

# NBA All-Star Media Day

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Los Angeles, California, USA

## Kevin Durant

Media Day Press Conference



Presented by  AT&T

**Q. Jayson is in the final stages of coming back from the Achilles tear here. Went through a practice with the Maine Celtics. What are the final steps like for him? And what do you expect to see from him if he does come back this season?**

KEVIN DURANT: I expect to see All-Star level play and the same Jayson Tatum we've seen before he was injured. Usually around this time you're playing a lot of five-on-five, playing against live bodies, just trying to get your rhythm and tempo back.

So I'm looking forward to seeing him get out there with his team.

**Q. What's that final hurdle you have to get over to get back on the floor, like if there's one above everything else?**

KEVIN DURANT: I wouldn't say it's a final hurdle. It's just, like I said, playing five-on-five, getting up and down the floor, getting your conditioning right and doing that consistently in the last phase is key to you stepping into the game, having an easier transition once you step into a game.

I'm sure he's out there playing every day one-on-ones, two-on-twos, five-on-fives, trying to get his rhythm.

**Q. Kevin, as somebody who grew about up looking up to the greats, I'm sure a lot of those greats were All-Stars. This being your 16th All-Star, what does this accomplishment mean to you?**

KEVIN DURANT: Man, it means a lot. It means the hard work is paying off. I have great teammates, great coaches over the years. So many people invested in my game. I'm always grateful for them. I'm just representing so many people who have helped me. I'm just a face of it right now. I get to go out there and play, but you know, there's so many people that taught me the game and taught me how to be professional and gave me great advice. I think that's the reason why I'm here.

**Q. You made some comments the other day about -- truthful comments, I would say -- just about the perception of --**

KEVIN DURANT: Were you offended by my comments?

**Q. Not at all. I said they were truthful.**

KEVIN DURANT: I'm just questioning. I can't ask you a question, Dave?

**Q. You can.**

KEVIN DURANT: All right.

**Q. So it got some attention, right, but let's take that away. The reason why the All-Star is the way it is, I want to ask you, is there an impetus for it to improve by everyone involved because, as you and Steph and LeBron near the end, kind of in the history of the game, it's kind of been this like send-off moment for the legends to kind of have their last All-Star Game? And if the All-Star Game is a farce, that moment won't be as special for those of you, the greats, that are going to be leaving this game sometime in the future?**

KEVIN DURANT: I just feel like fans and media need something to complain about, and the All-Star Game don't make them feel like they felt when they were kids. They need something to complain about. I don't think it's that big of a deal, to be honest, the All-Star Game, All-Star Weekend. Just here to celebrate the game of basketball. People still coming to celebrate the game of basketball. They're coming to watch.

People at home are complaining about the game and the intensity of it. I don't think we'll ever get past that, but to see everybody still here, showing up, doing their jobs, pushing the game forward through this weekend, you go around the city, it's so much energy in the city, so many past greats. Look at Cuz (DeMarcus Cousins) in here on the front row representing the game of basketball.

I just think it's way bigger than that this weekend. We can talk about who plays harder or the U.S. team versus -- all



that stuff don't matter. I just really feel like this is a great weekend to bring so many people together and help push the game forward.

**Q. You've always been identified as a student of the game. I'm just curious, what are you studying now that you weren't studying at the age of, say, 23?**

KEVIN DURANT: The last couple of weeks, no lie, I've watched probably the intro and at least the first quarter of every All-Star Game from, like, the '70s up until, like, late '90s. I wanted to see what the big deal was and if it was really that much intensity, like Game 7 like y'all said it was back then. And it wasn't. You know what I'm saying?

But that's usually what I tend to watch, the '60s, '70s. Now they got it all on YouTube, so I can go back and take a peek at the historians of the game and the people that laid the foundation down for us. But I've been watching All-Star Games. The intensity the older generation has been talking about, I don't know if I've seen it, you know?

**Q. Looking at the West in particular, I think there are three games that separate 3 from 7. How competitive has the conference been this year?**

KEVIN DURANT: It's a crazy conference, man. You can look up and drop down two spots in a night and rise up two spots in a night. It just goes to show you how much great talent there is in the league, great coaching, great GM'ing in the league to put together these good teams, teams that you didn't think would be in the running. Like Phoenix, who nobody thought would be this good and going out there and looking like a contending team.

San Antonio. A lot of teams each year have gotten better and made this conference even tougher. The Clippers are on their way back up. If you have a bad little stretch, you can drop in the standings, and that's always tough. But it's great competition throughout the whole league. But even the East got some great teams too. I know we always talk about the difference between the conferences, but I think the East got some teams that are playing great ball, too. So it's been a fun season.

**Q. If you can give up one thing for the rest of your life, Twitter or video games, which one would it be?**

KEVIN DURANT: Damn. I'm going to go Twitter. I'm going to go Twitter, because they don't deserve to hear this God-level talk I'm giving to them. They take it for granted, cuz.

**Q. I'm already knowing.**

