

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

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Boston Celtics

Jaylen Brown

Practice Day



Q. I don't want you to get me wrong, okay. It's obvious that you wanted to win all the other playoff games that you played. I want to know, in this particular postseason, we watch your eyes and we see more hunger for the victory. I want to know if you agree with this thought? Do you see yourself a different player in this regard compared to the other postseasons that you played?

JAYLEN BROWN: You could say that. I like to pride myself that I always try to play with that fire and that passion. I feel like that's what makes me who I am, the essence of why I play and how I play.

But my experiences, the heartbreaks, the losses, have all kind of cultivated into what you see now. I don't want to feel that again. I think that's fair to say.

Q. You've talked about the sacrifice it's taken to get back to this position. What has that taught you about what you've been able to operate in this postseason to be at the level you're playing at right now? What has that meant to you personally?

JAYLEN BROWN: It's been fun. Personally, I think it's been necessary. I think anytime you want to achieve something great, it's going to take a little bit of sacrifice from every individual to get to where you want to go.

Me going into this season, I knew that being one of the leaders, that would be in front of me on my plate. I didn't mind it. It's translated to us being here in the Finals. The sacrifice is necessary not just in sports but in life, if you want to achieve a goal, to some degree.

Q. Teams that go up 2-0 in the Finals go up to win the series 86% of the time. How do you keep the focus, your foot on the gas, not look ahead to the end of the series, stay hungry for Game 3?

JAYLEN BROWN: For me, it's different for every individual, but it's almost like you got to trick your mind

almost in a sense. You almost got to play like you're down 0-2 rather than up. That's hard to do. You got to go into that mind frame, that focus. Now we are playing like that, rather than you let comfort, you let some of those things kind of seep in. You just try to stay focused and try to harness the mind as much as you can.

The mind is a powerful thing. It's hard to grasp some of those things as you are intaking them. If you can kind of focus your mind on what you want it to focus on, you'd be surprised what you can do.

Q. After playing against him for so many years, how have you bonded with Jrue? A player seems to no enemies, adversaries. How have you bonded with him this season? How well have you gotten to know him?

JAYLEN BROWN: Gotten to know Jrue a lot. Jrue is, like I described it in the beginning of the season, he's like an assassin. He just has a will and a might about him, how he plays, that he'll die on the battlefield. I'm the same. You recognize that and you respect that.

His will is unbreakable. He's going to show up. He's going to be there. He's going to be in the fight with you. I've been against him on the other side, so you could feel it. You could feel like this dude's not going anywhere.

I think that's where the respect for me and him, just being opponents, but now him being on the same team, it's an honor. It's been an honor to be his teammate because of how he carries himself. His willingness to sacrifice, his willingness to adapt, and then be successful where he's adapting to.

For example, this year was different than last year. He's like mastered being a corner three-point shooter. He wasn't that at any other point in his career. He took the role on this new team and developed into almost a new player.

I don't overlook stuff like that. I think those are forms of greatness. Even though we expect greatness to be these things that are so large or so captivating. Stuff like that doesn't go unnoticed to guys like me. It's been an honor to be his teammate.



Q. (Question from Utah Jazz guard Keyonte George.) Obviously, you've been in this position before. I want to ask how you were able to keep the team camaraderie while adding a couple high-level guys from last team coming here? Is it you that's giving them the buy-in or almost like a collective thing, everybody throws something in the middle?

JAYLEN BROWN: For sure. Team camaraderie, you're going to experience this, it's probably the hardest thing to gain in the NBA. A bunch of guys, a bunch of egos. Agents telling them one thing; they feel another way. Having everybody on the same page is probably going to be the hardest thing you're going to be trying to experience throughout your career.

I think it always starts from the top. Like, you look at the top guys. Me and JT, we've been here the longest, and we set the tone from the jump. Everybody else kind of has to follow along. That's kind of what has worked for us.

Every locker room, every organization, is a little different. You got to figure out how to get your team into that same vibe.

It's hard enough to get two people on the same page. Trying to get 12 or 15, all the way bought in, there's going to be some challenges.

That's where leadership step in. As you develop as a leader, those are the type of things that you learn. You improve, you build relationships with guys, you talk to guys on the court, off the court, they start to trust you. That's how you start to build some of those good habits.

But it don't happen overnight, I'll tell you that.

Q. When you first learned there was going to be some uncertainty about KP's status, what was your reaction? Does anything about that uncertainty change the way that you prepare, get ready? Is it same old, same old?

JAYLEN BROWN: Same old, same old. KP has been tremendous for our group, not just in the Playoffs, but all season long. It's obvious him on the floor just helps elevate us to a different level.

But we've been priding ourselves on next-man-up mentality. We prepare for these moments to be able to play with or without anyone. It just requires somebody else on our team to step up and everybody to buy in to get a full team victory.

Q. With the Finals there comes so much talking, all the comparisons. How do you stay focused on keeping up the joy of playing basketball, in the position to play the game because you love it so much?

JAYLEN BROWN: How do I keep the focus? That's a great question. How do I keep the joy?

Honestly, just the relationships, the experiences that you have with your teammates, the growth is kind of what brings the joy out.

It's like the testimony, just seeing where we were to where we are now, like that journey to get there, that is the joy. That's where it comes from. Just being in those valleys, and now you get into the mountaintops. That's what brings that feeling.

I feel like we're climbing. We're not there yet. But when we get there, all the stuff that's happened before is going to be appreciated in those moments.

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