

Warriors vs. Grizzlies Rivarly is Spearheaded by 'Draymond Green vs. Dillon Brooks' Feud



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The rivalry between the Steph Curry-led Warriors and the Ja Morant-led Grizzlies dates back to a play-in-tournament game at the conclusion of the 2021 regular season, where the latter upset the 3-time champions in an overtime thriller (117-112). The instant classic set the stage for a collision course in the Western Conference semi-finals the following post-season. With a healthy Klay Thompson back in the fold, the Warriors reshaped back into championship-contending form en route to securing the #3 seed. On the flip side, their opponents from the Southwest Division defied the pre-season odds by finishing with the second-best record in the conference on the heels of a regular season performance that would see Ja Morant claim the Most Improved Player of the Year Award. In the end, the championship pedigree of the Warriors helped the franchise advance to the Western Conference Finals for the first time since Kevin Durant last donned the blue and gold back in 2019. The Warriors won the series 4-2. Still, the Grizzlies got the full attention of their veteran counterparts with a bevy of formidable subplots, such as the Klay Thompson vs. Jaren Jackson Jr. beef and the ongoing [Draymond Green vs. Dillon Brooks](#) feud.

Dillon Brooks made his presence felt in the Western Conference Semi-Finals last season when he injured Warriors guard Gary Payton II with a flagrant 2 foul (in game 1 of the series) and proceeded to put Steph Curry on his back with a flagrant 1 foul (in game 6 of the series). The ill-famed incidents established the Grizzlies' small forward as the team's enforcer. A role that 4-time NBA Draymond Green has occupied dramatically throughout the Warriors' dynasty with a myriad of high-profile flagrant fouls of his own, including a devastating crotch shot on current Grizzlies Center Steven Adams (when he played for the Oklahoma City Thunder). As expected, their crosshairs often interlock when the Warriors and Grizzlies rekindle their rivalry on the court. But the disdain that the two stout defenders share for one another on a personal level has transcended basketball arenas and spilled over onto social media platforms and news outlets, as they rarely pull punches when an opportunity arises to take a verbal shot at each other. The personal gamesmanship between Draymond Green and Dillon Brooks has the potential to reach the same level of animosity that has existed in the [Charles Barkley vs. Charles Oakley](#) rivalry for nearly three decades.

In a recent discussion with Dillon Brooks, Tim Keown of *ESPN* floated the notion that his game and demeanor are somewhat remindful of Draymond Green. Brooks took exception to that and responded with commentary that would ignite a fire in his rival days later.

"I don't like Draymond at all," Brooks said to Keown. "I just don't like Golden State. I don't like anything to do with them. Draymond talks a lot. Gets away with a lot, too. His game is cool -- with Golden State -- but if you put him anywhere else, you're not going to know who Draymond is...He plays with heart, plays hard, knows the ins and outs of their defense. I guess that's why they like him over there."

When Draymond caught wind of Dillon's less-than-flattering remarks, he responded with a fiery soliloquy on his podcast, *The Draymond Green Show*.

"He said, 'I just don't like Golden State.' I, quite frankly, wouldn't like a team that beats me all the time either," Green said. "That's No. 2. 'I don't want anything to do with them.' Quite frankly, you were a little kid in high school watching us win championships. You should be happy that you even witnessed that ... You're a fan. That's crazy..."

The 2017 Defensive Player of the Year continued, "If you ever wondered why the Memphis Grizzlies is not ready to compete for a championship, look no further than this idiot right here," Green said of Brooks. "They actually are depending on this guy to help them win a championship, and he says 'his game is cool.' Quite frankly, that just shows how little you know about basketball. That's where it gets really interesting...Your level of understanding the game of basketball is at a fan level. And you're running around talking about a dynasty? The dynasty starts after you, not with you. That's just a fact. I know dynasty-like players. They aren't clowns. That doesn't work when building a dynasty... Take it from me -- I actually know! Clowns don't work building a dynasty...I'm trying to figure out why they like you in Memphis. Or do they like you in Memphis? That's a better question," Green said. "I'm not sure your teammates like you. But I can tell you why they like me over [in Golden State]. When you contribute in the way I have contributed to four championships, they tend to like you."

The Memphis Grizzlies (38-26) have the third-best record in the conference; the Golden State Warriors are five games behind them in the standings, where they currently occupy the fifth seed out West. On Thursday, they will face off for the third time in the 2022-23 regular season when the Warriors travel to Memphis. The Warriors have won every meeting thus far.