

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Friday, June 14, 2024

Boston Celtics

Coach Joe Mazzulla

Game 4: Pregame



Q. Is there an update on Kristaps?

JOE MAZZULLA: Yeah, he's not quite there, but we're going to make him available. But we're only going to use him in very specific instances if necessary.

Q. You were regaling us last press conference with tales of what you spliced into the tapes and what you were talking to the guys about right when you think you're about to win, you're about to lose. What was the message heading into Game 4, and what kind of clips did you show the team?

JOE MAZZULLA: Yeah, just have an understanding of the environment. So at the end of the day, both teams have to keep the same edge and same chip on their shoulder. But you can't be distracted by anything. It really doesn't matter what kind of game it is. If you don't run back on defense, you can't win. If you don't rebound, you can't win. If you don't execute, you can't win.

So just focusing on the details, the effort, the execution, all the things that go into winning regardless if it's preseason, regular season, postseason, or the Finals. The process towards winning remains the same. We just have to hammer that home and for however long it takes, stick to that process.

Q. If Kristaps -- just to be clear, you said he's not quite there?

JOE MAZZULLA: Not quite there. He's available but only in very specific situational instances.

Q. I was just curious if he's not quite there, like what was the decision-making process to use him in specific instances if he's not ready to go all the way through if that makes sense?

JOE MAZZULLA: Yeah. He's not quite there. He's available. We'll use him in very specific instances (laughter).

Q. You've said a while ago that if you guys go all the way you will come to Israel for the third time in your life. Have you had a chance to talk to the Celtics guys about it? Is it something you plan to do as a team? And also, Israel is very, very thankful for your comments after October 7. Do you have any messages for them?

JOE MAZZULLA: I haven't really thought about that. Focused on Game 4. One of my favorite places in the world, so that's it for now.

Q. Wondering if you could share with us any specific game rituals that you have or superstitions, and if that has changed given you are one game away from a title?

JOE MAZZULLA: No, I have different routines, whether home or away, but they are relatively the same. Yeah, about the same.

Q. This team has played very disciplined basketball for the first three games. You've talked about the need to do that again. It might be the most disciplined stretch we've seen from them this season. Just what has gone into that? What has driven this focus?

JOE MAZZULLA: Yeah, I mean, I think obviously having an understanding of the environment and what we are trying to accomplish. But I think we've done that throughout most of the season when we've been able to dominate the transitions and the margins of the game, and when we've played well and not played well, still give ourselves a chance because of the margins and the discipline in these things.

Dallas is a great opponent because they test your discipline, like every single possession, and the second that you're not where you're supposed to be or you don't execute your angles properly, they take advantage of it.

So our opponent has forced us to work to be more disciplined, and we have to stay that way for however long the series continues.



