

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Sunday, June 9, 2024

Boston Celtics

Jaylen Brown

Game 2: Postgame

Boston Celtics 105, Dallas Mavericks 98

Q. Jaylen, I asked you yesterday about Thursday's crowd. You challenged them again for tonight. Just want to get your thoughts on how they did?

JAYLEN BROWN: I thought it was great. In moments where we gained some momentum, that helped us get over the hump. So tonight we came out, we didn't shoot the ball well. We were a little flat, but I felt like the crowd helped us stay in the game.

Q. You see Jrue have a performance like this where he gets his buckets basically just playing off of you guys. He came in here and said the chemistry between the team and him was pretty natural from the start and he credited you and the rest of his teammates for that. How have you seen Jrue grow into what is a new role for him this season and then be able to have a game like this in the Finals?

JAYLEN BROWN: Jrue has been an example of just excellence. Since he's been here, his role has been different from what it was the last few years on Milwaukee, and he's been able to adapt. Not a lot of guys can do that, be versatile, play different roles and different styles and still have an effect on the game.

Jrue, he just came in, he wasn't on the ball as much, still guarded at a high level, but became a corner three-point specialist. That's just a testament to his greatness. Tonight they wanted to emphasize loading up, making us make the right reads over and over again, and Jrue had a lot of opportunities tonight and he took advantage. He's just a hell of a player, hell of a person, great teammate. I credit the victory to him tonight. He played well.

Q. Yesterday Jason Kidd had the comments about you being the best player on the team. It seemed like everybody was kind of like we're not taking the bait on you trying to split us up and drive a wedge. Then today you and Jayson combined for almost more



assists than they're entire team had. So how do you guys like block out the outside noise? We've talked about this so many times, but it seems like you're showing on the court that you're committed to that. How has playmaking kind of become a tool for you to really show your greatness?

JAYLEN BROWN: Yeah, we got a lot of weapons on our team, so we just got to trust what we've been doing all season long, trust our game plan. We didn't hit shots tonight. I thought we had a bunch of great looks. If you go back and look in the first half, Sam had a bunch of great looks, D-White had some look that didn't go down. But we didn't panic. We kept guarding, we stayed in the game and we kept trusting it and we made enough tonight to win the game. But we expect to shoot the ball better going forward when we get on the road.

Q. Can you take us through the chase-down block of P.J. Washington? You and Derrick both converged, and I think both got part of the ball. What happened there? And can you kind of touch on Derrick's impact and the blocks he makes and the defense and just the things he does?

JAYLEN BROWN: Yeah, Derrick is -- he's been, you know, All-Defensive all season long. In that moment right there, we make a tough rim read. Rim reads lead to transition, so we want to manage that a little bit better. But it's the playoffs, you got to just get back and make a play. Derrick White sprints back. I see they have an advantage. I sprint back and was able to make a play there.

But those are the type of plays that help you win games. It's just effort, that's what it comes down to.

Q. Before Jrue said anything to us postgame tonight, he wanted to address us and basically say that the comment that he made the other day he felt like was taken out of context and he would never rank his teammates and he supports both you and Jayson Tatum as superstars. How has kind of his perspective, his wisdom, or his voice been something that's been welcome to this year's group as you've succeeded to this point?

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JAYLEN BROWN: Jrue is a great teammate, nothing short of that. He's brought championship pedigree to our team. So nothing Jrue says we question. Jrue, he comes in and he just is who he is. He's got that demeanor, that killer-like mentality, and we respect it. You know what I mean? He's a great teammate and it's just an honor to play next to him.

Q. You guys have held the Mavs under a hundred in both of these games, and then particularly in the second half tonight what you did against Luka, defensively how are you doing this?

JAYLEN BROWN: Just effort plays. I think tonight we weren't as crisp defensively. It was a lot of missed communications out there, a lot of stuff that we gave up that we didn't give up in the first game. So I think we got to be better in that regard. But I just think our effort has been the key, just the mentality, picking a guy up full court, stuff like that. It just wears on them over time. But I think we need to be more crisp going into the next two games.

Q. On a night when shots aren't falling, how big was the buzzer beater that Payton hit?

JAYLEN BROWN: Man, that was incredible. I heard he, like, checked himself in the game too. Like, he's been hitting those shots all season long. If anybody has been paying attention to it, he's made I don't know how many of those, at least three or four. So tonight he made it in in biggest of moments.

But it's just an example of what we do and have been doing all season long. How you finish quarters is big. We didn't finish that quarter great. We got a lot of open looks, we gave up some. There was some bad fouls. One of them was mine. I fouled Luka on the back cut, and then me and JT got mixed communication on the switch. Luka had a three.

We got to finish quarters better. But Payton checks himself in the game and covers us a little bit by hitting the big-time shot.

Q. You touched on it, but what's it say about your composure as a team, the fact that you have repeatedly answered run after run when things get tight in a series?

JAYLEN BROWN: That's the key. That's the majority of what the battle is, just managing your emotions. How do you handle adversity and your will and your perseverance. Everything isn't going to go according to plan. I wouldn't have hoped that we shot, I don't even know, what, 7-23 from three? We had a few ill-advised turnovers and fouls, but effort makes up the difference.

Your mindset, we play -- I think we played harder than them tonight, and I think that's just going to be the key. If we want to win, we just got to be the harder-playing team.

Q. When you kind of had focus in regard to Luka and Kyrie in this series, what's been the mindset in regard to making them work on both ends and how key has your depth been in regard to giving them multiple looks, Luka had to worry tonight about getting his pocket picked a couple times, what's the focus been on that side?

JAYLEN BROWN: That's the key. Just trying to wear on those guys, be as physical as we possibly can, full team effort. Just keep touching them. That's it. I think that those guys are tremendously gifted offensively. They came out swinging. Luka came out in the first quarter, we knew what he was going to do. We knew he was going to be aggressive. But we just stayed with the game plan. We stayed just consistent and we was able to turn him over a few times that helped us push the lead out.

Q. You mentioned the defense that they're showing you and Jayson, extra bodies, some of the crowds you're seeing in the paint. How much more equipped do you and Jayson feel to handle that and make the right passes, maybe not shoot as well as you want to, but have like 12 assists or as many potential assists as you have in a game like this?

JAYLEN BROWN: Yeah, that's just being patient. You got a lot of energy, excitedness, nerves, when the game starts, but sometimes you just got to be patient. And I got to the paint pretty much whenever I wanted, and I could be patient when I get there. I had a few turnovers where I had a little bit more time to wait for the defender to make a choice, because those two-on-one reads are there, where you get to the paint, the defender is, the big is coming, you either kick it to the corner or if he drives down to the corner you kick it to the wing. But don't got to be in a rush. Just protect the ball, make the great decisions and trust your teammates. I think that's what the majority of this is. We did that enough tonight, but I think we need to do it a little more going into Dallas.

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