

# NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Monday, June 17, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Jason Kidd

Game 5: Postgame



Boston Celtics, 106, Dallas Mavericks 88

**Q. You guys competed real hard. Luka was obviously hurt. Did you get the sense that it was the Celtics' time. I mean, they were together for seven years and kind of what you would want to keep building toward with this predominantly young group?**

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think when you look at their journey for seven years, there's been ups, there's been learning experiences for them with winning and losing, and so understanding for us, we've been together for five months, some of us, so this is a really positive journey that we've been on here, and we'll look at what we can do as we get to the Finals, just understanding we have to play our best basketball. Unfortunately, Boston was better than us in this series and they won the championship.

**Q. Was there anything in particular that the Celtics did on the defensive end to slow you guys, slow down your offense?**

JASON KIDD: Yeah, we had some great looks there that just didn't go down for us. Ky has a layup that rims in and out. P.J. had great looks. It just wasn't our night offensively.

**Q. When you look at what needs to happen for you guys to be able to get over that last hurdle, what are things that stand out to you as far as how you can get to that, take that next step?**

JASON KIDD: Well, I think the first step is just to be in it. I think that's a big thing. A lot of us -- when I say a lot of us, excluding the people in the locker room, didn't have us here, and so to be able to start the playoffs in L.A., to start the playoffs in Oklahoma, to start the playoffs in Minnesota, to understand that that's not easy to do. I thought the group did a great job. Yes, we lost 4-1, but I thought the group fought against the Celtics and just, unfortunately, we just couldn't make shots when we had to, or we turned the ball over and they took full advantage of that.

So there's a lot of positives in this run that we were on during the playoffs, but also, since March, we've been playing basketball at a high level. So when we go back to look at some of the stuff, what we can continue to build on and what we can get better at.

**Q. Speaking of building, you've talked about building a culture here in three years, Conference Finals, NBA Finals. What would you say kind of the biggest, the most important pillars that you feel like you have put in so far?**

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think that's a very good point. First year we lose to Golden State, who becomes the world champs, then we lose this year to the World Champs in the Boston Celtics. So, not a bad run in two out of three years. So, in between those two years, we get D-Live and we get trades that makes the team better, so a lot of positive things.

We're a young team, and so this isn't a team when you look at, you know, do we have to replace some of the older players, it's -- you know, we have a core, a young core at that, and so this is an exciting time to be a Mavs fan and to also be a coach for the Mavs.

**Q. Obviously, Luka dealt with a lot of injuries throughout this postseason run. What can he learn from this?**

JASON KIDD: Well, he's one of the best players in the world, and so I think the biggest thing for him is that we all would like to be healthy, but there's going to be bumps and bruises along the way. So, for him at the age of 25 to get to the Finals, to be playing his basketball at the level that he's playing is, now it's just being consistent, and I think we all would say he led the league in scoring.

He also has won, so now it's just a matter of being consistent and, again, always being in the talk for MVP because when you have one of the best players in the world, you should be always fighting for a championship.

**Q. You touched on a couple of these things, but obviously, you're a pretty young team and built around**

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**a 25-year-old star. You've got guys who just arrived, as you mentioned, a few months ago. At a time like this, I know it's hard to look forward, but is the next step in growth, is it just, you know, youth maturing, is it just all these guys having more time together, are there specific things that just maybe need to be added? What's the next evolution of this team or is it some of it just evolution within?**

JASON KIDD: Yeah, I think it's just time, being able to go through it, to get to know each other a little bit better on the court and off the court. So, I think the more time that these guys are around each other the better they're going to be next year.

Again, five months without a training camp. This season started in Abu Dhabi and it's been going on for a long time. So for this group to spend time together, to fail, and to understand what it feels like to fail and also to see what failure is and then how do we get better and learn from that. I think I've got a great group of young men who will be hungry this summer and will come back ready to play at a high level.

**Q. I think it was 19-18 there and you guys had played well up to that point and got the early deficit down. What happened there when you had some empty possessions? I think they might have had a couple of steals or you guys had a couple of turnovers, and it snowballed after that.**

JASON KIDD: Yeah, it snowballed quickly. The turnovers led to easy baskets or wide-open threes. So they took advantage of that, and we couldn't keep scoring or keep pace with them. We got good looks that just didn't go down for us.

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