

AT&T Slam Dunk

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Mac McClung

Press Conference



Q. Mac, nobody has ever won three dunk contests in a row. I'm not sure if you've ever gotten anything less than a 50. Do you think it would be fair for someone to call you the greatest dunker of all time at this point?

MAC McCLUNG: I definitely don't think that's something for me to say. I appreciate you saying that. But no, I think I was just extremely honored to be a part of this weekend.

I think the biggest thing is I genuinely love this contest, and I'm very honored to be here and just very appreciative.

Q. First dunk you hit the car and almost rotated over and fell maybe on your back or something. How do you even train jumping over a car like that? And two, did you have a close call while practicing?

MAC McCLUNG: Yeah, I want to shout out to Isaiah Rivera. He let me borrow his car. That's a brave thing to do. And the first probably 45 minutes, I was like, I can't do this dunk. I'm landing on the car, I can't do it. Then Chuck (Millan), the guy I work with for dunks, he helped me. He just was like, just jump over the car. I was like, it's not that easy, man.

They taught me the technique, how to do it. We got it like three or four times in a row, and I felt confident doing it. So shout-out to them.

Q. How did you get Mobley involved for the last one? Bigger picture, did you feel any pressure going into that last dunk because Steph had made it pretty close?

MAC McCLUNG: Oh, definitely felt the pressure. I think that it was originally somebody else, but a cancellation happened last minute. Shout-out to Chuck again; he found Evan, talked to him and asked him if he would do it. We just practiced like 20 minutes before the contest. So shout-out to him.

Q. I talked to Stephon and he said that it felt like a Big East battle, Georgetown versus Connecticut in that last final. Talk about what made great slam dunk contests were the two going head to head and being

that 50, 50 back and forth?

MAC McCLUNG: I would say he was amazing, man. He surprised me so much, and he definitely came prepared. It was just really fun being out there with him.

I also think he's an incredible basketball player. I can't wait to see what his future is in the NBA.

Q. Vince Carter just said that you guys saved the Slam Dunk Contest. How do you define success at this stage of your career?

MAC McCLUNG: I've said this a lot of times. I think just trusting my human experience. I know a lot of times you think, oh, I should be doing this or I should be doing that, but I really believe that you're right where you're supposed to be, and I'm just trying to enjoy becoming. Each year, I'm trying to become a better basketball player. If I do this contest, I try to prepare a little more.

I think God has me exactly where I'm supposed to be, and I'm trying my best, so I feel good.

Q. The Dunk Contest has always been about more than just dunks. It's about culture and legacy. How do you think your run has influenced the next generation?

MAC McCLUNG: I'm not sure. I guess time will tell with that. It kind of feels like a blur, you know what I mean? It's just something I love doing. I think that's where my creativity comes. It's because I genuinely love this contest and I love to dunk.

I'm not really comparing myself to anybody or trying to put value on my name. We'll just let the world and the people that love dunking judge that.

Q. We've talked so much over the last couple years, and your comments have always been, hey, I'm a hooper, not a dunker. What feedback have you gotten this weekend on your career? I know your goal is to play in the NBA. What feedback have you gotten from people around the league as you're sitting here playing and talking?



MAC McCLUNG: I think it was funny, coming into college after high school, I tried to get away from dunking. I was like, I wasn't dunking in games. I just wanted people to know I could hoop.

It's funny, this opportunity came, you've just got to follow God's footsteps for you. I don't think the Dunk Contest really wavers my NBA career. I think the pressure I'm applying in the G League does, and I hope that's what people see and scouts see.

Q. I'm very impressed about the dunk you had with the two basketballs. On the hoverboard, the guy was rotating. Could you explain what you were focusing on when you approached to have the take-off while knowing in which position he had to be and still knowing that you catch on the second basketball?

MAC McCLUNG: I think that's kind of the view of the dunks. It kind of started with him standing still. Then you do the dunk with the two balls, and I was like, it's missing one thing; I need something more. I thought of Aaron Gordon on when he had the hoverboard doing the 360.

And timing I think is one of my strong suits, so we just practiced over and over, second turn. Shout-out to Nate. He was literally on the hoverboard for about five hours a day each day for the last two weeks.

Q. A lot of people happy back in Orlando. One question: You have won the MVP of the G League, you have won three trophies straight in the Dunk Contest. Would you trade any of that to have a permanent role on an NBA team, and why?

MAC McCLUNG: I don't look at things like that. I think I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be. No matter what my ego thinks or how I think about my game, this is my life, and I'm going to keep applying pressure.

I love hooping more than I love dunking. I really just am at peace with that, that I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be, and I'm going to keep applying pressure, for sure.

Q. I know that everybody is aware that a lot went into this, obviously. You came really prepared. Can you talk about the ball, the grip? I couldn't help notice that it was a different ball and that it was on the baseline a lot in your group. The touch, the ball for you to do the same over and over again, I know you've been using leading into the competition.

MAC McCLUNG: Yeah, I think just the little details matter in a contest like this. I wanted the ball to be worn in to my

perfect liking. Being able to have grip on it, I'm not some 7'6" wingspan or anything like that, so I need the little advantages like that.

Q. You're wearing that Magic jersey, Aaron Gordon of course had the Dunk Contest moment of all time in that jersey. A lot of people from the Bay Area wanted to see him in this contest. What does it mean to have that visual to kind of bring back those memories, even if he's not here to do it himself?

MAC McCLUNG: Yeah, I think I just wanted to show my respect to him, and I was using one of his ideas. That contest is just so amazing. I think there was two winners that night.

It was just a shout-out to him and appreciation for him.

Q. You spent a lot of time in the area doing a bunch of different things. What's going through your mind when you're up there? Are you hearing a song, thinking about something you've got to do tomorrow?

MAC McCLUNG: I'm just thinking, please go in, ball, please. And then on the car, I'm like, please don't land on the car.

But I think just trusting the preparation. Trying to get into a flow state where you're not really thinking about anything. I feel like we've been practicing for like eight, nine months. It wasn't something we picked up a couple months ago. Really after the second one, I felt like I didn't put the performance on I wanted. I wanted to step up, so I knew I really had to start thinking.

Q. How would you tweak the Dunk Contest so you can continue your streak?

MAC McCLUNG: I don't know. That's not really up to me. I think the contest is a beautiful thing. I know people probably want bigger stars in it, and I would love to see that. But I think it's important for the people in it to want to do it. I think Steph, Matas, Andre, they all wanted to be here. That meant a lot to me, and the interviews and stuff like that.

This contest is a special thing. We all love when we see the Vince Carters, the Zach LaVine. It's a special thing that I think should be really appreciated.

Q. I've been seen you dunking three straight years. What did you notice about tonight, the atmosphere, the scene, and how much did that either help you or kind of make you more nervous or anxious, if at all?

MAC McCLUNG: Yeah, I think that crowd, when you feel like the crowd has your back, that gives you a different level of adrenaline and maybe confidence. It was great, man. It felt really good. The judges gave me some good scores, so that got me feeling good. I really do like to play off the crowd.

Q. You'll always be associated with the G League in some type of capacity. You are Rookie of the Year, the MVP. What's your message to the G League fans that have supported you over the years and also the new ones because of the Dunk Contest?

MAC McCLUNG: I would say I'm proud to come from the G League. I think it's an incredible league where everyone on your team, coaches, the refs, everybody is hungry. It's an incredible league to be a part of because there's a lot of guys I've seen chase their dream and get it, and people that are on their way to do it. So it's a beautiful grind, a beautiful league.

Q. Mac, during the Dunk Contest today, Ja Morant tweeted out "Mac may make me dunk." Giannis retweeted saying, "If you're in, I'm in." What does it say that your performance is making the best of the NBA wanting to join the Dunk Contest again? And two, would you come back and participate again next season if those guys are in?

MAC McCLUNG: I'm flattered. Those guys are so fun to watch. Ja, I love watching him. I think he's incredible. He'd be awesome in the Dunk Contest. I'd love to see that.

As far as me, I was probably thinking about hanging it up after this one, but I don't know. I never want to say never.

Q. How do you pick what you are going to do next? Every single year you came with something special, something amazing. How do you pick what you're going to do next?

MAC McCLUNG: I think it's important to start with maybe your best dunk. I've always thought that in the contest to get the fans on your side. Then I play it by ear. But you try to have as many 50s as you can. That's the hardest part about it, sending the videos to all your friends. Is this a 50? Is this guaranteed 50? Do you think it's a 50?

Yeah, I don't know, man. I think just a lot of preparation always helps. I think my love for the sport and dunking helps me kind of be creative with it, as well as Chuck and all my friends.

Q. How is your thought process? How do you decide the order of your dunks? At the end you maybe wait to

see the more spectacular ones at the end, but you did it at the beginning of the contest. How do you decide that order?

MAC McCLUNG: Just trying to get the crowd on your side early. It was scary definitely doing the car first because we didn't get to warm up or nothing. We just went straight out there, and thank God it went in.

Yeah, I think we stuck to our plan, and we felt like the preparation and everything would take us through.

Q. Obviously these dunks are no easy feat to get creative with, but does part of you want to come back just to see if you can challenge the creativity over and over again and see how much more creative you can get with these dunks?

MAC McCLUNG: This year really felt that big challenge, this year. Yeah, I don't know. I never want to say never, man, but I think this one took a lot out of me, for sure. I prepared very early and put a lot of work into it.

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