

# NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Sunday, June 9, 2024

**Boston Celtics**

**Jrue Holiday**

Game 2: Postgame



Boston Celtics 105, Dallas Mavericks 98

JRUE HOLIDAY: If I could say something before we jump in. I want to address the comment that was made yesterday. I feel like people kind of took that out of context. I've been hearing that I prefer JB over JT and that's not what that was. I like to praise my teammates. I like to praise my teammates when they're playing well, and I feel like that's what I did my best to do.

When I got here, JT was the first person to text me. I already know that -- and both of them know how I feel about them, how I feel about them as players.

But to compare them is something that I would never do because they're two completely different players as well as being on the same team, and the things that they have done in this organization and the things that they have done against me as an opponent. I say, like, how they play together and how they work together is something that is sacred and something that can't be broken.

So just to address the comment yesterday, I do not prefer one or the other. I prefer both. Both of them are superstars, and it's being shown out here on the biggest stage in the world.

Questions, please.

**Q. Jrue, how were you able to shred Dallas's defense, effectively cutting to the basket the majority of the game? How do you feel when Kyrie gives up the ball when you guard him?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: Again, I don't think I'm shredding the defense. I think it's moreso JT and JB. Especially tonight, JT was getting into the paint and being double-teamed and making the right plays out of it and just finding me. Just either being at the dunker (spot) or being in the corner. He has that vision as a playmaker, so I would give that to them.

**Q. Jrue, the buzzer beater that Payton hit, if he doesn't hit that, you guys are up six going into the fourth. Just as someone with your defensive chops, what does that do to a defense when someone hits a shot like that at the end of a quarter?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: Well, first, I fouled Kyrie and put him on the free-throw line and I got my third foul, so Payton came in for me. I didn't want to foul him, but I'm kind of glad that I did. The energy that Payton brings, him just having the balls to take that shot. He's done it so many times this year. Where he's had the courage to take it and he's knocked it has been huge for us. So it was definitely a confidence boost and really just boosted us for the rest of that game.

**Q. Curious, what, in your opinion, drives the closeness and togetherness of this group? Is part of it the fact that everyone has had to sacrifice a little bit of something?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: I think when you sacrifice together and you do something together, it brings you closer. I think being able to go through wins and losses and to build something, it means a lot. So when you go through things like that, I think it makes you closer and I think that that's what this team has done. From 1 to 15, somebody's sacrificed something. It's been great and the journey's been awesome, but at the end of the day, the job is not done.

**Q. You were praising JT's ability to draw two and make the right read. When you're in the dunker spot going on the baseline, for him specifically compared to other ball handlers on your team, what are you reading about his handle and what he's doing to try to put yourself in the right position?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: I think just trying to get into space and trying to be in his vision. I know that sometimes when I drive and I might get stuck, I need somebody to drift with me or to kind of be in space and be in my vision. So I think for the most part, I just try to stay in front of him, give him a good outlet. He's been making great reads.

**Q. I know lots of things probably factor into why a**

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**player is comfortable with a certain team, but I wanted to know maybe what influence Brad Stevens has had on you and with you and how you feel about playing in Boston and for the Celtics.**

JRUE HOLIDAY: Yeah, when I first got traded here, he was obviously one of the first people that I talked to, and I just think his positive nature. He's kind of this kind soul, somebody who has great energy about him. So every time that I talk to him and every time I see him, he's always been encouraging. This has been from the beginning. It's always nice to have somebody like that have your back and, again, somebody like that in your corner in your organization.

**Q. If Jaylen and Jayson are the superstars on this team, what's your role? And if you're going to be the team's leading scorer, leading rebounder and shoot the highest percentage in Game 2 of the Finals, why aren't you a superstar as well?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: I'm a utility guy. I'll do whatever. I'm here to win. I feel like they brought me here to win, and I'll do my best to do that. But at the end of the day, this is their team. I know it's probably just as much my team as theirs, but again, I feel like I talked about this before, the pressure that they have on themselves to execute and to be great is a little bit different than my pressure. And, again, I've always been honest about that and how they always handle themselves has been something that's been so honorable. So it's just, it's slightly different. They're superstars and I'm here to support.

**Q. Two games in to another NBA Finals, you were up 2-0 in that one also, but just very different teams, so I'm curious how this Finals experience so far has been different from your first one.**

JRUE HOLIDAY: Yeah, well, that one we were actually down 2-0, that was slightly different, but --

**Q. All I remember is the win.**

JRUE HOLIDAY: And that's, and that's all I remember, too. So I think it's a little different that -- again, a different team, different setting, different year, definitely having COVID year, it was a bit weird. I think being on this team, the journey to this point has been, great, but we still know being up 2-0 means nothing. Job's not done. We have to do whatever it takes.

**Q. Has it felt a lot different for you though being here a second time?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: Yeah, I would say maybe I'm a bit more

comfortable. Just knowing kind of the pressure and the atmosphere and obviously what's on the line, this is a bit different.

**Q. During one of those extended timeouts in the second quarter it looked like you guys had a pretty tight huddle and a long huddle. What conversations do you remember from that huddle in particular or what kind of conversations are players having with each other when the game is kind of going back and forth?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: Yeah, in huddles like that, it's intimate, and it's something that we kind of hold close and dear to ourselves. I think in times like that, encouraging each other, being able to police ourselves in times like that when we might be doing something that is uncharacteristic. Or even if we're doing something great, all those things are brought up in those moments to where we can really just go out there and do our best to win the game.

**Q. You mentioned you were brought here to win, and the guys have all kind of seemingly looked to you as the guy with experience, the guy that knows what it takes. How have you embraced that role and how has that role kind of manifested during the Finals here as well?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: Man, I love my teammates. They have been here before. They have been here before and they know what it takes to get to this point. They have shown it. You've seen them in the Eastern Conference Finals and you've seen them in the Finals before. We're all determined as a team. We all want this and it's something that, it's collective. I won't say that I do much or I talk much. I feel like I'm more of an action type of guy. I go out there and I play as hard as I can and do whatever the team needs for us to win.

**Q. Derrick was in here and said he was very grateful that you came in and sort of adapted the way you did, because he said you could have come in here and said, I'm Jrue Holiday, and he would have just sort of accepted that, that you were the All-Star that was coming in. Was there a moment in the season where you felt that you guys as a team really clicked in terms of that chemistry or was it just sort of natural from the start?**

JRUE HOLIDAY: I think it's natural. I think that they had chemistry and some things I had to figure out. But that just goes to show how great of teammates I have. There's been times where I've struggled kind of figuring out my place or what I need to do to help the team win, and Derrick has been the person who has talked me through it.

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I've been point guards on other teams and I've been shooting guards on other teams. But Derrick is our point guard, and he's shown that the whole season.

I would say that there are different times in the season where each guy's kind of come and talked to me about how they felt and how they saw the game and what I could do to help and all that. That's helped me out tremendously getting to this point.

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