

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Coach Jason Kidd

Practice Day



Q. Jason, how do you assess the job you guys have done defensively on Tatum? Obviously he's not shooting great, but still doing lots of important things. When you're playing an elite player like him, is that the best you can hope for?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think he's one of the best players in the world. You're trying to just make it tough. That's all you can do, is hopefully guard the first move, guard the second move, guard the third move and contest. Guys are doing that at a high rate, trying to make it tough on him.

Q. Game 2, seemed like you utilized Dante Exum more as a third ball handler next to Luka and Kyrie. What did you see from that combination? Something you could potentially lean on more in Game 3?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I thought Exum did a great job in Game 2. We'll look to see if we can get that combination out there a little bit more as a third ball handler. Defensively, I thought he did a really good job.

He's one of the few that has made a three in this series. He knocked down the open three. We're going to need that a little bit more from him.

I thought the pace he came with was really good.

Q. It seemed like the Celtics are doing a lot of pre-switching whenever Luka tries to get isolation on a big. What is the best way to counter that?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think when you look at their defense, just understanding -- I thought Luka did a great job of getting off to a great start scoring. It's just understanding who's on and who he's involving in the pick-and-roll.

We have to do a little bit better job of that. Again, he's getting where he wants to go.

Q. Jason, what do you think the shift to Dallas will

mean for your team -- particularly, it's cliché, but they say the role players play better in home games?

JASON KIDD: That's what they say. We're home. Understanding that Boston held serve, that's what we're talking about, is just focusing on Game 3. We felt in Game 2 we had opportunities we just let get away from us.

For us at home, protecting home court. But the cliché is role players play better at home, so we'll see.

Q. How do you walk the line between urgency, which is obviously growing, and telling everybody to relax and chill out a little bit?

JASON KIDD: It's easy, just say relax. I think the urgency started for us awhile back. I think we're used to that. I think the game of basketball is about makes and misses and capitalizing on mistakes. We just haven't had that opportunity to capitalize. We're getting stops. We're turning the ball over, give up a three. Understand coming down the stretch we had to play perfect.

Hopefully the game is close coming down the stretch and we can capitalize on their mistakes. But there's two teams playing, so we can relax and enjoy this and have fun. That's what it's all about. Hopefully we can do that tomorrow night.

Q. Coach, they had a lot of success in Game 2 going to a little bit like four-out, one in, Jrue or White in the dunker spot. What does the changing of that spacing do to your defense?

JASON KIDD: You look at White and Holiday are comfortable -- Holiday is very comfortable in the dunker. He plays as the big. Being able to not just put the ball in the basket, but also to be a playmaker from that position.

He's a willing passer. When you talk about a point guard or a versatile guard, those two can playmake from there. So they put a lot of pressure. It's a little different when you have smalls in the dunker.

For us, we had to do a little bit better job of understanding who is down there. Again, Boston is a very talented team

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when you talk about the four around one. They have four shooters on the perimeter. They can playmake. They're very willing passers.

Sometimes in this league you've got to give up something. Right now, they're taking advantage of that.

Q. How was your experience of playing NBA Finals in this building? What does this franchise mean to you as a player and coach?

JASON KIDD: This is an incredible atmosphere. To win that championship in 2011, the city is incredible. They love their Mavs. To win it then and now to be here in '24 is special because you don't really get an opportunity to do that.

I understand the opportunity that I have to be the head coach of the Dallas Mavericks. It's a dream come true. But we're trying right now to figure out how to win one game, and that's the next one tomorrow night.

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