

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Monday, June 17, 2024

Boston Celtics Derrick White

Game 5: Postgame



Boston Celtics 106, Dallas Mavericks 88

Q. Talk us through what happened with your tooth, and how low on the list is that of priorities right now?

DERRICK WHITE: Dove for the ball. Lively landed on me. I knew right away. I've chipped it in the past, so it's not new. But, like, I mean, this tooth is loose. The other two teeth are wiggling. They were trying stuff in the locker room. I was like, I don't care. Just play.

Q. How would you explain the reality of winning a championship? What are the emotions right now?

DERRICK WHITE: This is unreal. I don't think it really has hit and settled in. This is a special group of guys, a special coaching staff that I'm just thankful to be a part of. Yeah, it's unreal. I'm just trying to enjoy the moment and not get too lit (laughter).

Q. When this team traded for you two years ago, they were going through a rough patch at the start of the season. To go from there to now, I know you just reflected on being a champion, that journey with this group of guys, what has that process meant? That journey, what's it been like?

DERRICK WHITE: At the moment I got traded, I was -- I wouldn't say disappointed. But you're in San Antonio. That's all I knew.

Such a blessing to be a part of this roster. They just drive me in so many different ways, from top to bottom. I'm just so thankful and grateful for each and every one of them. They made me a better player and made me a better person. The city of Boston, everything, has just been amazing for me.

Q. What's it mean for you guys to see the joy and excitement out of AI and to be able to win it for him?

DERRICK WHITE: Man, nobody deserves it more. Hell of

a career. So underrated career. Just does everything for us. Doesn't ask for anything.

I'm so happy for him, and I'm glad I could be a part of it. Just an amazing career, and this is just another chapter of it.

Q. You talked a minute ago about the personal stuff you've gone through the last couple years, your own individual play, getting to this point. Obviously two years ago, you guys were in the Finals, and last year the series with the Heat in the Conference Finals. Now you made it over the top. What has that process been like with the group and coming full circle today?

DERRICK WHITE: Everything I've learned in the past two years just kind of prepared us for this. They were trying to say we weren't battled tested; I'm like, What do you think the last two years was? Did that not mean nothing?

Just continue to work hard, learn a lot about each other and stick together. It's easy to point fingers and try to split up. But we stuck together -- JT, JB, and we added Jrue and KP. Most of the core stuck together and believed in one another.

Q. You talked how Joe has helped you become the player that you are today. What was it like to share the moment with him, and what can you say about the job he did leading you guys to this opportunity?

DERRICK WHITE: Man, I love Joe Mazzulla so much. Coming off the year I had, and he gets the job, and he's like, You know what? I'm going to start you. Which I wasn't expecting. He was like, I believe in you and I trust in you. This is going to give you the confidence.

And from that moment on, I think it's changed my whole career. I'd do anything for him.

Q. We know Kristaps was not a hundred percent, not even close to that. How much did that mean to you guys for you guys to pull this off tonight?

DERRICK WHITE: He's just a great teammate, a great competitor. I was happy for him that he was able to go out



there. The crowd cheering him on like that just got him going. He's still 7-4 and can do so many different things here. He's special.

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