

## Eastern Conference Final Post-Practice Quotes, May 17 -- John Tortorella

STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS  
NHL Eastern Conference Final  
Philadelphia Flyers at Tampa Bay Lightning  
Post-Practice Quotes  
St. Pete Times Forum  
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### COACH JOHN TORTORELLA

Q. A lot of attention has been focused on Keith Primeau kind of taking charge for Philly. Would you like to see somebody on your team kind of take charge in that kind of capacity or do you feel you have a team that collectively they can do it?

JOHN TORTORELLA: I always think you need someone to try to lead the charge, I think. But eventually it has to be collectively. I don't think any one guy is going to win a series. Keith has played very well for them and I think other guys are chipping in for them. That has to be our mindset. I think some guys are trying to do that, but eventually to go through a 7-game series against a quality club like Philly, everybody is going to have to chip in.

Q. Do you think that the time off has allowed them to survive sort of the attrition thing that would normally take into account in a series like their defense being beat up?

JOHN TORTORELLA: I think both teams, as players and as coaches, we like the format as going every other night. I think that it's Playoffs. It ends up being a more Playoff-type scenario. But we don't put the schedule together. We go by the schedule and I think both teams, with the two days, it's helped some players.

Our defense is pretty beat up also and it's helped out some guys and even just the aches and pains of a series, so we have no control over it. I always enjoy going every other night because I think the battle stays on as you play. I think you lose a little bit of the luster when you have two days off and that's a big part of Playoff hockey.

Q. Can you fill us in on the status of Cory Stillman and how close is Jassen Cullimore for --

JOHN TORTORELLA: Today Stillman was just body maintenance, just leaving him off the ice. Culli is out.

Q. Following up on what Hitchcock says when you have these two days off and you are the team that's won last you have lost all the momentum, you can't build off of it. It's a lot harder to restart, whereas the team that's lost, comes back with a different attitude.

JOHN TORTORELLA: Well, to a certain point I agree. But you also have to look at it the other way. I think when you end up losing one you don't like sitting around for a couple of days either thinking about it. I think as both teams probably do, the mindset is you need to move right by the games, especially when you take a tough one and a loss.

So I agree, but there's also the other end of it, sitting around. Guys want to play; these guys don't want to practice. It's not about tape anymore. It's not about practice. It is about playing. So no matter what the scenario is, after the game is finished, you know, like to go out, get away from it for a few hours then play again. So that's the weight I look at it.

Q. What is Brad Lukowich's status?

JOHN TORTORELLA: Luke will be able to play. He's ready to go.

Q. The series has gone four games, already obviously these two teams know the tendency of each other at this point. How do you gain the extra edge, does it come down to attitude in the game or adjustments or what is the difference-maker do you think?

JOHN TORTORELLA: No, I don't think it's adjustment. I don't think it's tendencies. I think it's a mindset. I think it's just a terrific series. It's had the ups and downs of no team winning two in a row, and winning in the other team's building. I think it's just been a terrific series. As you go, I

think to five, six, seven, it's attrition. It is a little bit of mental toughness and how you get it done. It's simplifying in getting it done, so to me it's more mental than anything.

Q. Hitchcock was saying today the banter between the two teams in his mind is just fun especially between you and him. Are you seeing it as fun or taking it a little bit more seriously?

JOHN TORTORELLA: Well, you know, I made some comments after Game 2, I believe it was - was it not - yes, Game 2. Those comments were made to protect my team. I felt at that time the situation that we felt was going on in Game 2. I will be honest with you, it was to protect my hockey club. I think coaches need to do that. If the same situation arose I'd do it again. You know, but now yesterday -- I am not sure -- I know I haven't said another word about Hitch or anything. I think someone in the media -- I just happened to be watching the game the other night, and/or yesterday afternoon and someone said that I said something else about Hitch talking too much. Which I never did. That's not fair to him; it's not fair to me. But what is fair? I understand that. That banter -- and to me, some of the other banter that's going on, if you'd like to call it, some of the other, to me, it's just childish comments, that goes on now, I am out. I am not going to get involved in it anymore. Because you know what worries me? I did it for a reason in Game 2. Hitch needs to do what he wants to do. But I just don't want us to lose site of the integrity of the game here in this series. We have one helluva series going on here. So as far as all the other comments going on, I mean, I am out. It's about the players, and I think this is a great series for the National Hockey League. It's just two teams with quality people going toe to toe. Now we have 3 more left. We could have three more. Five more days of great hockey. So that's what we're involved in. The other comments going on around here and people trying to infer my comments, I just don't want to lose site of what this is about, and so that's the way we are going to try to approach it.

Q. That means you don't want to hear what Hitch said today?

JOHN TORTORELLA: No. (Laughs).

Q. You are ruining my setup.

JOHN TORTORELLA: I know you guys have had fun with it. But I am -- and I am serious about that. I really -- I have never been one to get involved in a bunch of this stuff because it's about the players. But as coaches and Ken knows also at certain times you need to protect your hockey club, and as I said, I do the same thing in that type of situation. But you know, with all the other stuff going on and not from the coach, and not from Ken, and not from me, some of the other stuff that's going on, to me it's a bit childish, and we're concerned about our team. He's concerned about his club. And it's just such a terrific series, we're really excited about being involved in it. I think it's going to be a tremendous three, four or five days, we'll see where it goes.

Q. Not even curious?

JOHN TORTORELLA: No, no, I am not. Sorry, boys.