

# NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Thursday, June 6, 2024

## Boston Celtics Derrick White

Game 1: Postgame

Boston Celtics 107, Dallas Mavericks 89

**Q. Derrick, when you guys are bringing help to Luka, is that sort of strictly the game plan, like, we help when his feet touch the paint or whatever it is, or is it more instinctual and like, you know, trusting the guy behind you is going to make the next rotation?**

DERRICK WHITE: It's a little bit of everything. I mean, Joe kind of gives us the freedom to trust our instincts, and then you also know that, like, if someone gets beat, someone's going to have your back, and we just fly around after that. So just a little bit of everything and just competing at a high level.

**Q. Down eight -- up eight, the lead's been cut to eight in the third quarter, with Dallas in that spot, what did you guys do to kind of set yourselves in that moment after they're in that run?**

DERRICK WHITE: Yeah, I think, like, we just took a breath, stayed together, stayed composed, and just kind of got good looks offensively, moved the ball. We got good looks, and I feel like that close in the third was huge. Kind of just put 'em away, kept a distance. So credit to the guys that are out there just staying together, getting stops defensively, and making the right reads offensively.

**Q. Externally there was a lot of focus on what Kristaps was going to be able to do tonight. What did you guys think internally about what his performance was going to look like and how did it meet expectations, what did you see?**

DERRICK WHITE: I mean, you never really know, coming back from injury. We just seen him -- all the hard work he's been putting in. But you, like, never really know, to miss all that time and come back for The Finals. But he was unreal today and it's nice to have him back.

**Q. Obviously a dominant win for you guys tonight. Jaylen was in here, kind of mentioned you have to kind**



**of brush this off in a sense, not be stagnant for Game 2. How do you guys kind of keep your foot on the gas after a game like this?**

DERRICK WHITE: Yeah, we just won one game. We know they're going to be better. I think we have seen it in the playoffs this year. Like, they have lost Game 1's and they came back and played better. So just it's one game. We got to learn from it, we got to grow, and understand that we're going to need to play a lot better Game 2.

**Q. You guys as a franchise re-tooled the roster since The Finals against the Warriors. You add a guy like Kristaps. Just at 7-3 with his skill set, what does he bring to the table when he's clicking the way he did tonight?**

DERRICK WHITE: He's a matchup nightmare. Even when you play good defense, he doesn't really see you. It's been unreal just watching him all year. Then defensively, he uses his size well, just impacts the games in so many different ways. He changes us and he makes us a better team.

**Q. Joe mentioned that in that timeout when the Mavs went on that run and cut the lead down, the coaches go into their meeting and you guys talk on the bench. Joe praised how well you communicate with each other. Is there anybody that leads those or are you guys just talking amongst yourselves? And what did you say in that moment to each other to get yourselves back on track?**

DERRICK WHITE: Yeah, it can be anybody. I think it was JB that timeout. But AI, JT, Jrue. I can say, like, that's the great thing about this team, is if there's something that needs to be said, people are going to say it and we're willing to accept that and grow from it.

So, I mean, it can be anybody that's playing. Like X [Xavier Tillman] has said stuff in the past that has helped us, so there's a lot of guys that have the voice and we're just learning and growing with each other.

**Q. You talk about taking that breath to stop their run, start your run. I don't want to make it sound like why**

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didn't you take that breath sooner, but like what's the process of like they're making that run, obviously you want to stop that run sooner. Why did it take that long? What's the process of withstanding that going, through that, and getting to that point you're like, okay, this is where we're turning it around?

DERRICK WHITE: Yeah, I mean, they're a really good team. They're going to make runs, they're going to make tough shots, they're going to -- I mean, they're going to make it difficult for us. We didn't expect it to be easy. I mean, I wish you could just stop it after, like, one point, that would be nice, but I think you just got to figure out why you're struggling and just try to limit those mistakes.

**Q. As a guard that also gets a lot of blocks, what have you thought about Jaylen and his weak-side help and the work he's done on that end this year?**

DERRICK WHITE: Yeah, JB'S unreal on the perimeter. I mean, blocking shots obviously he had two big-time blocks. He can just do everything on the basketball court and he has like no weaknesses on both sides. So, he's big-time.

**Q. Obviously you guys have been on a Finals run before. You guys lost to the Warriors. Do you feel like going through that experience you guys are much more composed and prepared for this Finals run this time around?**

DERRICK WHITE: Yeah, I think anytime you go through something like that and all the experience that we've gathered through like the ups, the downs, like, all that has just helped us to be a better team. So we've learned from everything and, like, this core group has been together through a lot of adversity, so I definitely think it helps.

**Q. From two years ago to now, obviously the biggest difference on the court is both Kristaps and Jrue being here compared to back then. Just curious, in tonight's game, seeing the way that Jrue was able and you were able to impact the defense on the perimeter, the way KP was at the rim, did you sort of see what you guys hoped that they would bring to you guys when you brought them here last summer?**

DERRICK WHITE: Yeah, I mean, those two are unreal, great players, great teammates, and they just do so many little things for us on both sides of the basketball, so it's amazing having them as our team on our team.

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