

failed on four chances

Escrito por zxlbxj1 - 08/09/2018 08:01

HOUSTON -- Dwight Howard is happy again. He says he has put his disappointing and drama-filled season in Los Angeles behind him. He seems ecstatic about joining the Houston Rockets and helping the young team compete for a championship -- and maybe, just maybe, he will return to form as the NBAs most dominant big man. "Im in a better place mentally, physically and spiritually now," Howard said. His delight is evident in watching him interact with his new teammates. He wears a broad smile and fits of laughter are common as he chats with his fellow Rockets. Howard spurned the Lakers to sign an \$88 million deal with Houston, joining James Harden and a team that made the playoffs last season for the first time since 2009. He wouldnt get into specifics about the problems in his short stint with the Lakers after he was traded there in August 2012 from Orlando as part of a four-team trade. But most agree that he had a strained relationship with Kobe Bryant in a season where he has admitted that he wasnt having fun at times. The Lakers struggled all season and was swept in the first round of the playoffs. The Lakers could have offered him a five-year contract worth \$118 million, but he chose to make the move to Houston with a four-year deal. "The situation in L.A., what happened is over with," Howard said. "It didnt work out on both sides. So we have to move on. It happens in everyday life. People decide to do different things with their lives. Its just that when youre NBA and at the top of your game everybody wants to know what youre doing." Howard lights up when asked about his new teammates and talks endlessly about the fun theyve had in bonding both on and off the court. When asked if that aspect of the move was the most important to him after last season, his response was telling -- even if he wouldnt specifically address the Lakers. "For any team to be successful you have to have a great environment," he said. "You dont want to work in a bad place." Whether simply perception or reality, his feud with Bryant had some wondering if he was the problem. There were questions if he might mess up the chemistry of a team that made marked improvement in the first year with James Harden on the roster. The Rockets brushed off that notion, and everyone has raved about Howards personality and work ethic. "Dwights a great guy," coach Kevin McHale said. "Plays hard, likes to have fun, so its just been pretty seamless to add him to the team." Harden, who was the fifth-leading scorer in the league last season, rolled his eyes when asked if hed be able to coexist with Howard when Bryant couldnt. "Its my job to make it work," the 24-year-old Harden said. "Hes going to teach me some things that I dont know and Ill teach him some things he doesnt know. Thats the kind of partnership and friendship were going to have in order to be successful. Thats the only way you can be successful is if you be 100 per cent with each other." Howard struggled last season after back surgery. He now knows that he came back too soon and said he never felt like himself. An entire off-season of rehabilitation and training has him feeling like the player he once was. He wasnt as dominant in 2012 as he has been, but still averaged more than 17 points per game and led the league in rebounding with 12.4 an outing. Though hes left L.A., he knows that the glare of the spotlight probably wont dim much with the expectations surrounding the Rockets. Thats OK with him. After last year, hes more equipped to deal with it. "If you get caught up in the good, bad and the ugly, it messes you up as a person and as a player," he said. "I think some of that happened with me last year. I allowed the bad stuff that happened to really sit in my head, push myself away from people in different situations and thats not who I am. So you have to step away from all the negativity or whatever it might be and just focus on the task at hand." Howard is just 27, but hes one of the older players on a Houston team that was the NBAs youngest a year ago. He enjoys the energy of his younger teammates, but joked that when theyd want to play 10 or 12 pickup games in a row, hed beg them to slow down. "Im like, Guys, Im almost pushing 30. I need a break," he said. "But I love it." Howard stayed away from talking Lakers, but he couldnt stop talking about his other former team, the Magic. He referred to Orlando often when discussing why he likes the Rockets and how theyve made him feel at home. Howard specifically talked about the bond he and his Magic teammates had in 2009. "Theyre full of life and after practice everybody is together talking and I just love that feeling," he said of the Rockets. "It reminds me of the team in Orlando when we went to the Finals -- we were always together. Everything that we did was together. It really makes the team better

on the floor when you have that great chemistry off the floor." Now, hes made the Rockets contenders after several lean years for the first time since Yao Ming and Tracy McGrady were on the roster. "Were goofy. We have fun, but we like to work," Harden said, referring to himself and Howard. "Thats the most important thing. Were not going to be all strict, were young. We like to have fun. When its time to get serious and when its time to win, well be focused." Caris LeVert Jersey . Now, the hottest team on the ATP are pointing their sights on qualifying for the eight-team season finals in London next November. Pospisil has now established the year-end World Tour Finals as the benchmark for a breakthrough season, with Pospisil and Sock provisionally standing ninth. Jared Dudley Jersey . - In about six minutes, the Memphis Grizzlies had allowed their 23-point lead to be cut to seven.

<http://www.cheapnetsjerseys.com/>. Lowry and the Raptors officially announced a four-year US\$48 million dollar deal Thursday. The deal was reported last week but couldnt be made official until Thursday, when the moratorium on signings was lifted. "They were real factors. I did my homework. Jarrett Allen Jersey . - A mixed martial arts fighter who changed his name to War Machine was ordered Friday to stand trial in Nevada state court on 34 felony charges including attempted murder, sexual assault and kidnapping that could get him life in prison for allegedly attacking his porn star ex-girlfriend and her friend. Dzanan Musa Jersey . -- The Minnesota Vikings have signed Jerome Simpson, the former Cincinnati Bengals wide receiver recently convicted on a felony drug charge. Los Angeles, CA (SportsNetwork.com) - Dennis Wideman scored the winning goal in the final minute of overtime as the Calgary Flames nabbed a 2-1 win over the Los Angeles Kings on Monday. Wideman fired a shot on net from the left circle that appeared to hit the crossbar and come out the other side. However, when play was stopped and the refs got a chance to review, it was determined that the puck hit the camera in the back of the net and came out, and Wideman was credited with his 12th goal of the season for the win. Sean Monahan had the other goal, while Joni Ortio had 33 saves for the Flames, who are 4-0-0 on a five-game road trip. Matt Greene scored and Jonathan Quick had 21 saves for the Kings, who have lost their past three. dddddd This game stayed scoreless until the third period when Greene put the Kings on the board as his slap shot from the right point found its way through some bodies and into the net at 10:23. Calgary, though, tied the game with 6:05 to play in regulation as Monahan skated in on a breakaway down the left wing and fired a wrister that Quick got a piece of, but it retained enough momentum to go into the net. Game Notes Los Angeles plays in San Jose on Wednesday ... Calgary wraps up its road trip in Anaheim on Wednesday ... Neither team scored on the power play, as Los Angeles failed on four chances and Calgary five. Cheap Lions Jerseys Cheap Packers Jerseys Cheap Jets Jerseys Cheap Dolphins Jerseys Cheap Patriots Jerseys Cheap Jaguars Jerseys Cheap Titans Jerseys Cheap Chargers Jerseys Cheap Giants Jerseys Cheap Saints Jerseys Cheap Buccaneers Jerseys Cheap 49ers Jerseys Cheap Seahawks Jerseys Cheap Rams Jerseys Cheap Vikings Jerseys Cheap Colts Jerseys ' ' '

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