

NFL

# Seahawks give rookies extensive course in NFL transition

By **TIM BOOTH**  
AP Sports Writer

RENTON, Wash. — Pete Carroll stood at the front of the auditorium just like he would for any other meeting as the head coach of the Seattle Seahawks.

But his words Monday were brief, poignant and directed just at his newest players. And they had nothing to do with what these rookies end up doing on the field.

"It's so important to us to help you guys figure out what is coming," Carroll said.

When the NFL did away with its rookie symposium in Canton, Ohio, it put the onus back on the teams to organize three days of rookie transition education after the completion of their minicamps and before players head off on their summer breaks. Seattle took it a step further, creating an education program that started following the completion of the Seahawks' rookie

minicamp the second week of May and will conclude with the mandatory three days this week.

"They've been with us since May 9 so we had nothing but time," said Mo Kelly, vice president of player development. "It's a redundancy type deal. They can never hear it enough. We've talked to them on finances, I don't know how many meetings we've had so far, but guess what? They're still going to make mistakes. They're still young men. They're still growing up. Imagine if you were 21 years old with a lot of money in your pocket. That's the thing I keep thinking about it is they're young individuals, they're going to make mistakes and we have to be here to help them when they make mistakes."

Seattle's program was opened to the media Monday and included a history lesson on the franchise and a panel discussion with former players Bryce Fisher, Jordan Babineaux, Marcus Trufant



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson  
**Former Seattle Seahawks' Walter Jones, center, address rookies during a panel discussion with Bruce Fisher, left, Jordan Babineaux and Marcus Trufant, right, at the football team's training camp Monday, June 20, 2016, in Renton, Wash.**

and Hall of Fame offensive tackle Walter Jones on the lessons learned and pitfalls to avoid as a young player entering the league.

Much of the conversation revolved around finances and the circle of friends and family suddenly looking for money.

"Nobody thinks they have to worry about managing that. They think they have that under wraps.

They go from the small kid, the young one, to now being the person in their family that everyone turns to and asks questions to," Kelly said. "Now they have to have a PhD in their finances. Everybody is asking them about spending money or getting money from them. Dealing with family and friends is really, really tough because it's close to the vest. We can talk about it, but

until you live it and be put in a situation like that it's tough to understand."

That's where the experiences of former players proved important. All four came from different backgrounds and entered the league with different expectations, but their stories shared a common theme. Yes, mistakes will be made. But the ultimate priority for these rookies is not endangering their future.

"You have more to lose now. So what are you willing to bargain? That's the question," Babineaux said. "What is this position and this opportunity that you guys have in front of you worth to you? That means a change in attitude. It requires a change in lifestyle. And it requires a change in really the way you act. The choices that you now have to make. Because what you are doing now is investing in your future and every choice and decision that you make will be a result of where you end up."

Trufant's recommendation was to have someone able to deflect those requests, an intermediary to work through and keep the pressure off the individual player. Jones, who earned the most of anyone on the panel during his Hall of Fame career, told the rookies to start training their families now on priorities.

"It's going to be tough because you've got people tugging and pulling, that want something," Jones said. "But you've just got to make sure you're taking care of the people that you feel that's in need or you, say this is the person I want to take care of."

Rookies also questioned the vets about workout programs over the next six weeks and how to watch their diets so they report to camp in shape.

"To be able to hear from guys that have sat in the same seats as us and done the same things as us is priceless," said first-round pick Germain Ifedi.

NBA

# Disappointed Warriors vow to get back to NBA Finals stage

By **JANIE MCCAULEY**  
AP Sports Writer

OAKLAND, Calif. — Draymond Green wants to maintain the momentum from a special season that fell short by competing in the Rio Olympics. Klay Thompson plans to take his mind off basketball and missed chances entirely and go watch brother Trayce play baseball for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Stephen Curry's toddler daughter, Riley, helped the crestfallen MVP begin to put things in perspective by telling him "It's OK" to lose.

While Green is eager to immediately move forward, Thompson was despondent a day later, still at a loss for

words to describe how the Warriors became the first team in NBA history to squander a 3-1 Finals lead and miss out on a second straight championship that was there to be had.

"We'll be there again. You've just got to realize how bad it hurts and why winning is so good," Thompson said. "It was very disappointing just because we know how good we are. We feel like we're still the best team in the world. We let that slide. It hurts right now. I can't tell you when the disappointment's going to fade, but it will."

The best team in regular-season history with 73 wins, Golden State succumbed to a determined

LeBron James and the Cavaliers 93-89 on Sunday night as Cleveland capped a remarkable comeback for the franchise's first title — doing so with three straight victories, two at typically intimidating Oracle Arena — and to end the city's 52-year championship drought.

"To sit and dwell on it, that's not going to do anything for me," said Green, who sat out the Game 5 defeat while suspended for flagrant fouls. "I'm not going to sit and throw a pity party for myself or my teammates or anybody else. We were a minute away from winning a championship. We had a 3-1 lead, we had all the opportunities in the world we needed. Got to take your

hat off to them. They fought, they battled and they took the series. It's nothing to sit around and cry about. It's something that you learn from."

A downtrodden locker room was a strange sight for this "Strength In Numbers" group, which relied on its deep bench right along with the shooting touch of Splash Brothers Curry and Thompson and Green's emotions and physical play on both ends of the court.

"We've had so many moments of joy together, and it was like, 'Wow, we're actually having a moment of sorrow as a team,'" Coach of the Year Steve Kerr said. "It's a great reminder that, first of all, it's not easy to win a

championship. But, as I said, it's life. Things happen. You move on."

Curry, for one, can't do that just yet. He will spend the summer thinking about what went wrong, what more he could have done to change the outcome.

"You look at the history of the league, it would have been really nice to be in that group of teams that repeated," Curry said, "creating that year-to-year special accomplishment. ... The teams that have fallen short found a way to come back stronger."

Golden State lost as many games in the post-season — nine — as it did in a 73-win regular season while breaking the 1995-96

Chicago Bulls' record for victories and he will appreciate "a special journey, a special ride" in spite of the finish.

He woke up all night long in disbelief.

"It was very surreal just sitting in your bed, staring at the ceiling and realizing that the season was over," Curry said.

The first unanimous MVP, Curry knocked down a record 402 3-pointers this season before his up-and-down playoffs began with the frustration of a first-round ankle injury and then a sprained knee. He was far from his best in the Finals, and doesn't need to hear it from anybody given he is his own worst critic.

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