

Castrol Rising Stars

Postgame

Friday, February 13, 2026

Los Angeles, California, USA

Team Vince

VJ Edgecombe

Press Conference

Team Vince 25, Team Melo 24

Q. Did it feel like some pressure there at the line at the very end, or just kind of what was going through your mind when you had a chance to seal the win?

VJ EDGECOMBE: No, there was no pressure. To be honest, there was no pressure. Free throws, man, I just try to be dialed in, try to be focused at the line. Free throws are precious. Obviously tonight, we needed them to win the game. I just focused and made them.

Q. In the first game when you got rolling with the 10 straight points, what did you see? How did that sort of unfold from your perspective?

VJ EDGECOMBE: My teammates were swinging the rock. My teammates were passing the ball, and I was open. I had some open shots. My teammates would find me, and I just made them.

Then I was coming off the pick-and-roll, whatever it is, one-on-one, just go up there and try to get a bucket.

Q. VJ, obviously bright lights here in the city of L.A., Olympics coming up in L.A. '28. Impressions of just what L.A. brings to the global stage and your first experiences with All-Star Weekend here?

VJ EDGECOMBE: It's a lot of attention, a lot of attention. Obviously L.A. is one of the more famous cities in the world. Not just the U.S., but the world. There's a lot of people watching, and I appreciate people tuning in, too, even to the Rising Stars game.

We just try to make it fun, make it competitive, where it's worth your time.

Q. Just curious what it was like to have Vince as a coach. Talking to some of the other guys, he seemed like he was pretty into it and wanted you guys to win.



VJ EDGECOMBE: He told us, why not just play hard? Earlier today, after practice, we all decided, man, we're just going to go in there and compete. Vince, he just wanted me to be aggressive the whole time.

I just tried to show him why he picked me as his first pick, which is a blessing. I just wanted to go out there and go hoop, just play basketball.

Q. With the short format of this new tournament, how did that impact how you went after each possession?

VJ EDGECOMBE: I'm going to be so honest, we got lucky because we had the second game. So we didn't have to sit and wait for another game. It played in our favor, thank God for that. It played in our favor. It was just like a little halftime break. That's all it was.

We kept rolling. We could have been like, all right, it's over, but we decided to keep playing hard. We decided it's a championship, so why not win it?

Q. It seemed like you guys, especially you, were taking this really seriously. Your competitive juices were showing. Why is that? Why has that been the approach this weekend? Like there's a lot of criticism about All-Star Weekend players not playing, and maybe you guys being the catalyst for turning this thing around with just competitiveness.

VJ EDGECOMBE: Yeah, we all wanted to compete. Like I said, man, we all wanted to compete, and I wanted to win. I hate losing. I really hate losing. Like, man, we have a chance to win it all. So why not go out there and win?

It's really credit to my teammates. We all were bought in. We all were like, let's go win it. Coach Vince was like, yeah, might as well, right? I was like, why not?

I'm glad we got the win for him, his first time coaching. Yeah, he can hang his trophy, put a trophy up.

Q. What did you prove to yourself tonight?



VJ EDGECOMBE: What did I prove to myself? I don't think I proved anything to myself. I just wanted to go out there and show everyone that I can hoop. Regardless of stage, I just want to go out there and play basketball. I enjoy it. I enjoy playing basketball. I hope I showcased that tonight.

Q. VJ, I know it's been a small sample size, but what's the best part about having Vince as a coach?

VJ EDGECOMBE: His energy. His energy. He's telling us just go, just go, just go. Just keep playing hard, keep running. And we feed off of that. I'm pretty sure you could tell we feed off of that. We just started rolling, especially late in that first game, and then obviously carried into the second game.

Q. How was it having Tyrese (Maxey) courtside? What do you think it is that makes you guys this box office backcourt?

VJ EDGECOMBE: Tyrese is my dog, man. I told him, I was like, man -- he's like he ain't coming to watch it if I ain't going to play hard. I was like, man, I'm going to play hard so he can have some -- at least that's not a waste of his time. I didn't want to waste his time.

I know he has a whole lot of stuff he could probably be doing right now, especially being an All-Star. Tyrese is my dog. I love him.

Q. Congrats on winning MVP. You play on a team that is right in the middle of a playoff hunt in the Eastern Conference. As the No. 3 pick, to be on the team that you're on and to be able to bring that trophy back to Philadelphia, how does that feel for where you're at in this stage of your rookie season?

VJ EDGECOMBE: Man, it feels great, obviously to win the MVP of the Rising Stars game. But I'm focused. My next focus is this push after the All-Star break. After the break, we've just got to make a push.

Like you said, we're still in the hunt for that playoff spot. Obviously we want to secure a playoff spot. From there, we've just got to stay together, just keep hooping, just keep trusting each other. Like I said, I feel like we're a dangerous team if we're healthy. I stand on that.

Q. What have some of the highlights of the past couple days been besides tonight? I know what a basketball junkie you are, so what else has been a highlight?

VJ EDGECOMBE: I got to sit next to Kareem

Abdul-Jabbar. That was fire. Yeah, that was fire.

I just interacted with a lot of players. Some of them I've known. Some I got to know and build a good relationship with. Just all these appearances, man, I'm tired. I'm tired, and I'm ready to go home now.

Q. Did this inspire you to be part of the main event on Sunday at some point in your career?

VJ EDGECOMBE: Definitely. Definitely, man. It would be a true blessing to be an All-Star. I won't take that for granted if I'm an All-Star one day. Hopefully I am. I'll say I'd just be truly blessed, and I'll enjoy it for sure.

Q. I've heard you say a few times tonight, just go out there and enjoy yourself and have fun. Through this game of basketball which you've been playing for many years now, how have you been able to maintain that joy? We know it has its ebbs and flows.

VJ EDGECOMBE: First of all, I love it. I really love the game. It kept me out of problems and different things.

Secondly, I'm in the NBA. There's a lot of great people.

Another thing you get paid in the NBA. (Laughter.) So I'm able to take care of my family. So why not go out there and have fun? I feel like everyone else is going to put pressure on you to do certain things. So you've got to be at peace with yourself. I have Coach Rico (Hines) that I work with on the Sixers team, and he says just be at peace with myself, just be at peace with my game, and that helps me. Especially at this level when you've got the parlays and everyone is telling you they're ready to beat you up and all the different type of things.

I just try to stay levelheaded, man.

Q. You said you got to sit by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. Why was that important? A lot of young men your age might not know who he is. Did you talk to him?

VJ EDGECOMBE: I'm going to be honest. I shook his hand. We did not have a conversation. He's one of the greats of all time to ever touch a basketball, and to just be in the same room as him is a blessing. Obviously when we go on the floor, we try to honor everyone that came before us by playing hard, doing all the little things in the game, grow it in the community, off the floor, things like that.

Him still showing love, even though he's retired a long time ago, it means a lot. I have nothing but respect and love for Kareem and all the greats that come before me. Everyone that come before me, I'm grateful to be in the league

because they helped make this league what it is today. I'm just very grateful.

Shout-out to all the OGs that came before me, everyone. It's all love from me.

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