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| It's too hard to say. Just trying to make plays for myself, make plays for my teammates, keep the defense off balance throughout the course of a 48-minute game. The coaching staff and my teammates do a great job of putting me in a position to succeed, and I just try to come through for them every night. Tonight was another one of those games where I made a couple plays to help us get a win. But it was definitely our two bigs that set the tone. Kev [Love] and Double T [Tristan Thompson], they were phenomenal. I don't think it's no momentum. I pretty much know how many guys I'm going to see throughout the course of a game. I know the guy that's going to start on me. I know the guy that's going to shift off onto me if a sub happens or if they go small or if they go big. For me, the only thing on my mind is how we can execute the best way we can and get a bucket in this possession, either if I can get myself a shot or if I can drive, get my shooters a shot, or if I can get a double-team in the paint or get to the free throw line. It's not an individual matchup for me, no matter who's in front of me. My mind is always racing on how I can make this the best possession at that particular time. Well, for me I saw that in Kev this morning. I knew what type of game he was going to have. I mean, he came through for us. We want the mentality of Kevin from Minnesota, but his usage rate don't have to be as high as Minnesota. Obviously we all know that he was a featured guy pretty much every possession going down the floor, and here that's changed a little bit because we have other guys. But his mentality needs to stay the same as Minnesota, and I think as he continues to get even more comfortable and comfortable -- tonight was one of those instances where every time he got the ball, it was a small guarding him or somebody was in the post, he was aggressive. He grabbed every rebound for the most part with him and Tristan in the paint, and he was very aggressive with his shot. He also got to the free throw line 10 times -- well, nine. So definitely that mentality from Minnesota is what we all love. We put in a lot of work. We put in a lot of work. Coach gave us a couple days off after we closed the series in Toronto, but after that we've been on the practice court or in the weight room training as if we were playing. There's no way you can substitute a game. We all know that. But the work that we put in this week, we just tried to be as up to speed as possible when the game did come. Tonight was just another opportunity for us to implement our scheme. Our coaching staff gave us a great game plan, and it was up to us to go out and execute it. Well, I think it's the mindset that you have to have when you go on the road for a Game 1. You can't start the game off lax or shooting a bunch of jump shots. That's my mindset. We've got guys that can shoot the heck out of a ball, and obviously Kev showed that tonight. But for myself, I have to be in attack mode and just put the pressure on the defense and see what happens. I was able to do that and kind of just set the tone early on what we needed to do. Once I started to see the defense start to crack in, then I started to find my shooters. I don't even think we played that great tonight. We definitely didn't shoot the ball as well as we're capable of shooting. I know Kyle had three or four very, very good looks that he missed when we had a good stretch. But I think the energy and the effort and the mindset was where it needed to be starting on the road, especially in the Eastern Conference Finals. |
| No, I didn't see it. And what are you going to do about it at the end of the day? My only job is to try to be the MVP for this team every night, put my teammates, put our franchise in position to be successful and ultimately compete for a championship. For me, I know what I bring to the table. This league knows what I bring to the table. That's for you guys to write about. It's not for me to be concerned about. We just want to try to get better. I also told you we had another level. You looked at me crazy when I told you that. I believe we've got another level as well. As well as we played tonight, there were still some things we could have done better. We had a few bad turnovers offensively that we could do better. We had a couple miscues defensively where we gave up some open looks. We can get better. That's the positive for our ballclub. There's no complacency with us right now. There shouldn't be. It's the postseason. But we like where we're headed and the direction we're headed right now. Well, that's a huge compliment, but there's no such thing for us. We don't have a perfect roster. We don't have a perfect team. But we can make up for mistakes, and we can make up for maybe some deficiencies that we may have because we communicate, we fly around and we sacrifice for one another. That could put us as close to perfection as possible, which you can't ever get to. But our communication level, our sacrifice, what we give to each other every night kind of covers that, kind of covers some of the faults that we may have. And with the faults that we do have, we try to get better and better at it so we can be as great as we can be every single night. I don't know. I'm a guy who lives in the moment. Our team is in a great groove, and I'm happy to be a part of that groove. At the end of the day, we want to try to put ourselves in position to win every game. That's the goal. Can you do that? Sometimes you come out with an L, but it's how you learn from those experiences that's going to help you out the next time. We are in a good groove as a team, and we want to try to continue that going home. No, I don't really pay attention to those things, to be honest. I only pay attention to what's going on with our guys and how we can put a lot of pressure on the opposing team, from IT to the rest of those guys. Obviously we didn't see him in the second half. Marcus Smart started the second half, but that was not our concern going into the second half. Our concern was not get complacent. Don't do what we did in Game 1 in the third quarter here, where we gave up I think 36 or something points in that quarter. Don't allow them to get into a good groove. It's not my concern. Well, they're going to make another adjustment, and we have to be ready for that going into Game 3. We're going to watch film tomorrow and see ways we can be better. We do have some great perimeter defenders that take the challenge, but we also have great third-line defense as well with our front line, which communicates pick-and-roll coverages or pin-down coverages or whatever coverages and allow the guards to get up into the ball or do what they need to do to be successful versus their guards. Absolutely. We have a veteran ballclub. We're one of the oldest teams in the league, so we all push each other. We're here for one reason. When you sign up to be here, we're here to compete. We're here to sacrifice for one another. And if you're in garbage time or if you're in in crunch time, you need to be a professional. RJ [Richard Jefferson] has done that. Champ [James Jones] has done that. Channing [Frye] is doing that. You see guys playing one round, a huge piece for one round, but then the next round certain things change. Guys just continue to stay ready. Guys continue to stay professional. It's great to be in a locker room like that. |
| Momentum. We didn't continue to press the tempo. Marcus Smart started to hit a lot of threes. They started to get momentum, and that's what happens -- you give a team a life. They played so freely without IT, and they just made play after play after play, and we couldn't weather the storm. I had a tough game, period. Not just in the second half. Me personally, I didn't have it. My teammates did a great job of keeping us in the game, building that lead. But me personally, I didn't have it. That's all I've got to say about my performance. No, it's never that. We've been playing so well, but like I said, you let a team grab momentum like that, you almost knew that that last shot was going to go in. It was like, you already knew. As soon as the ball went out his hands, you kind of knew that shot was going to go in because of how the game was just played throughout the second half. No, no, they didn't mix up the coverage. They did a good job of sprinting back, leveling to the ball, doubling me a little bit more in the post. But like I said, my performance personally was all on me. I mean, a lot of things went wrong. I don't know; I can't play the game right back in my head right now, and I'm looking forward to seeing the film tomorrow when we get together. But they moved the ball, like Double-T said -- 28 assists -- and they kept us at bay. We couldn't get stops. We couldn't get out in transition a lot. Those guys made plays. They made a lot of plays. They got some second-chance points. We only had two fast-break points, so they neutralized what we wanted to do. No, I was just pretty poor. I mean, what do you want me to say? Well, we're going to crack down on the film tomorrow, for sure. We've got to be a lot better. It's the postseason. You win some, you lose a couple, maybe, but how can you be better from game to game? And like I said, they was better today than we were, and we've got to figure out how to be better than them in Game 4. But we look forward to the challenge. I think it's great -- what happened hurts. It's a loss in the postseason. But I'm glad it kind of hurt, that it happened the way it did -- let our foot off the gas a little bit, didn't keep the pressure on them like we have been accustomed to. But we have to play a lot better in Game 4. I said that before the series even started about Brad Stevens' ATOs. If you go back and look at my transcript, I said he's very good out of ATOs. He has so many different wrinkles, misdirection, thinking the ball is going this way, he has a misdirection going the other way. You've got to kind of keep your head on a swivel. He has a lot of packages. So you can plan for a few, but then he might run something you've never seen before. If we communicate a little bit better out of timeouts, it'll put us in position to be more successful against that. A little bit of both. A little bit of carelessness. I had one when Kev ducked in, I should have faked high, bounced low. But I just threw it, and that lets me know I didn't have it tonight. Jae Crowder got his hands on it. We had a couple more turnovers where we just were either overpassing or overthinking or whatever the case may be. That definitely resulted in us not being as fluent as we've been offensively. Well, I feel some adversity is all part of the postseason. I feel like you have to have some type of adversity in order to be successful. If it was going to happen, let it happen now; let us regroup. Let us regroup and all the narrative and everything that was going on, let's regroup and let's get back to playing desperate basketball, which they did tonight. So we've got to be a lot better, for sure. |
| Nothing. Same thing I've been saying since I got here. I've been saying he's a special kid. He's a special talent. As the stakes get higher and higher, his game gets higher and higher, but it was nothing surprising for me. But he rose to the occasion, and he put the team on his back, and we definitely needed that effort from him. Like he said, he's been just kind of dictating the game and being a playmaker and things of that nature throughout the Playoffs or even throughout this series so far, but tonight, he showed why he's one of the best point guards in the league, and he commanded us to be better, especially in the second half. Just trying to be aggressive. Obviously I couldn't be as aggressive as in the first half because of the foul trouble, so if I'm on the floor I've got to be aggressive and try to make plays, help our team be successful and read the defense. I was able to still be aggressive and find two of our shooters for two threes, found Kev, found Swish [JR Smith], so it was just trying to read the game, the game in between the game, and it worked well for us. Yeah, my rhythm for the most part is broken when you -- I can't remember the last -- I don't think I've ever had four fouls in a game before in the first half, so my rhythm is kind of broken and you've got to figure out ways you can still help the team, and my teammates said be aggressive, be you. You got us to this point and continue to do that, so I just tried to find ways to get into the lane, get into transition, when they backed off shoot the jumper and felt very comfortable with it, so I was able to get back into a rhythm very fast. At the end of the day, you play the game that's in front of you. We didn't take care of business in Game 3, they played well. Tonight they played well again, but we was able to play well, especially in the second half, and we defended. If we defend, then we're going to always give ourselves a good chance to win. We look forward to the next game. It's a difficult challenge because our preparation going into the series was going against a team with Isaiah, so now they're playing a lot differently now, so we're trying to figure out exactly what they're running and things of that nature, so it's been very difficult on us without IT on the floor, but now this is two games that we've been able to see them and we're going to get a better understanding. We should be a lot better in Game 5. Yeah, like I say, we game planned -- because their series went to [Game] 7 we game planned for both teams, and they're a different team when IT is -- I won't say a different team, they run different things just because of IT being a huge piece of the puzzle for them offensively. So they had to kind of reshape, and that's the beauty of having Brad Stevens as your coach. You're able to reshape what you do offensively and still be in a good rhythm. It's been challenging for us to kind of -- plays out of time-out, kind of been killing us on ATOs and keeping us off balance, but in the second half we kind of got a little bit of rhythm, and think we'll be better in Game 5. No, I mean, listen, they're well-coached, and they've got guys that's always kind of been counted out throughout their career, so they play with a lot of pride. And then you add the green on their back and this is history, this is a franchise that you kind of no matter who's out on the floor, you have to play for that franchise and play with pride. You know, they're giving us everything that they have, and we're expecting it, and we want the challenge. It's the postseason. At the end of the day, you just want to win the game. It doesn't matter who you're going against or how you get the job done, you're just trying to figure it out, and I think we did that. Yeah, I mean, when you look at some of the greatest rebounders in our game, guys who create extra possessions, you've got to figure out a way to try to take him out, and not take him out like in a bad way, but how do you keep him off the glass, and they're doing a really good job the last couple games of putting two or three bodies on him. But when you do that, you allow our other frontcourt player who's been a monster rebounder his whole career to come up and do the thing that he did tonight, and we needed that. We needed the 17 rebounds from Kev, and it was huge for our team. have. I have. I think I missed one in Boston before. I've missed a couple drunks in my career. I think I've made more than I've missed though. Percentages are pretty good. (Laughter). When I came into the league or my first seven seasons in the NBA? I mean, the kid is special, and he basically was just waiting for an opportunity to be able to blossom, and I'm just happy and blessed that when I decided to come back that I was able to help him blossom, I guess, because he gets to play in games that he's always been built for. He just never had the opportunity because of the team at that point in time. With me coming back and we're getting Kev and making a trade for J.R. and T-Mo [Timofey Mozgov] and Shump and all the pieces and all the pieces started coming together and Double T [Tristan Thompson] gets better and Delly [Matthew Dellavedova] and all that, and in year 1, even though it wasn't the successful season we would have hoped for, it gave him some experience that he didn't have in his first -- I don't know what he had, four seasons before I got here, that he didn't have. But he was already built for it. His game was built for it, and I'm happy, like I said, to be able to, I guess, sit back with four fouls and see him do what he's always been built to do. He was born for these moments. Well, in order to be successful, you have to defend. You have to defend. And especially versus a team like this who moves the ball, shares the ball, moves bodies, and they're very precise with their offensive sets. You have to defend, and it allows us to get to our best attribute at times and that's to get out on the open floor. I think that allowed us to outscore them by 17 in the third. Well, it's all -- the close-out game is always the hardest, and also you're doing it, and Boston is going to make it even harder. We have to go in with a bunker mentality that we had in Game 1 and Game 2 to go out and do what we do, but we have to defend. We have to execute offensively. We have to have low turnovers, and we have to try to make them miss because some of those guys play a lot better at home. That's just how the game be played. But we'll play the game, and we'll see what happens. |
| Absolutely. It's the first time I've seen him since he didn't return for the second half in Game 2, I believe. Yeah, Game 2. Throughout the series we didn't get an opportunity to actually have that moment. I know I said a few things in the media about the situation he was going through, but I was happy to see him. Just give him a big hug from myself and my family. Just how tough and determined the guy is, and to be able to go through the situation he was going through on a day-to-day basis, still being focused and maintaining his focus for the team -- family is everything, and basketball comes second after family, and to see him perform the way he was performing throughout the playoffs under the circumstances was a treat to watch. A lot more words were said, but that's the gist of it. I don't know. That's a question that none of us can answer in here. They have a great team right now. IT is going to come back healthy. They have the No. 1 pick; we'll see what they do with that. But I can't answer that question and know if we're going to play them in the Eastern Conference Finals next year. I have no idea. I think the first thing for me was seeing the excitement on Kyle [Korver's] and Deron [Williams] face. You've got one guy with 12 years, first Finals appearance, and another guy 14. So that's the first thing I picked. And just to see the excitement around my teammates -- I do it for them, and they give it back to me as well. Well, I don't have a message right now because we need to live in the moment. Like I said, it's been 12 and 14 years for those two guys. So we all need to soak it up. This is a great moment, and this is not promised. We know that. But once we start to lock in on that beast of a matchup that we've got next round, then we'll be very focused and I'll let those guys know what to expect out of a Finals appearance. Well, I love the fact that RJ does that because we have a great partnership, Uninterrupted, and Road Trippin' is doing very well now. So it's a huge plug for my business and our partnership. Thank you, RJ. You're unbelievable. First of all, I wear the number because of Mike. I think I fell in love with the game because of Mike, just seeing what he was able to accomplish. When you're growing up and you're seeing Michael Jordan, it's almost like a god. So I didn't ever believe I could be Mike. I started to focus on myself on other players and other people around my neighborhood because I never thought that you could get to a point where Mike was. So I think that helped shape my game. I think the biggest thing for me sitting here today after breaking the all-time scoring record in playoff history is that I did it just being me. I don't have to score the ball to make an impact in the basketball game. That was my mindset when I started playing the game. I was like, if I'm not scoring the ball, how can I still make an impact on the game? It's carried me all the way to this point now, and it's going to carry me for the rest of my career because scoring is not No. 1 on my agenda. I'm going to be honest, I'm not in the right mind to even talk about Golden State. It's too stressful, and I'm not stressed right now. I'm very happy about our accomplishment. I have no discussion -- Golden State, they've been the best team in our league for the last three years, and then they added an MVP. That's all I can give you right now, because I'm happy and I don't want to be stressed. They cause a lot of stress, and I'll get to that point when we start to prepare for them. I don't -- have I? I'm not a golfer. This guy right here to my left [J.R. Smith] is, though, so he'll tell me what that means when we get on the bus. I think at the end of the day, for my name to come up in the discussion with the greatest basketball player of all time, it's like, wow. Like I said, I did pretty much everything that MJ did when I was a kid. I shot fadeaways before I should have. I wore a leg sleeve on my leg and folded it down so you saw the red part. I wore black and red shoes with white socks. I wore short shorts so you could see my undershorts underneath. I didn't go bald like Mike, but I'm getting there. (Laughter). But it will be post-career, though. That's the only thing I didn't do. But other than that, I did everything Mike did. I even wore a wristband on my forearm. I didn't do the hoop earring, either. That was Mike. But I did everything Mike did, man. I wanted to be Mike, so for my name to come up in any discussion with Michael Jordan or Kareem or all these guys that's paved the ways for Tristan and Kevin [on podium with James] and myself and Swish [J.R. Smith], it's a wow factor. I don't really have anything to say. That's all part of the plan. It's been part of the plan since I really started taking this game serious, to say how can I get the youth to feel like passing the ball is OK, making the extra pass is OK, drawing two defenders and no matter if you win or lose, if you make the right play, it's OK. Because like you said, scoring the ball is so heralded in our sport. I want the fundamentals of the game to be as great as they can be. And if some kid or a group of kids from the West Coast or the East Coast or the Midwest or the South and everything in between all around the world can look at me and say, well, I made the extra pass because LeBron made the extra pass, or I got a chase-down block and I didn't give up on the play because LeBron didn't give up, that would mean the world to me. So we'll see what happens. We'll see what happens. Appreciate it. |