

NBA Western Conference Finals: Lakers vs. Nuggets

Thursday, May 18, 2023

LeBron James Anthony Davis

Los Angeles Lakers
Game 2: Postgame

Nuggets 108, Lakers 103

Q. Was that the ankle that you caught late and how is it feeling?

LeBRON JAMES: Yeah, I think I stepped on somebody's foot. I think it was maybe Aaron Gordon or one of the guys underneath the basket, but it will be fine.

Q. What did you feel like when Denver was hitting those five straight threes? What's the differences in your coverages and what you're trying to do battling Jokic versus what you're giving up on the outside?

LeBRON JAMES: Only one of them was uncontested. All of them was great contests. Two of Jamal's threes was right in the face of me and AD. The Michael Porter Jr one by our bench was right in the face of AR after a transition, they were in transition. Bruce Brown had one as well with a contest.

They made -- that was it, the three-point line is what killed us in the fourth, but I didn't see many breakdowns though.

Q. Did they do anything different defensively tonight against you than in Game 1, and what do you think it will take to bounce back in Game 3?

ANTHONY DAVIS: No. I got the same looks. A lot of them were just short tonight. I'll be better.

Q. Not that it's an excuse but you guys exerted so much energy early against Jokic, did you feel like fatigue was a factor at all?

ANTHONY DAVIS: No.

LeBRON JAMES: I mean, if you're not tired in the postseason, I mean, everybody's tired.



Q. Obviously two teams playing here, you're playing the No. 1 team in the West, and Jamal had a remarkable performance particularly in the fourth quarter. What did you see out him and what type of rhythm was he able to find against you guys' defense?

LeBRON JAMES: He made shots. He made shots at the end of the clock when we guarded for 24 seconds, and he made two big-time shots, one over AD and one over myself. Had his mid-range game going. But he had his three-point shot going in the fourth. It's no surprise to anybody, he's done it before. Hate to be on the other side of it but I don't feel like we had many breakdowns when he was doing what he was doing. He made shots and sometimes it's a make-or-miss league.

I feel like defensively we were really good. They shot 43 percent for the No. 1 offense in the league. And so it just sucks that those five threes in the fourth definitely killed us.

Q. What did you guys make of the starting lineup adjustment going back to the starting lineup you guys have been using for most of the second half of the season and just kind of playing bigger lineups in general tonight?

LeBRON JAMES: It doesn't matter at this point who starts, who comes off the bench, it's just about how we can get it done and win a game. That's all that matters.

Q. They haven't lost a game at home in the postseason, neither have you guys. If you include the Play-In I think you won the last seven. Does that give you guys any more -- is that a benefit for you guys going home knowing you haven't lost a game?

LeBRON JAMES: We still got to play with the same desperation as we did tonight. We came out with an L but doesn't give us any more comfort. We can't go into any postseason game with comfort, just because you either haven't lost at home or you're going back home. I think it's even more you got to be on edge, because when you go home you get in your own bed, get around your family, everybody's being cool and jolly and everything. Nah, you got to be even more on edge when you go home. So, we got to understand that going back and being down 0-2. There's no reason for us to get comfortable.



Q. After these two games what do you think you need to improve and keep doing now that you are going home?

LeBRON JAMES: I think we improved from Game 1 to Game 2. And if we can do the same thing from Game 2 to Game 3, we put ourselves in a position to win.

Q. You've been in this position before, every time you've won. From a mental and emotional standpoint what do you take out of that that can be applied, if anything?

LeBRON JAMES: What you take out of it is the fact that this is not the NCAA tournament, it's the first team to four wins. We have an opportunity to go home and play great basketball and hold serve. So until a team beats you four times then you always have an opportunity to come out of it. So that's the confidence that we should have. I know it's going to be a tough hill to climb up, but we still have an opportunity to play good basketball and play the best basketball of the series in Game 3.

Like I said, if we can get better from Game 2 like we did tonight to Game 3, then we put ourselves in a position to do that.

Q. You made the one three and then you had the two other looks there. What did you think about those shots that you got down the stretch and just overall, you know, you're coming off 40, your efficiency wasn't there the way it was in Game 1.

ANTHONY DAVIS: I liked both the looks. Made the first. Second one was back rim. And the next one in the same exact spot, rims in and out. So, I liked all the looks that I got today. Just a lot of them was short. I'm going to continue to shoot those shots and I got to be better, more efficient, help the team win. So, I'll be better.

Q. The dunk in the first half is not a play we often see. The ball squirts out like that. There was another play I think in the third where you guys got an offensive rebound and Dennis could have held for one, he shoots. When the margins are so slim are those the plays that kind of eat at you between now and Game 3?

LeBRON JAMES: No, I mean those are -- obviously you have an opportunity, I mean, my opportunity puts us up 10 and instead it was an eight-point deficit in the game for us. Obviously, that's sucks that that ball squirted out of my hand like that, whatever the case may be, maybe hit my knee or whatever, but unforced turnover by myself. Horrible. Especially on the road. The same thing at the

end of the third. I missed a three -- I believe we were up five -- I miss a three. Jamal Murray tried to save it, saves it right to AD and we swing it to AR. And Dennis had a pretty good look, but we had an opportunity to hold and not take the shot with a five-point lead. And instead they get the block, Bruce Brown gets the block, Joker pushes it, throws it to the right corner away from our bench. KCP, we get a great contest on KCP from AR. And I thought it was a great block by AD, to be completely honest, but they called goaltending, instead of being up five we're up three. So those are momentum plays, for sure, both of them.

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