he said. We have scouting reports, but when you come down and play, it's a feeling out process." One good thing is this game didn't deflate us," Nets forward Keith Van Horn said. It gave us more confidence, knowing that if we play for four quarters we can compete with this team. Going into Game 2, we are more confident than we were in Game 1." <http://sports.yahoo.com/nba/news/ap/20020606/ap-nbafinals-lakers.html> I normally don't concern myself with my offensive output," Bryant said after practice Thursday. When asked what the Lakers wanted to change entering Game 2, Bryant quickly replied: Make more shots. I had a couple easy looks, just didn't fall for me." I thought we did a pretty good job on Kobe," Scott said. On the perimeter, we did a pretty good job. I think he was deferring to Shaq.

Other than the first quarter, I was pretty happy with the way we played. We let (Bryant) penetrate a little too much and he got to the foul line." I think we played as if we had a 20-point lead, a 23-point lead, as opposed to playing the possession," Bryant said. And just focus on playing good basketball. Start of the game, we came out with a lot of intensity and then, you know, once you get a (big) lead, you have a tendency to let up. That's something we addressed today and hopefully it won't happen again." In the first half, we just moved the ball wherever we wanted to move it, got Shaq the ball wherever we wanted to," Bryant said. I think that's going to be a minor adjustment (Scott) is going to make for Game 2, and we're going to be ready for it. In Game 1, they didn't play like themselves outside of the last two quarters or something like that. They were nervous in Game 1. I think after Game 2, we'll have a much better feel for who they are as a basketball team." Forward Robert Horry said he didn't believe the Lakers necessarily relaxed when they got their big lead. In the first quarter, we did things that came easy and we kept trying to do them because they worked," he said. But sometimes, you just have to make changes, and I didn't think we made changes in the second, third and fourth quarter. But the bottom line is you try to do enough for a win. "If this was the CBA, we might have been worried. but we got a nice little win." <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-plaschke07jun07.story>

Jason Collins, the Stanford man, pointed wearily to his right and concocted a metaphor from a slab of concrete. Guarding Shaq is like standing up against that wall, he said. It's like trying to move that wall. Aaron Williams sat in the middle of the bleachers fiddling with his cell phone, one imagining his fingers on 911, or at least 1-800-SMOTHER. He's a beast, he said. Yet Byron Scott shows up Wednesday with the idea that his slight club is going to stop O'Neal with one man? No double-team? No help? Said MacCulloch, It's the coach's decision. Said Collins, We just follow the game plan. While floundering around against a guy who outweighs them by at least 50 pounds each, the three Nets totaled 12 fouls. O'Neal was charged with two. It drains you a little bit, acknowledged MacCulloch. It's a David and Goliath situation, Williams said. You can get away with a lot more with him, Collins said. I push on Shaq and he doesn't move, Collins said. But he catches me with an elbow and I fly to the ground and I look over at Joey and he just ... Meanwhile, in the stands behind the basket, a heckler was hitting Collins below the belt. You're such a bum, you're a backup to MacCulloch! he shouted. I had to do exercises just to get in shape to play him, Madsen said. So his advice when Collins asked? I told him, 'Good luck,' Madsen said. We're going to play him the right way, Williams said. We're going to accept the challenge. Shaq and Kobe, if they get 50-55 points, close to 60 points, I can live with that, because they're such great scorers, Scott said. My main objective is to make sure the other guys don't hurt us. Playing him feels like lifting weights, Collins said. The entire fourth quarter, lifting weights. <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-lakernotes07jun07.story>

Phil Jackson, of course, couldn't resist. Sacramento is a political town, is it not? he said. They would have some consumer advocate groups and Ralph Nader would be there. I think that's typical. I think the norm, when you go through a course of a year and you look at how many free throws a game Shaquille makes or takes, I think you'd find that somewhere in the balance of a seven-game series against Sacramento that he shot about the normal amount he would normally shoot. I think that's ridiculous that this was done. But, you know, I do feel sorry for Sacramento. It's tough to be good losers. It is. It's not an easy thing to do. New Jersey forward Kenyon Martin took exception Thursday to an assertion by Jackson that the Lakers gave the Nets confidence with three lackluster quarters in Game 1. We had confidence before the game, he said. They didn't give us confidence. How they going to take something they didn't give us? They didn't give us anything, so they can't take nothing. You get Kenyon Martin a clear lane to the basket, you know what he's going to do with it, Kobe Bryant said. You're better off backing up off of him.... If he takes a jump shot, put a hand in his face and contest it. Do I think horses are athletes? Bryant repeated to a man across the room. I would say so, yeah. Because they run around the track. I don't know about the guys that are on their backs ... but the horses are fine. The Lakers were reasonably satisfied with their defense on Jason Kidd in Game 1. He's going to get his, Lindsey Hunter said. He's going to score and get his assists. As good as he is, it's hard to stop him, and I don't think he really got into his game. <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-netnotes07jun07.story>

We'll adjust, Harris said. Jason was doing what Jason does. We didn't knock down our shots. We needed to help him out. He did his job.... I don't think we played in the first quarter the way we've played all year. Our offense was kind of stagnant. We can't do it again in Game 2. Van Horn had a few ideas on how to improve matters for Game 2. Obviously, our biggest adjustment is just going to be our mind-set going into the first quarter, he said, referring to the 29-14 drubbing the Nets took in the opening quarter of Game 1. Number two is rebounding the ball and getting it into Jason's hands a little better. We're not going to underestimate them on the boards for the rest of the series. I know we'll be much better in Game 2, Van Horn said. I feel confident. We missed a lot of free throws, but I don't think it was jitters, Harris said. I'm not concerned about free throws. We just had a terrible first quarter. <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-lakers07jun07.story>

Frankly, O'Neal couldn't care. Go straight up, double-team him, zone him, bolo tie him with the Collins twins, dress out Willis Reed, whatever. Been getting doubled all my life, he said Thursday afternoon. It's not that I want it to be a part of my legacy, O'Neal said. When I was in Orlando, we got swept. I made a promise to myself and my family that if we ever got back to the Finals I will make sure that happen again. So every game on, I just have to make myself known, make my presence known. In the wake of another enormous game by O'Neal 36 points and 16 rebounds in Game 1 a question being lobbed around the news conferences Thursday afternoon was the basketball version of Ginger or Mary Ann? That is, Shaq or Michael? Jackson, an otherwise intelligent man, last year was sucked into the Shaq-or-Kobe query, chose Shaq, and suffered the consequences. A year later, he grinned. Yeah, sure, he said. You want to stab me in the back now or later? He won six championships with Michael Jordan, and has two in two seasons with O'Neal. Kobe Bryant, however, did not hesitate. Shaq, he said. Because Shaq shoots such a high percentage. I think everybody knows that. I mean, you give him the ball in the paint, that's an automatic two. He's a modern Wilt Chamberlain. What he does, you don't see anybody else doing in the history of the game. So, he'd bypass Jordan, then? I would have to, man, Bryant said. I would have to take Shaq. Byron Scott? Shaq, he said. He's the most

dominant player in the game. I mean, finding guys like Shaq, they come around once in a lifetime. I'm not saying you're going to find two or three Michael Jordans, but you just don't find a Shaq. I still feel pretty much the same, but I've been getting through it all year, O'Neal said. I don't think anybody can do what I do. I've been playing through pain. I never really talk about the pain unless you guys ask me. But I've just always been sucking it up. Asked if it were easier to play through now, with the end of the season so clear, he shook his head and said, No, it's not whether it's easy, hard. When I go into the game, the adrenaline takes over. Feel no pain. Particularly now, though, in Game 2 of the NBA Finals, versus three months ago, when the only things ahead were trips and ice buckets and little Indocin tablets and games whose meanings were debatable. Oh, yeah, of course, of course, he said. Definitely more now. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/07/sports/basketball/07NETS.html> We know how good they are, we know what they're made of, Kerry Kittles said today, but we know what we're made of, too. We feel we have to get better, Kenyon Martin said. If we don't, it will be over quick. I saw Sacramento put four guys around him; he had 41 points, so I don't know if I want to put five guys on him and leave Robert and Fisher and Fox and especially Kobe wide open, Nets Coach Byron Scott said, referring to Robert Horry, Derek Fisher, Rick Fox and Kobe Bryant. The Lakers were not expecting the Nets to stay in man-to-man defense as they did in Game 1. I seriously doubt they will do that, said Bryant, who shot only 6 of 16 but scored 22 points. If they do decide to do that, we'll just pound the ball inside all night long. Kidd said Kittles and Van Horn had to emerge. We need them to be productive and aggressive like they have been, he said. Our biggest adjustment is going to be our mind-set coming into the first quarter, Van Horn said. Also, we need to rebound the ball so we can get the ball in Jason's hands. We really underestimated their aggressiveness on the boards. We're disappointed in ourselves, Fox said. We're not going to let that happen again. We recognize that we can play better, we will play better and the opportunity to win another championship is right in front of us. It was kind of like the Lakers were going through a dummy offensive drill where we were just standing and watching and they were doing everything right and they were the aggressors, Kidd said. The Lakers' Brian Shaw said they never felt as if they were going to lose. We could keep them at bay when we wanted to, he said. If there was a game to be gotten or if we were going to be slipping, last night was it. We're just going to get better from this point on and I think you'll see a different team tomorrow night. <http://www.nytimes.com/2002/06/07/sports/basketball/07JASO.html> If I hit the ground, it's because he knocked me over, said Collins, the Nets' first-year center. I don't go out there to flop. I know that I'm a rookie in this league and he's Shaquille O'Neal, so I'm not going to get that call a lot of times. That's your dream scenario, said Collins, who guarded O'Neal for the final eight minutes of the game. I grew up here in Los Angeles, and Shaquille O'Neal's the best center in the league. You want to always go up against the best, and I always want to beat the best. It's an interesting situation because during the game, I want the Lakers to win by 30 and so I want Shaq to go to work, Madsen said. At the same time, I see Jason working hard and I respect that effort and I respect his skills and I respect him doing a great job on a tough assignment. I feel for anybody who has to try to guard Shaq one on one. It's not a fun assignment, and it's not a glamorous assignment. Madsen remembers guarding O'Neal in his first training camp with the Lakers, last season. Honestly, Shaq was lowering his shoulder and going so hard that it threw my back out of place for almost a month, Madsen said. Our trainer, Gary Vitti, said, 'Now you know what all the other trainers in the league have to go through after their team plays Shaq.' It takes their players two or three weeks to get better. Collins is fine physically he only played eight minutes. His statistical output was not bad, recording 5 points, 2 rebounds and an assist while committing 5 fouls. O'Neal scored 11 of his 36 points against Collins. But Nets Coach Byron Scott said Collins had earned more playing time Friday in Game 2. I thought he did a terrific job, Scott said. I thought he did a better job of keeping his body on Shaq than Aaron and Todd. Will he play more? Probably. I haven't worked on it as well as other people have, Collins said with a grin. I think there's a technique to it and being a rookie in this league, I'm going to have to learn from the vets how they do it. It's something I try not to do.

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