

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Sunday, June 16, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Coach Jason Kidd

Practice Day



Q. You forced them into a lot of tough looks at the rim in Game 4. Just curious what you thought of the help situations and help principles in general?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I thought they were really good in Game 4. That helped us get to Game 5. But just understand, we can't have three on the ball. They are too good at being able to make that pass. They are the best team at shooting the three. There are some things that we can clean up, and we're going to have to be better here in Game 5 if we want to win.

Q. I saw a clip the other day of Ty Lue talking about the Cavs' 3-1 recovery against the Warriors a few years back. On the one hand, it seems cliché when you tell your team, one game at a time, but he drilled that in, like, I do not want you thinking about anything past this game. Imagine there's some version of that for you guys right now, but how are you handling the mental focus to not look at the bigger picture?

JASON KIDD: I think what helps is we were in that situation last game. So not to change or deviate from what we talked about in Game 4. It's just take each possession one possession at a time, and hopefully we can put ourselves up winning each quarter. We ended up doing that.

Same thing that we are talking about today and tomorrow is we can only focus on Game 5, and trying to find a way to win here in Boston.

Q. It seems like you got a little closer in Game 2 and Game 3, and you finally pulled it off in Game 4. I was wondering in real time, what you are seeing about the progression of your team and learning in the moment what's required to win in the Finals?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, one, it's hard to win in the Finals. And so I think, as you brought up, each game, we have gotten better on both ends, offensively and defensively. So the trend is to continue to get better. Hopefully we can do

that in Game 5, where we can get better defensively and offensively. We started to knock down shots here in Game 4, and hopefully we can get those same shots in Game 5 and have the opportunity to knock them down.

But looking at Luka and Ky, those two have to set the tone for us and everybody else will follow.

Q. You mentioned Kyrie setting the tone. Obviously unique circumstances for him, struggled in the first couple games here in Boston. Having been through those first couple games, how do you think that might benefit him coming back for another crack at it here in Boston?

JASON KIDD: I think, and I'm not speaking for him, but just from experience, just as an athlete, you want to get another opportunity, and he has that opportunity here tomorrow night. Hopefully he can take full advantage of that. Make some adjustments and look back at Game 1 and 2 and see what they were doing to him defensively and hopefully take advantage in Game 5.

Q. After Game 4 in your postgame comments, you mentioned Luka needs to be ready tomorrow to be put back into pick-and-roll situations. Did you guys do something in Game 4 to, I guess, protect him from that? Because it didn't seem like he was run through, I guess, the wringer like he had been in the first three games.

JASON KIDD: Our defense didn't really change. I think just the effort. I think Luka participated at a high level, and he was really good on the ball. He came up with some deflections and steals. We believe that he is going to be involved in the pick-and-roll tomorrow.

We're going to need that same effort from him, but also for the guys that are there to help protect him, they will be ready to protect him. But he's got to participate at a high level, and we believe he will.

Q. You mentioned three-point shooting and just the fact that shots went down in Game 4. I know the game was already decided in the fourth quarter, but Tim Hardaway making five threes in that span, did you see

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

anything that you can lean on for Game 5?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, he looked like he joined a special company. He looked like Ray and Steph. So we're going to need that here in Game 5. If it's a close game, hopefully he is able to knock down those same shots, get those same shots.

But it was great to see Timmy knock down those shots. Hopefully he can build on that, and as a team we can build on that. We are going to need that here in Game 5.

Q. Al Horford said after Game 4 that they didn't really have to make adjustments, the Celtics, after the first three games, and now they are going to have to go back and see what they need to change. What changes are you anticipating from them?

JASON KIDD: They are not a team that changes. They are a team that makes you change.

So they are going to probably look to see that they had some good looks from three that didn't go down, and also being able to probably get Tatum and Brown going early. Having those two attack our defense early is probably something that could be an adjustment.

But for them, it's shooting the three, creating in the three and then capitalizing on your mistakes. Hopefully for us, our mistakes were low in Game 4, and hopefully they are low in Game 5.

Q. Nico was noting a couple days ago that four of your top eight guys really have not been in long playoff runs before. Some, very little playoff. All of y'all's best games in the series have been Game 5. Is there something to that? Are the players getting adjusted to the opponent, and the level of competition in the series gets older?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think there's probably something to that. If we look at the analytics of our group, they are young, and as the series goes on, they get better. Hopefully that's true tomorrow night.

Sometimes when you do play an opponent over and over, you get used to the tendencies and you start to capitalize on that on both ends, defensively and offensively. Hopefully our group has seen enough of Boston to understand what they are good at, and hopefully we can take that away tomorrow night.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

