

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Monday, June 17, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Coach Jason Kidd

Game 5: Pregame



Q. Kyrie and Luka have combined to score 1,079 points as a duo. It's the most in NBA [playoff] history. Regardless of what happens tonight, what have they proven together as a group?

JASON KIDD: They shoot the ball a lot. I mean they are good. They are really good. That number is incredible when you think about it.

But it works. And so we're going to need to add to that point total tonight if we want to win.

Q. We've seen Dereck Lively make his first three, and he works on that quite a bit in practices and so forth. I'm wondering how you guys as a staff and with him balance trying to expand his game and grow it outward but also remembering that he's really good around the rim and you don't want to lose that?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think there's a balance. You know, there's communication. There's always development with one's individual game. And so it's almost going to be a year since we had him in the draft. I think the draft is in nine or 10 days.

And so to be able to see where he has improved, not just in his strength but also the other areas, and he can shoot. You know, he has the ability. He has a nice stroke out beyond the arc. And so in due time, he will be one that's going to probably shoot a lot of threes.

But right now, his strength is offensive rebounding, the vertical game, and then defense, being able to guard the ball and then also protect the rim.

Q. You guys are 3-0 in Game 5s during this playoff run. What is it about this team when Game 5 comes around that you just do whatever you've got to do to win the game?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, those have been games that we've looked at as games that can change a series. And so just

understanding swing games, when you look at 3 and 5, are typically the swing games. So we really have had success in Game 5s, and hopefully that will continue tonight.

Q. Porzingis is available. How does that change things for you guys? And with him coming back off that injury, how much will you guys want to go at him and see how healthy he is and how well he's moving?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think we expected him back at some point, and he's available tonight. What does it change? Just, you know, his ability to score in Game 1 and 2, and we have to be better. We've got to make him put it on the floor where he just can't catch-and-shoot.

Then defensively, we have to be aware of his shot blocking. And so we've got to account for him when we do drive it to the paint that he's one that can change or block shots, and we have to be better at that. In Game 1 and 2, we weren't very good.

With him on the floor, we'll see how he moves, but I think that healthy or not healthy -- I mean, healthy, we are going to still check to see how he moves. So nothing changes there.

Q. Before Game 4, you had those comments that turned out to be really prescient about how there would be a moment when your players were going to have to decide whether they were going to concede the series or the Celtics would punt, and we saw what happened. What do you expect tonight? And is what you saw in Game 4, does that tell you that the Mavericks won't concede and you'll fight all the way through?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, we're going to fight. We put ourselves in a position in Game 4 to get a win to keep the series going, and now we're here in Boston. They have played extremely well at home. But we still feel that the pressure is on them to end the series.

For us, it's to go out there and play. Hopefully we can copy some of the things we did in Game 4 to have success and hopefully can put ourselves in a position tonight to win.



But, you know, as we've always said in this league, it's hard to close the door. Nothing's given. You've got to earn it. And so for tonight, we've got to find a way to keep this thing going and get it back to Dallas.

Q. Historically Luka has thrived in the moments where he's on the road and he's against the wall, his back is against the wall. Curious why you think he thrives in those moments?

JASON KIDD: He's a superstar. He's one of the best players in the world. Most stars love that type of atmosphere, that type of setting. That's what makes them stars is they tend to bring their best game with their back against the wall. He's done it for the Mavs and for his national team, and so we expect nothing any less than that tonight.

Q. We keep on talking that we say no one ever came back from a 3-0, but actually we saw it happen in Major League Baseball 2004, Red Sox against the Yankees, and also 1942 in the Stanley Cup. Did you know that? I know you keep saying you think game-by-game, but how much is the desire inside of to you really make the impossible like happening now in basketball, and being one of the teams that made it?

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I knew about the Red Sox and Yankees. You know, when you talk about being down 3-0, that's the truth and those are the facts.

But there is another game to be played, and so if you can just stay in the present, that can help, you know, with what you're trying to achieve, and that's to keep the series going, and we did that in Game 4.

Here on the road, we have to be in the present. We can't think about Game 6 or Game 4. We have to play Game 5.

So we are excited about having this opportunity, and hopefully we can put our best foot forward to keep this thing going.

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