

NBA All-Star Media Day

Saturday, February 14, 2026

Los Angeles, California, USA

Tyrese Maxey

Media Day Press Conference



Presented by  AT&T

Q. I remember back when you were announced as a starter, you were taken aback by how high your fan vote total was. I'm just wondering, you obviously have been a super, super popular athlete in Philly for basically your whole career, but when did you kind of sense that maybe you had sort of broken through and become just, like, a really popular player and a respected player nationally, internationally, just kind of with more fans beyond just Sixers fans.

TYRESE MAXEY: First of all, I'm just blessed. Blessed to be here. Blessed to have supporters and fans and all that. I'm thankful, and I appreciate them for that across the world, America and everything. Philly, especially.

I think somebody was telling me, like, my fourth year in the league I was, like, jersey sales were high, and one of my jerseys was high. I saw a lot of jerseys on the road. I was, like, man, I called my mom. I was, like, it's kind of crazy to see people in "Maxey" jerseys, like not in Philly or not in Texas or Dallas where I'm from. It's just a blessing, man. I'm just thankful.

Words can't describe how happy it makes me. I just feel like I'm putting on for our organization and our family.

Q. There's been a lot of talk about teams, to put it charitably, not performing to the best of their ability. Last year the Sixers, I think you finished 4-29, but that ultimately led to getting a better pick, that turned to VJ, who you are close with. I was wondering what that experience was like for you as a player, and if you think it was ultimately worth it because you did get VJ?

TYRESE MAXEY: You talking about last year? Last year was really good for me for a mental thing. I needed to mentally go through that. I've never lost in my life, honestly, at any level of basketball. So it was definitely rough for me to go through, but for me to get up every single morning, go to work, and motivate my teammates and, like, try to get us better every single day, that was good for me.

Like you said, the outcome was VJ Edgecombe, who is like a little brother to me now, you know what I mean? He's great, man. Not just basketball-wise, but for our team personality-wise and culture-wise for our organization and things that we're trying to turn around.

I feel like this year we've done a really good job of turning things around. We've had a lot of injuries still. A lot of people, a lot of guys out. Every single night we go out there and compete extremely hard, and we're starting to get guys back.

Once you have seen, when we are healthy we have a good rhythm. We have a chance to do something if we're healthy. I think that's the biggest thing that we're trying to do. And trying to keep pressing forward as far as a culture and doing things the right way.

Q. There are so many guys around the league and retired guys who have podcasts. You were one of them for a little while. I'm curious what you liked about doing that and why you stopped? And also if you have a favorite current or former player podcast?

TYRESE MAXEY: Oh, that's a good one. I stopped because just like, I started the podcast because I had just got hurt, so I had a lot of time on my hands. I was just doing rehabbing and things like that with my foot, so it was kind of easy for me.

I think what I did like about it is players feel comfortable talking to other players. So I was able to, like, on the road go to a room with Joel and us sit down and do a podcast and we talk normally. It's like he can open up to me and have a conversation with me because we're friends. We have that type of relationship, where I can call Tyrese Haliburton and say, hey, let's jump on a podcast and talk. I feel like that's the cool thing that players and ex-players have. We like to talk to each other. It's like a brotherhood.

I think that, and then, I don't know, my favorite podcast now? I don't know, there's a lot of them out there that I watch and laugh at, because guys are funny and entertaining. So I don't want to give any specialties or anything like that. So I like them all.



Q. I wanted to ask you about the finishing package that you have. It feels like you have one of the more unique ways of getting to the basket, same foot, same hand finish. Where did that come from? Did you have influences on that front? What kind of work goes into having that?

TYRESE MAXEY: I kind of realized probably around my sophomore year, junior year that I wasn't going to be too tall. My mom is 5-6. My dad is probably 5-7, 5-8, and the Lord blessed me with this height, so I'm thankful for it.

But I realized then that if I wanted to be good and I wanted to, like, finish at the rim where I have finishing packages that I'm going to need to -- I can't dunk on everybody. I won't be dunking on OG Boogie [DeMarcus Cousins] right here. I got in the league, he wasn't going to let me dunk on him.

So I need the floaters. I need the touch finishes and throw off the rhythm of the 7-footers, those guys with right-right finishes, left-left finishes. I think the influence to that is I watched a lot of Kyrie growing up, not even going to lie, and just watching him, what he did with the basketball and his different finishes and the angles off the glass. That's kind of where I got all that from.

Now I just kind of add in my own little English to it.

Q. Can you talk more about your friendship with Joel Embiid? He's been, you know, past some obstacles, and he came back, like, real vintage Embiid.

TYRESE MAXEY: Yeah, he is vintage, huh? [laughing]. No, man, listen, Joel has done wonders for me in my career. Not just on the court, but off the court as well. He's taught me a lot.

Like I said, he's someone that I can call all the time, and he may not answer right then and there, but he definitely will call back. I can talk to him about anything.

For me I'm just happy to see him happy again and playing and having fun. It was tough for him last year, man. When he did get on the court, I don't think he was having joy. He wasn't having fun. Injuries do that to you.

He has a good group of guys around him now that we make him laugh every single day when he gets on the plane, even when he doesn't want to be there at shootarounds early in the morning. We crack jokes for him, make him laugh and do all those different things.

I'm just happy to see him happy, you know what I mean, as

a friend, as a brother. That's what you want.

Joel had confidence in me from day one. So I'm always going to have Joel's back in any given moment.

Q. We talk a lot about competitiveness with All-Star Weekend. I'm curious if you feel like the way the format is structured with international players against U.S. players and the way the teams even seem like they're younger guys and older guys, if that's enough to level the competitiveness up and if that's something you've talked about with your fellow All-Stars?

TYRESE MAXEY: Yeah, I just talked to Scottie [Barnes], and we said all this stuff and all that. I told him, listen, I want to win. I'm here. We here, so let's win. You know what I mean? It's going to be fun.

He's the type of guy that'll pick up full-court. If you bring that type of energy, I'm pretty sure the rest of us young guys will do the same, you know what I'm saying? I want to have fun and make it competitive and do those different things.

I don't want to lose to the OGs, you know what I mean? That gives them the trash talking in the world. I'm just competitive like that in that aspect, you know what I'm saying? If I see these guys in two weeks when we play against them, those are bragging rights, those are fun to have. I think it gives a fun viewership for our fans if we're out there competing.

Q. My Kentucky brother, I need your starting five all-time Kentucky lineup.

TYRESE MAXEY: Okay. I'm just going to go Coach Cal era, because that's where -- I'm going to go Coach Cal era. I'm definitely going to go to taller lineup. I'm going you [Cousins] at the five. I'm going AD [Anthony Davis] at the four, I want to go D-Book at the three. I'm not going to put myself in there [smiling]. I'm going to go Shai at my one, and then I want to say, I'm going to go Jamal [Murray] -- I got John Wall too? I got to go John Wall. I got to play John Wall in there because I was doing -- I was John Wall when I was a kid.

So John Wall, Shai, D-Book, you and AD. That's going to be my five. That's going to be my five.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports