

# Emirates NBA Cup

Friday, December 13, 2024

Atlanta Hawks

Quin Snyder

Semifinal Practice Day



**Q. I see you wearing this shirt, these Chinese words. Do you know what it means actually?**

QUIN SNYDER: I do know what it means, yeah. I'm going to just keep it between us.

**Q. Actually, I can tell everyone, it's "Changing for Good." Do you think this reflects actually the situation? This team from the beginning of the season, the team kind of a little bit from scratch, a little bit going up until this point that you guys are here?**

QUIN SNYDER: You're not supposed to see that.

I guess we would talk about it as continuous improvement. That's something that I think is at the core of what this team needs to do and what we're trying to do. Being focused not as much on the result of any one game, but how we play and understanding that this is a group that, particularly Jalen and Dyson and Zac, they're young.

The importance of us growing as a team, how we play as a group, playing together, moving the ball, playing defense, and understanding those things don't come overnight. There's just got to be a consistent commitment, and hopefully that yields results over time. If we can continue to play that way, we've got a chance to continue to get better.

I don't know when the payoff is. This is great. This is a great experience for our guys, but again our focus is on how we play and how we play together and playing as a team.

**Q. Whose idea was it creating this shirt?**

QUIN SNYDER: I'm going to speak to you privately. It's something we've talked about as a coaching staff for a long time. It's not new.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about the evolution of Trae. You can tell that guys are really enjoying playing with him. He's clearly done the work on film to stay out of trouble defensively. Are those the top -- what would**

**you say the top examples of the maturation of him over the last X number of months has been?**

QUIN SNYDER: I think the word that, when we talk with Trae and we talk about Trae, the word I like to use is evolution. Every player evolves. They just evolve in different ways. He's been an important part of our young guys' growth and being able to elevate them and some of the things that I was mentioning earlier.

Trae has, I think, taken pride in how he defends, particularly on individual matchups, whether he's switched on to somebody. One of the biggest things for him has been, even when he's in help situations, getting involved on the defensive glass. So there's some specific things that he's really focused on.

We know what a talented offensive player is, but I think in his mind being successful as a team, not just Trae, we've all got to do our part defensively, and he's doing that. That's really as much as anything.

I don't think he'd object, he's not going to be -- he's not Dyson, and Dyson is not Trae. We're a team, and I think that's the important part. Everybody has their strengths. Everybody has things they need to work harder at and focus on a bit more. He's done that.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about, number one -- two-part question. First, De'Andre Hunter. He's going crazy. Last eight games he's averaging 22 points, shooting 51 from the field, 51 from three. You guys are 7-1 in that span. His growth. Then got to ask you about Darvin Ham, someone who's been very vocal about you, especially during his Laker times. He's undefeated right now. That relationship, that dynamic between you two and how close you are too.**

QUIN SNYDER: No disrespect to Darvin, we'll talk about De'Andre first.

I think I was mentioning earlier like how a team plays and how a player plays. With Dre, he's always put in time. Putting him in a situation in games that are high percentage situations for him and him putting himself in those situations.

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What I mean by that is discussions we've had, I've just wanted him to be as aggressive as possible from three. He's 6-8, and he can shoot over the top of the defense. I love it when he takes contested threes. I love it when he takes them early in the clock.

The other thing that he's worked on -- when I say worked on, these are things he's just emphasized -- is attacking the rim. Whether it's transition, just a quick read with the ball and being able to attack the rim and get to the line and put pressure on people that way, I think those bookends offensively also allow him to be effective in the mid-range. He's done that selectively as well, whether that be attacking the rim, getting to the line, shooting transition threes, just being bold. That's been the biggest thing we've talked about.

One of the things about Dre that I think is really unique is he would be a guy that you just would say he's a pro. He's just a consummate professional. To me, what that means is there's no detail that's too small for him to embrace, and you see that on the defensive end. Both he -- I think both he and Dyson, when other guys on our team look at them and the fact that they're making all the small things important, just it raises the bar.

He's playing great, and he's going to keep -- the big thing for him is just keep playing the same way. Whether the ball goes in on a given night is less relevant than how you're playing.

Darvin, as you know, is my big little brother, and we've been close for a long time. If you hang out in the Bismarck Airport with somebody, you tend to develop a relationship. We go back to our D-League days. I think we're two of those guys who still refer to it as the D-League because it was a different time back then.

As you know, a close, close friend. He's been supportive of me throughout my journey, and I have been with him as well. That's the beautiful thing about this game is that those relationships transcend everything. When he and I are old and gray, we'll still be close.

**Q. I know what you said at the top about the eventual payoff of the Cup experience and sort of it's a process for you guys, but to get here, you guys beat the Cavs, the Celtics, you beat New York in New York. Those are three pretty big wins. Do those wins tell you where you are now and what is possible later this year?**

QUIN SNYDER: Let me qualify that because I think what I was trying to refer to was the payoff being just the growth of the team. To me, this is part of that process that

hopefully can give us that opportunity to grow.

This is a unique experience for all the reasons that you guys are here and we're here. It does provide, I think, some of those opportunities.

We're a group that's trying to develop an identity. Having some success can help that. It can also prevent -- or create challenges too. I think losing and failing as much as none of us want to see that happen, can have the same impact. I think for our group that's what we have to stay focused on.

I think you can do that without diminishing any one game or experience, whatever the team may be. I think it's that consistency that over time creates an identity. To me, that's the most important thing for our group is to continue to grow. When you do something over and over and over again, it becomes potentially who you are, and we haven't done that. We haven't done that yet, but that takes time.

**Q. Jalen has been such a steady presence this season. He's kind of taking that step into a leadership role as well, whether it's playmaking or talking to guys on the bench. How have you seen him involved in that aspect of this game?**

QUIN SNYDER: It's something we talk about, and the word that I really want him to grab onto is presence. I think he's someone, aside from a pass or a shot or a dunk, to have a presence on the floor, whether he's in a timeout, coming out of the game, coming into the game, at a free throw play, free throw line, whether he's a shooter.

Whatever it is, I think great players, you can feel them. That's something that he wants. That's a little more nuanced than I want to make my corner three more. I think those things are all really connected. It's something I think he believes in and wants, and him having a presence is a big thing for our team.

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