

NBA Western Conference Finals: Lakers vs. Nuggets

Saturday, May 20, 2023

Jamal Murray

Denver Nuggets

Game 3: Postgame

Denver Nuggets 119, Los Angeles Lakers 108

Q. That fourth quarter last game you had 23 points. Is it possible to carry momentum over into another game? Does that work for you?

JAMAL MURRAY: No, I just thought we as a team had the right mindset going in. We knew the crowd was going to be into it, and they were. I thought we did a good job of just hitting first, on the road especially, and keeping that up even when they made a run. They came back I think it was like 71-71. But we were even in the quarter, and once we realized that, even when we weren't playing our best, we've just got to buckle down and do the things we did in the first half.

Q. Can you talk about the team's defensive effort tonight and over the last two games?

JAMAL MURRAY: Yeah, it's been good. I think we've just been on a string. We're on the same page with what we're doing, even when we mix it up in timeouts and adjustments game to game. Everybody is just on the same page.

When we mess up, we don't get too down. I think that's the biggest thing. Just next possession and get back to it. We can't hang our head in the Playoffs, and we're doing a good job of just trucking along and getting back on the same page, like I said.

Q. Malone was just in here talking about how late in the fourth Joker kind of took over the huddles a little bit, was calling out plays, saying you and him were going to play two-man game, clear the side of the floor for that. What was the communication like between him and the team and all you guys at that point?

JAMAL MURRAY: We were up at the time, and we just wanted to not rush anything. We know that once we have space, we can find out different holes and seams and gaps in the defense. I think we did a good job, like I said, taking our time. We didn't rush anything, and we made a good



play every time out of it.

No rush was the biggest thing, and no turnovers. We did a good job of just executing. Jokic did a good job of clearly in English speaking to the team in the huddle about where everybody should be, and like I said, we did a good job executing.

Q. I know this is the farthest you've been since 2020 in this same round against this same team. Is there anything you take from having been to that spot, and also other previous playoff experiences that helps you get here and also forward, past it?

JAMAL MURRAY: You can learn things in your wins, and you can learn things in your losses. I remember the Lakers when they were in the bubble, they were a big team. Their lineups of LeBron, AD, Dwight Howard, Kuz and then Danny Green. That was a big line. Even when we got a stop, it was tough for us to rebound. I think they were up at the half and rebounding. We just knew this was kind of the same thing. I knew we were making shots in the first half, but we can't let them get second-chance opportunities.

We just did a good job of just giving them one shot, and like I said, being in the paint, helping out each other and just being on a string, especially on the back line of the defense.

Q. Following up on that, your message coming off the of the court, the message that continued in the hallway wasn't, we've got to win one more, it's that we need to win five more. What's the balance there with the micro task at hand and the joy you have in this versus knowing that there's something else that you're going for?

JAMAL MURRAY: Just keeping everybody in the moment, not letting it slip away. You need 16 wins to win a championship, and we've got five more to go. The Lakers are in our way, and they're going to do everything in their power to come back and fight. They're not going to just lay down and let us beat them on their home floor.

We know next game is going to be another test. They're going to come out more aggressive. AD is going to be more aggressive. LeBron is going to be more aggressive. So the crowd is going to be more into it.



We know it's coming, and we've just got to stay locked in and know that we can do it, and we have full belief in that. Like I said, we've got five more to go.

Q. We don't see Nikola struggle like that very much in the first three quarters and then he also got in foul trouble. Do you feel like this team can find different ways to win games?

JAMAL MURRAY: Yeah, we've got a lot of guys that can come in and impact the game. So I just -- KCP did a great job, Bruce, everybody that played today did a great job. Jok, to me, didn't even struggle in the first; he was just in foul trouble, and he wasn't really getting the ball because I was having it. (Laughter.) I think he'll have a stronger start next game.

Q. Going back to what that was, what does it say about your team, giant first half for you, KCP was monster in the third quarter, Joker comes back in the fourth, but what does that say to everybody about your team?

JAMAL MURRAY: Yeah, we're just a very unselfish team. It may not be your night, it may not be your quarter. I thought Aaron has done a great job all Playoffs just finding his matchups and guarding, getting back in transition, being at the rim, being big.

Everybody, Bruce, steps up. Everybody realizes when we need something, we need a spark. Could be Joker, could be me, could be Bruce, Jeff off the bench, whether it's a chase-down block or a charge or something. Everybody has something they can come in and impact the game with. And I thought tonight was another example of everybody stepping up in the right way.

Q. What is the biggest difference in your game between the bubble and this series?

JAMAL MURRAY: I'm healthy. That's it. I see the game a little slower, I think. Not as rushed. I'd probably say I take my time a little more, even if it's just a couple more dribbles, just to not turn it over or put somebody else in a bad spot if I pass it. So I would say just slowing the game down and also getting to watch the game from afar for a couple seasons or a season and two postseasons.

Watching a lot of film and picking my spots from there.

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