

# NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Thursday, June 13, 2024

**Boston Celtics**

**Xavier Tillman Sr.**

Practice Day



**Q. You talked a little bit yesterday about how you feel like your whole career has prepared you to be able to step up whenever someone is injured, but how challenging is it to not know when your number is going to get called and fighting through that, and does that help you grapple in that storm and be better as a person in life off the court?**

XAVIER TILLMAN SR.: Yeah, I would say it was difficult early on because your ego and your pride is in the way. You dream of yourself being this great big thing, and you want to be the star of the show and stuff like that.

But when you realize that you have to be a star in your own role, I feel like that's when it becomes easier day in and day out of just doing as much as you can, whether that's in the weight room, on the court for your own individual workouts.

If you're not playing, that's you encouraging your teammates. Just owning your role and doing everything you're supposed to do within it.

**Q. Is this an environment where it's really been a team-first approach with everyone, willingness to sacrifice and rooting each other on? Has that made it easier to buy into that?**

XAVIER TILLMAN SR.: 1,000 percent. I think that's why the transition for me was really easy. Knowing that Jrue Holiday was an All-Star last year and he's playing the role that he's playing now and he's not complaining. He's working hard, he's dedicating himself to the team day in and day out. It makes it a lot easier for a guy like myself to come in every day with that same attitude of wanting to better myself so I'm ready when I'm needed.

**Q. Joe talked about how your experience with Memphis was a factor in going to you last night. How much did that help and that familiarity with the Mavs?**

XAVIER TILLMAN SR.: A ton. I couldn't tell you how

many times you played against them, maybe like 10 or eight or so. I've played against the Mavs a lot. I felt like I had a lot of confidence just in my past experiences against them, what I did well and stuff like that, so I kind of recalled that before going into the game.

**Q. I saw you hit four of those corner threes in a row during warmups. Is that part of your normal routine or was that an emphasis this series to get some corner threes up?**

XAVIER TILLMAN SR.: No, shooting is part of my normal routine. I'll do that on a regular basis, for sure.

**Q. Not too many people get this Finals experience. What have you learned just watching what Jrue Holiday, Al Horford from this experience, the process it takes to get to this point?**

XAVIER TILLMAN SR.: To get here? You have to be really maniacal about your routine and making sure that you're taking care of your body and stuff like that because it's a long, long season. It's a long season. I can't even remember really being in Memphis, as far as at the beginning of the year and all that stuff, because of how long the season was.

For me, what I've learned from them is they're always taking care of their bodies day in and day out. There's not too many days where either you're not getting treatment or they're not in the weight room. They're always doing something to keep their bodies strong and ready to go.

**Q. To step up in this Finals stage, do you feel like that's momentum for not just Game 4 but the offseason and moving forward?**

XAVIER TILLMAN SR.: For sure. But I feel like my mentality is mainly focused on these next couple games. Definitely a lot of confidence going into it. Kind of no different than it was before, but just knowing the things that I did well, I'll try to repeat those.

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