

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Friday, June 14, 2024

Boston Celtics

Al Horford

Game 4: Postgame

Dallas Mavericks 122, Boston Celtics 84

Q. The group was very intentional about not looking ahead to what tonight could be. Did you feel that perhaps a little of that filtered into tonight, or was tonight just more about Dallas?

AL HORFORD: I think it was more about Dallas. You know, I felt like they were the better team tonight, clearly. They played much better, and you've got to give them credit.

Q. Joe was just in saying that he thought Dallas played harder than you guys tonight. Do you agree with that assessment, and how do you feel that your guys' urgency level was compared to where they were at?

AL HORFORD: Yeah, I felt like we came out determined. They were the better team. They were the team that was playing harder. He's right.

Q. You guys felt comfortable in the series coming into tonight. How do you regroup after a loss like this, and what do you do to ensure it doesn't happen again?

AL HORFORD: Yeah, we have an opportunity here to be better, and it all starts with us going over this film and having a good practice session and understanding the opportunity we have in front of us.

So that's what we're going to do.

Q. It seemed like the decision-making was a little uncharacteristic for you guys in this game compared to the first three games. Is there a sense when the Mavs started to go on a run at the end of the first quarter that some guys tried to do too much themselves or maybe you got caught up in the "We need to answer Dallas," versus play your game and get out of it just naturally?



AL HORFORD: I'm not sure. I just know, there could have been some of that. Ultimately, you know, I felt like they were the better team tonight. We can say all these things about us. They played much better than us. They clearly outplayed us, and that's tough to take but that's the reality.

Q. They had 60 points in the paint. I think it was a series-high for that matchup and seemed like they had more success finishing inside. What did you see from the way they were attacking? Were they putting you guys in different actions trying to get downhill? What did you see from the way they were attacking?

AL HORFORD: Yeah, I don't know specifically. It just seemed like a lot of stuff was going their way, and I'm just eager to just look at this film and get together and see how we can be better.

The one thing I can tell you about our group is that time and time again, we've responded any time we have adversity, and this is an opportunity that we have here front of us.

Q. Dereck Lively had a big impact in the game tonight. What can you guys do differently so that he doesn't impact the game that much?

AL HORFORD: Yeah, that's a good question. We definitely have to be better. Have to be more active and make sure that we're a little more aware of him, and it's something that I expect us to be better come Monday.

Q. You guys were down 0-3 against Miami in the Conference Finals last year. Did you see a little of yourselves in them tonight, the way they came back, the way you guys did in Game 4 last year?

AL HORFORD: I'm not sure. I feel like every series kind of has a life of its own. But yeah, they were in a position that their backs were against the wall, and they did what they were supposed to do.

It is hard to win on the road. And even though we've had a lot of success this postseason on the road, you know, they had the momentum. They kept it going, and that was a big difference. Their crowd really rallied behind them and I feel



like that helped them throughout.

Q. Joe has talked a lot about how difficult it is to finally submit somebody and really get over that last step, and this is the first time you guys have had that chance to clinch for an actual title. How difficult was it just going through the journey of trying to find your way back into this game especially since they were able to get to so many of the things that you had taken away throughout the series so far?

AL HORFORD: Yeah, it's hard. It's a playoff series. Teams are going back and forth. Usually, you know, I've been in a lot of these, and usually by the second game, you're making adjustments. Third game, you're making another adjustment, and that's kind of how it is.

And for us, we've had the first three games, we didn't really make any adjustments. So today, they did something. We have to see what we can -- how we can be better and prepare for it. That's kind of where we're at right now.

But, you know, it's the playoffs, and, you know, they are fighting for their lives, and they played better than us.

Q. You mentioned we've faced adversity and gotten through it. There has not been a ton this year, but for a team that's been so process oriented, even after 3-0, you're saying practice, film, etc., what are some of the things that the team does in adversity, and what are some of the things that's allowed you guys to come out on the other side of it?

AL HORFORD: I think we always fall back on our work and preparation and understanding what we need to do. It's not going to be any different now.

Q. How do you ensure that the thoroughness of this win isn't impactful? For them to win this big, they had some guys who had not been playing as well maybe gain some confidence. How do you guys make sure that doesn't linger into the next game?

AL HORFORD: Yeah, it's a good question. Understanding that it's one game. You know, after we won Game 1, we put that behind us.

You know, Game 2, kind of same thing and so on, and we are at this point now. You know, we have to take some things that we can be better at and try to fix them, and then you know, others kind of throw them out and just kind of do that and make sure that we come out and we play Celtics basketball.

I think ultimately that's what it comes down to for us, and

there's a lot of things that we can control and that I expect us to be much better on Monday.

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