

Emirates NBA Cup

Saturday, December 13, 2025

New York Knicks

Mike Brown

Semifinal Postgame



New York Knicks 132, Orlando Magic 120

MIKE BROWN: Man, good game by our guys. They kind of just found a way to win. It was ugly at times. Orlando with Jamahl Mosley as their head coach, they have a really good team. They are physical and get up in you and do a good job defensively and kind of take you out what you want to run and what you're trying to do.

But when you have an MVP of the league candidate in Jalen Brunson, you know, 16-for-27, 40 points, he makes the game easier for everybody. That's what MVPs are supposed to do, and he definitely did that tonight.

He scored for us when we didn't have much going with our offensive movement and stuff like that. And again, you give Orlando credit to play good defense. But you have a guy like that that can go get a bucket and he keeps you in the game and gets you leads and at the end of the day, he carries you home.

It's beautiful to be able to see him do what he's more than capable of doing on a national stage like this in an environment like this, so that hopefully you guys as media and the fans out there can continue talking about him as an MVP of this league because that's exactly what he is.

Two of the things that we told our guys that we had to do against these guys, we had to keep them out of transition. We struggled with it in the first half.

By the way, we calculated they had 21 fast break points in the first half.

In the second half, we did a little bit better. They had 16 fast break points, and part of it was because we turned the ball over. So we do a great job taking care of the ball but we did just good enough.

Another thing we talked about was trying to be physical without fouling; lead with your chest and not your hands. And these guys averaged 30, whatever it is, 30-plus free throws a game. And so for us to have them at 25 at the end of the night was a big night for us because that's one

of the ways that they are very effective.

Didn't do a great job of keeping them off the glass. We can do a lot better than that but a lot of good things, starting with our 70 paint points. Our guys attacked the paint. They finished strong, and to score 70 points in the paint when you're not necessarily posting anybody up, a la Tim Duncan days, is huge.

But the performance off the bench by Mitch; Mitch was big, four blocks for us. He was huge.

Tyler came in and gave us a really big lift, especially when we were kind of stuck in the mud. So those two guys coming off the bench were bang-bang good for us.

But at the end of the day, you know, a lot of great defensive performances, OG, three steals, Josh, three steals. Like I said, Mitch four blocks.

A guy that was just constant with verticalities, trying not to foul, just being big at the rim was KAT. KAT was our Defensive Player of the Game. It was well deserved. He's been playing a lot better on that end of the floor, and he's got to keep performing at a high level for us defensively in order for us to continue to get wins, especially in environments like today.

Q. In one way or another, you've coached some of the greatest scorers this game has seen since 2000, I guess. Where does -- I don't want to say where does Jalen rank, but what are some common threads between him and some of those scorers you've taken under your watch?

MIKE BROWN: They have a relentlessness -- am I saying that right -- okay -- to them, where they just keep coming and keep coming, and that's their competitive spirit coming out. Like they get denied, they get doubled, they get hit, there's all types of things that happened but they keep coming.

And when you have that, you know your team is in good hands because at the end of the day, no matter what defense you see, no matter how physical your opponent is, he's going to be right there.

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And then he is confident. You can feel his confidence, and that gives everybody else, not just his teammates on the floor but his teammates on the bench, the coaching staff, the confidence that he has and breeds into everybody else.

And if there was, you know, a couple of things that are in common with those guys, because they all got talent in their own way and they all score in their own way and that other stuff. But it's those two things, those two intangibles you can't measure with anything but you know it when you're around special types of players. And he is special.

Q. Looked like they were trying to be physical with him, and he seems to relish it, match it. Do you see he rises to that challenge?

MIKE BROWN: A hundred percent. And again, that's what MVPs do. You know, MVPs, doesn't matter what you throw at them, they are going to find a way, and they embrace everything that comes their way because they know they are that good.

Q. What did you think about the atmosphere in the building and anything in particular about the arena that caught your eye?

MIKE BROWN: Yeah, again, being in an environment like this, it's a great experience for all of us, especially, you know, having the feel of a single-elimination game, there was no, Hey, let's go get them tomorrow or let's figure it out. Everybody kind of hangs on to that during the course of the game, and not just the players and the coaches but I'm talking the fans, too.

Then, you know, I tell you what, it kind of surprised -- I didn't know that they were going to do it this way but they really made it a show from the standpoint that the court was lit up and everything else around it was dark. That was pretty neat.

Again, I'll take my hat off to Adam Silver and his team. They just keep coming up with things to try to separate this game or this tournament from the regular season, so a lot of fun.

Q. A kid like Tyler comes in, and obviously makes a huge impact in the game, and the difference between winning today and winning Tuesday is like 325 grand which is a lot of money for anybody, and a lot when you're making --

MIKE BROWN: I didn't even know that that was the difference between. So if we win today?

Q. They are up to like 220 or something, and it's like 533 if they win Tuesday.

MIKE BROWN: Wow. Thank you, Adam.

Q. A kid like that playing for a check like that, I think it's one of the fun byproducts of the fun. But what impact did he make today, and how neat is that element that he's playing for probably the biggest check he's ever seen?

MIKE BROWN: First thing I would say about him is, he's got a competitive spirit to him that not many people have seen. He's got a little nastiness. We want him to continue growing that nastiness, too. So whether there's a check out or not, he's going to try to play the right way and all that other stuff.

He's been playing more and more for us as of late because he's getting it done offensively and he's getting it done defensively, and that's what's exciting about him.

I had heard, and correct me if I'm wrong, but didn't he buy his mom a car or something like that, and I think you said now it's his dad's turn or something like that? I just want to know -- I just want to know if his dad's going to get a better car than his mom or vice versa, because we'll find out soon which parent he likes more [laughter]. Better be his mom.

Hey, I'm not causing trouble, I just got two eyes open. Wait to see what he's going to do.

Just take care of your mom. Just remember that. Take care of your mom.

Q. Suggs had 25 in the first half, and then I think he had one from that point on. What did you guys do in the second half to kind of contain him?

MIKE BROWN: You know, you don't contain guys like Suggs and Bane. You do what you're supposed to do defensively with your rules, and you try to be as physical as you can without fouling.

And in the first half, Suggs was doing a great job getting out in transition, and we were kind of backpedaling and pointing, and with him and Bane, guys like that, you've got to be ready to play as soon as they gain possession of the basketball. You've got to be ready defensively, and he was just getting outside of us in transition.

We did a better job in transition of containing him, and then, also, we were up into him a little bit better. He had a couple of threes where he was kind of able to set his feet and let it go but we did a better job of trying to get up into

him and not let him be comfortable in that second half.

Q. You've been pretty adamant about Jalen as an MVP, just in the past 10 minutes. Do you think he hasn't gotten the notoriety, the credit for that? Because it seems like a campaign speech you've been giving.

MIKE BROWN: There's no campaign speech. I'm just telling the truth, and he has not gotten enough credit. No offense to you guys, but I try not to read a ton on social media or your guys' stuff because it can mess with your mind. If you guys are saying good stuff about us, I can get too high; and if you're saying bad stuff, I can get too low. I try to block out all the noise and stay even keel.

What I have seen, somebody bring up conversations about MVP, and you see a lot of other great candidates that are well-deserving but I don't ever hear Jalen's name. When you're first or second in either conference, and you're putting up the numbers that he's putting up, his name's got to be one of the first names coming out of somebody's mouth.

I just hope to see that more, not by the local people in New York because they get to see him every day, but by the national people, and that's what I want to get across.

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