

NBA All-Star Media Day

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San Francisco, California, USA

Kenny's Young Stars

Jalen Brunson

Media Day Press Conference



Q. What type of advice would you give your 12-year-old self?

JALEN BRUNSON: Damn, first question?

I would honestly say just keep believing in yourself, first and foremost. I always think about how there were so many people when I was younger, like you look, damn, that kid is really good, I wonder if I'll ever progress to be there, and then you see where you are now and you see where you've grown from.

So continue to believe in yourself. Continue to trust yourself, work hard. Don't listen to what other people say or think about you. Just believe in yourself.

Q. If you could do one thing to make the league better, what would you do?

JALEN BRUNSON: To make the league better? Hmm. This is a trap question, too.

Q. No, it's not.

JALEN BRUNSON: One thing I would do to make the league better? I would say, honestly, lessen the back-to-backs, for sure. My only answer.

Q. Obviously point guard has to be an all-around player, but for you what is the most important thing that a point guard has to have in his bag?

JALEN BRUNSON: It's actually something that's not in his bag, or it's the leadership aspect. I think that's the most important thing.

There's so many different ways to play the point guard position, but to be able to lead a team, to help your team win is the most important. So how can you keep guys together when things aren't going well? When everything is going well, it's easy. But when it's not, how are you able to focus everyone in to get back on track? I think that's what's the most important thing, or at least I think it's the

most important.

Q. Defending in the NBA has become harder and harder over the years between the rules and the growing players' skill set. In your case as a smaller defender, how you have been adjusting yourself to it over the years?

JALEN BRUNSON: It changes. I think game to game, the physicality can change. You have to adjust to how it's being called. Sometimes it's more physical, sometimes it's not. I think it's just adjusting, knowing when you can be physical, when you cannot and being smart about it.

Like you said, the game is evolving. Everyone is getting better. Everyone is finding out how to attack the best defenders.

It just makes it 10 times more difficult. But you honestly just have to adjust to the physicality.

Q. Would you change any rule?

JALEN BRUNSON: Would I change any rule?

Q. Yeah, any rule for defense.

JALEN BRUNSON: No, I wouldn't.

Q. With Karl-Anthony Towns, do you consider that the championship is more possible?

JALEN BRUNSON: I think we've grown over the year, and obviously that's a goal of ours. But we have a long way to go. Obviously, it starts with me and KAT. But the team that we have, everyone is bought in. Everyone wants to win. Everyone has that as their goal. As long as we have that as our focus, it's definitely a possibility.

Q. You've had two really terrific battles with Victor Wembanyama. What do you make of his competitive spirit and his drive?

JALEN BRUNSON: I think it's great for basketball. I think it's great for a person like him to be so competitive and so

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focused and so driven in all aspects of his game, no matter where he is. It could be preseason, it could be in All-Star, he's going to have that same mindset. That's what we've seen. And obviously the things he does on the court are just abnormal for someone his height.

But he's ridiculous, and to see how he works, his preparation, I think I admire that most. I admire hard workers and people who put everything into being the best player they can be.

Q. Jalen, looking at the All-Star format now with the changes, how do you think it'll be?

JALEN BRUNSON: Yeah, I'm excited. Excited to see how it's going to be. It's definitely different, definitely interesting. We'll see. I'm just as interested as you.

Q. Did you watch last night? What did you think of how it played out last night?

JALEN BRUNSON: I did not watch last night. I spent a little time with my family. It was Valentine's Day, so I had to...

Q. Just the nature of how the game has changed so much, and people talk about the questions that you were just asked regarding the format, are you happy with how the game has changed or are you just happy to be out there playing basketball?

JALEN BRUNSON: Both. Obviously, I think you want to make it more competitive. It's an honor and a privilege to be here, so obviously I'm happy to be playing this weekend. But yeah, it could definitely be more competitive, for sure. We just need to have that mindset.

Q. LeBron is going to play his 21st All-Star Game and he's still regarded as competitive. Could you see yourself playing at his age?

JALEN BRUNSON: I hope. I hope. I would love to play past 40. I think it's really cool to see someone like that who has -- if you want to call it pressure, the pressure of coming into the league and being the first overall pick, having all these expectations on you, and then for him to not only achieve but to exceed the expectations and continuing to do so, that's just remarkable. You don't really see that.

You see people who have a lot of expectations and maybe more times than not get there, but he's exceeded it, and it's unbelievable.

I mean, he's obviously one of the GOATs, for sure.

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