

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Thursday, June 6, 2024

Boston Celtics

Jaylen Brown

Game 1: Postgame

Boston Celtics 107, Dallas Mavericks 89

Q. You've talked all year about wanting to have the big matchups show that you can lead its way defensively. You have the big matchup to start this game with Luka, but you also on the other end were able to play within yourself while being aggressive. How difficult is that balance on the biggest stage to have those responsibilities and how much do you relish that?

JAYLEN BROWN: I think it's a full-team effort. Luka still had 30 and 10, so I got to do a better job. But it's a full-team effort and tonight I got lucky a few times, but we got to get ready for Game 2.

Q. What stood out to you most about the performance tonight from the group? What did you like the most about the way you guys competed?

JAYLEN BROWN: I think defensively I thought we were -- we made some big-time plays. When they cut it to eight, that's when the game started. I liked how our team responded. We stayed composed. Offensively, we got to our spacing and was able to push that lead back out and make some plays on offense. That was a big third quarter.

Q. What were you feeling at the end of the third when you rejected Kyrie under the basket and then went down the court for the big three-point shot?

JAYLEN BROWN: What was I feeling? Just trying to make some plays, get my team going. Defense is what we got to hang our hat on. Right there, that was an example of that.

Q. Along those lines, from a typical seven-footer standpoint, Kristaps is supposed to be the back line rim protector in this defense. What's your thought process as you're trying to go up and contest a drive when you're in the back line there?

JAYLEN BROWN: It just depends. It just depends on who



you're on, it just depends on the spacing of the game, and we got to be able to make plays, and right there, it was just -- I was the low guy, I was on some of those bigs, you don't want to give up lobs. That's one thing that we made an emphasis on. So I don't want to step up too much and give those lobs, but I was able to cat and mouse a little bit and then make some plays at the rim.

Q. When you guys lost that lead, it gets down from 29 to 8, what's going through your head? We haven't seen this level of response maybe in the past, but this year, you guys have been able to kind of turn that around a little bit. What goes into that kind of response?

JAYLEN BROWN: That's the game right there. It's going to be -- it's not going to be perfect. It's a long series. I expect them Game 2 to come out with tremendous force and maybe try to hit us in the mouth. So that's the game. When a team goes on a run, you got to manage it, you got to stay composed, and you got to keep playing basketball. It's almost like you just have short-term memory a little bit, like the team's not even on a run. You got to play smart basketball and make great plays to get us on a -- get our flow back, and I think in that third quarter, I got to the free-throw line. I think that helped us get going. Then we made some kickouts to the corner. Al got a three. We was able to get some good offense going.

But getting into that paint, being solid, being composed was what allowed us to push that lead back out.

Q. Back to the eight-point deficit lead, Joe said something like he -- we asked him what he said during that timeout, and he said, I talked for 30 seconds, they're talking for two and a half minutes. So I guess what I'm asking is what did Joe say for 30 seconds and what did you guys say to each other for two and a half minutes?

JAYLEN BROWN: We just said, just breathe. The game is starting now. Just breathe. We're in -- this is a moment where our experience shines through. Just breathe, just keep playing basketball. If you got a shot that's open, take it with confidence, no turnovers, take care of the basketball and just play our game. We got to get some stops. They

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made some big shots. Just navigate the run. That was it.

Q. Couple years ago you guys were obviously in The Finals. Now you're back two years later. The two biggest differences are having Jrue and Kristaps here. How much of an impact did the two of them make tonight and what did they show in terms of the differences they made to your team over the past year to get you to the position you guys are in?

JAYLEN BROWN: Two great additions between Kristaps and Jrue. In any given night it could be any of us. And Kristaps had a monster game for us and just his presence shooting the ball and then him being able to attack those switches and mismatches, he made 'em pay every time, and that's what we need going forward in the series. Kristaps was big, but those other guys, Derrick White, Jrue Holiday, JT, they all can get going at any point in time, so that's the beauty of our team.

Every game has its own story. We just got to stay ready, stay composed, and take it one game at a time.

Q. It looks like from earlier in the playoffs that you guys didn't need Porzingis. You guys got here with a 12-2 record and had a lot of rest. It seems like he completes you guys with the way he protects the rim and plays in the middle of the floor. Do you see it that way, that you guys are a complete top to bottom team now because he's back?

JAYLEN BROWN: Yes, I think Kristaps has been great for us all season long. I think he's a big reason why we've been the best team in basketball record-wise, at least, and having him back and him playing well and to that level he was during the season is so important for us because you got another defender, another shooter, out there that you have to respect. So that just opens it up for everybody else.

Now, next game, I'm sure they will make adjustments. We got to be able to read it on the fly and make plays. Guys got to step up. We need guys like Sam, Payton, to come in and step up, JT. Everybody got to be ready to go.

Q. First Celtic in Finals history to have at least 20 points, three blocks, and three steals. What does it mean to you to showcase your career evolution on this stage?

JAYLEN BROWN: It means nothing. You just get ready for the next one.

Q. Three blocks, three steals, but then also, when the game got a little tighter, it looked like you were

drawing contact. You got to the free-throw line a few times. Can you talk about how your aggressiveness on either ends of the floor have become a big part of your game?

JAYLEN BROWN: Yeah, just trying to get to the paint. You know, get paint threats. That creates openness for our shooters. Just get to the throw free-throw line, take my time, and knock 'em down, and clean it up for the next game.

But overall, that's what I've been doing all season long, is just getting to the paint, and that just opens up -- that puts a lot of pressure on the defense. We got a lot of guys that can shoot the ball. Making those reads and stuff is big for us, so got to continue to maintain that throughout the season, throughout the series.

Q. Your friendship with Kristaps Porzingis has been well chronicled this year. As a friend and teammate and someone who's been around him, what did it feel like to see him have the kind of game he had right off the bat and have that energy?

JAYLEN BROWN: It was amazing. Nobody's more proud and more excited for him than I am. But we got to get better, we got to, you know, almost forget about it and get ready for the next one. We can't be celebrating ourselves. Dallas is probably getting ready for the next game right now, so we got to prepare and get ready for the next one, too.

Q. Every basketball player at some point has to deal with an injury and has to go through recovery and rehab to get back on to the court, and usually we see a bit of a feeling-out process. You know, it takes time to get back to that same level. When did it click for you tonight that Kristaps didn't skip a beat?

JAYLEN BROWN: Yeah, was it the first or second quarter? He just went on a run where he just, he hit the three, hit the middy, then ran back, got the block at the rim in transition. He was just making play after play and it was just like, all right, he's back, there was no question about it then. We need some more that have going forward for the rest of this series.

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