

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Jason Kidd

Media Day



Q. You coached Porzingis for one year in Dallas. There were a lot of expectations for him. From your perspective, why didn't it work out the way you probably thought?

JASON KIDD: No, when you talk about it didn't work, did it work, I only had him for a short period of time. I thought it was going well in the sense of our defense, his ability to block shots, rebound.

Then offensively we looked to post him up a little bit more than Rick [Carlisle] had used him in the post, which was strictly on the perimeter shooting threes.

Both worked. He has the skill set to do both. As you know, in the business of basketball, there's trades that take place. We're judged if it works or doesn't work. That's just part of the business.

For the short period I had him, I really enjoyed KP. Great, great on the floor, great off the floor. Did everything we asked.

When you talk about maybe the health, he got hurt. As much as any coach or teammate you want them all to be out there 100 percent at all times.

I thought KP did great for us. But the business of basketball, there was a pivot. So, from there things changed.

Q. Also on Kristaps, how have you seen his game evolve in the years since he left Dallas? What kind of challenge is going up against him, when you're not certain how they might use him?

JASON KIDD: Has it been that long he's been from Dallas?

Q. A couple years.

JASON KIDD: Again, his game, when you talk a big who

can put the ball on the floor, who can score, I believe can play in the post. In today's game there's a lot of threes, not a lot of post-up.

When you look at the defensive end, too, a lot of times he doesn't get recognized for his defense, being able to change shots or a shot-blocker.

I think here in Boston, he's done an incredible job of doing both. He plays his role. I think that's one of the things that's underrated about KP. When you ask him to do something, he does it. He doesn't complain about his role. He goes out there and tries to help his team win.

Q. You were a pretty elite thinker back in your days as a player. What do you think about the way Luka thinks his way around the court to help maybe some athletic shortcomings maybe?

JASON KIDD: Well, you said that, Eddie. I did not (smiling).

We believe he's super athletic. But when you talk about basketball IQ, everybody has different levels. When you look at Luka's level of understanding the game, time and score, who's on the floor, he is at the head of the class in that sense.

When you look at the stage, he's not afraid of the stage, of the moment. Successful or not, he loves that moment.

It's really cool when you get to spend a lot of time with someone to see how they do move around the floor. He has shown that he can play defense at a high level. He's also shown that he'll take a little time off when needed defensively.

When it comes down to it, he's about winning. That's why we're here, is because he's playing both sides of the ball. He understands when he has to. But his offensive skill set is pretty special when you talk about being able to play inside and out, play the midrange game, shoot the deep three.

So, I think he's one of the smartest players in this league. That's why, again, we're playing in the Finals, because of

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

his IQ and his willingness to step up on that stage and not be afraid to fail.

Q. When Boston lost to Golden State a couple years ago there was a sense that guys like Jaylen and Jayson had to go through the Finals, go through it once to figure what it was about. You played in it a couple times as a player before you won one. Is there any truth to that notion that a guy really, to understand what it takes to win it, you almost have to go through the pain of losing once?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think you do have to experience it. I think that's the nicer way to accept losing, is that you have to go through it. It's a graceful way to accept losing.

But you do have to, again, go through defeat to understand that bad taste, how do you feel, how does it make you feel, to work on your game, to get better.

There are times when you're just not good enough. As a player, unfortunately with the Nets, we played the Lakers, we weren't just good enough and we got swept. There are some cases that you run into Shaq and Kobe. You got to just take defeat and then move on.

We did bounce back to come back. But I think you do. Jayson and Brown have gone through defeat. We also lost to the Warriors, too, that year. The Warriors are really good.

But they learned something. You could see they're playing at a high level right now, winning 64 games, the best team in the NBA. To be penciled in at the beginning of the season, that puts a little pressure or stress because you're supposed to be here. They fulfilled that.

But that tandem, they're playing at an extremely high level and we got our work cut out. But they've been here. Some of us for the Mavs have been here, some of us haven't. We're going to embrace that and find a way to hopefully win a series.

Q. Piggybacking off of that question. This is your fifth Finals as a player or coach. What is the biggest difference when you're talking about that hurdle between winning the Finals? What stands out to you as the biggest part of that hurdle? Is it the aura, the atmosphere? Increase in competition?

JASON KIDD: It's simple: talent. Sometimes you don't have enough talent. As I brought up the Lakers and Nets, we were happy to be there, but we just didn't have enough talent to beat Kobe and Shaq. It could be that simple.

But nerves sometimes play a part, too. Just the human side of things. But at the end of the day, as much as we've talked about it, to embrace it, to stay steady, and to enjoy this time because you're not promised anything to come back the following year.

To do everything, this isn't a vacation. This is a road trip in the sense of a job. We have an opportunity here to find a way to win on the road. That's how we're approaching it.

This is the best of the best at the highest level. It's fun. That's what the Finals are all about, is seeing what team is going to step forward and take advantage of mistakes.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports