

# NBA All-Star Rising Stars Postgame

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Team Jalen

Chet Holmgren

Jalen Williams

Press Conference



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**Q. Oftentimes, the Rising Stars Challenge helps the next class of NBA talent kind of establish their identity in the league. Describe what it's like watching this year's rookies and sophomores really find their footing and establish their identity.**

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah, it's like you said, it's a great opportunity to come out here and kind of just mingle with the guys. It's a unique platform, you play with people you probably wouldn't play with. You're playing in front of teammates you wouldn't play with.

It's a good time to kind of play free. Win or lose, it doesn't really matter. Shows what guys can do and kind of puts guys on the map as well.

CHET HOLMGREN: It's a great opportunity to have fun and also put out a good product for the fans. Throughout the season, you don't get a chance to talk to a lot of these guys. There were definitely some dudes who I thought, I don't rock with this dude. He's kind of weird. He be mean mugging. Then you get in the locker room with them, and they're super cool.

Shout out to our teammates. They were all cool. We had a fun time, and it's always nice to put a little extra bread in your pocket. So good time.

**Q. I was just wondering, of course throughout the season, you guys have looked more and more comfortable playing together with the Thunder. I was just wondering, here at All-Star Weekend, do you guys still find ways to improve on and off the court, or is it just about enjoying the moment and having fun?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: It's probably both.

CHET HOLMGREN: I'd say it's everything.

JALEN WILLIAMS: We're around each other pretty much all season. We kind of get to hone that even more playing out here. I was forcing lobs to him that weren't even there today, just trying stuff out.

I think any time we're around each other and able to relish this moment together will bring us closer, which will obviously give us a good product every time we play. So it's a little bit of both.

**Q. Jalen, want to ask you about the feeling of hitting the game winner, but then also the feeling of being here again and if this year feels differently to you because of what you've experienced or maybe the team success that you guys have had so far this year?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: We were up a good amount of points to where, if I missed, it didn't matter.

CHET HOLMGREN: Because that spirals.

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah, that is true. We're up 10, it was doable for sure. But I like fake ran a stack play, so they could go under and I could shoot a three.

I don't know if the team knows that's what I had intended, but that's what I was going to do.

Yeah, my parents are here. So it's always good to have them around and just enjoy the festivities. You never know when you'll get invited to a weekend like this again and even be part of any of the events. Any time you can, it's a blessing and an opportunity I don't take for granted.

**Q. Chet, you kind of mentioned earlier, just being around some of the guys that you wouldn't usually be around and realize some of them are actually cooler than you thought. Do you feel yourself in season -- I know Giannis has said before he is anti being cool with other guys or working out with other guys. Do you feel in season because of your goals straying from some of the relationships you build here?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I'm not going to go like out of my way to just act angry towards people because I'm trying to beat them. Like I'm just going to be me, you know what I mean? That's not going to take away from my competitive edge. I'm still trying to win at every moment.

But there's no reason to be over the top in any way, I guess.

**Q. The NBA is always improving the All-Star Weekend, the Rising Stars. What would you add to this All-Star Weekend and to the Rising Stars for the future years?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I think what they should do with the Dunk Contest is the four highest verticals in the NBA have to participate. So I'm safe.

(Laughter).

JALEN WILLIAMS: I think some of it is -- I don't even know. I've heard a lot of stuff about doing the one-on-one tournament. I know there's a lot of logistics that go into that, like guys don't want to get hurt and stuff. I think a one-on-one tournament would be cool. That's an experience that fans don't get to see.

We play a lot of one-on-one in the summer, which nobody ever really sees. So one-on-one would be cool.

Everything else, I think Dunk Contest is good. Guys just got to participate and do the whole thing.

I like the Rising Stars event we just did. I think it's competitive. You saw the way we were playing at the end. [Winning] 25K is a pretty good incentive to play hard.

Yeah, it's fun. I think the one-on-one would be pretty cool, though.

**Q. Chet, earlier this morning, Ben called his shot and said, I'm going to be MVP. I want to win and that. I'm curious, did you guys see that in the locker room? Was he talking that up? Were any of you talking that up?**

CHET HOLMGREN: To me, I didn't talk to him about it, but usually if a guy is in his home city, if that is their intention, you understand. You don't want to be trying to get in the way of that necessarily.

Ben's a great player too, so all credit to him. If he wants to go out and have some extra juice to go get that MVP, go ahead. We're going to support him in that.

The whole team gets the bread if we win. If he wants

MVP, go ahead. We're happy for him. Shout out to him.

**Q. For both, what do you think overall about the G League team? They made it to the final. They faced you guys in the final. I think the effort was pretty great. What do you guys think?**

CHET HOLMGREN: They were great tonight. They came out from the jump, and they were hungry. You could tell they wanted to win. I asked a couple of the guys, and they were like, yeah, we want to win. I'm sure they have plenty of different motivations to win, and it showed out there.

Shout out to them. Credit to them. A bunch of good players over there.

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah, they came out ready to win. They've got a lot of unique talent over there too. I think that helped the game too, just them wanting to play as hard as they did. They're out there running plays and talking defensive coverages. I think that added a little extra juice for us to play too.

CHET HOLMGREN: They were rebounding too.

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah, they were rebounding, running the lanes. It made us play hard inadvertently.

**Q. What did you think of the Elam ending, the target score? Did you feel like it added a little more juice?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I guess you could say that because, if you just do a normal format where it's timed and a team's up big when the clock gets low, there's no incentive to really start playing hard. Yeah, I think it's a good idea. I'm going to leave it at that. Good idea, yeah.

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