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| I think we had a great playoff run so far. Beat some great teams. But it's the biggest challenge ahead of us. We face a team with three superstars and with a bunch of other players that can play, make shots around them. They are very good defensively. So this is the biggest challenge yet. But we've played well throughout the first couple of rounds. We got a bunch of veterans, I think, that want to win, that have been around forever. They're not selfish. We just want to play together and ultimately win and sacrifice. I think that's where we're at. We're going to start on the road this time around, but I thought we played well on the road this whole postseason run. We won a game in Portland. We won two in L.A. And we won two in Oklahoma last round. We feel confident, and we should be ready to go. Well, you know, ultimately that's where my heart was at. I almost felt like we had unfinished business after '06. Had a great meeting with Mark there, free agency. All I needed was reassurance that he was going to keep going and keep building around this team, and keep putting all his resources for us to hopefully be up there one day. We're here again at the big stage. Hopefully we can turn it around this year and finish strong. You know, both games are decided down the stretch. Both teams are very good down the stretch. Both teams are very good defensively, which you need. You need to lock down and get big stops. And both teams have guys down the stretch you can go to and create baskets. That's why both teams are here. They had a great comeback in Chicago, and we had one in OKC where we finished on a 16-2 run, or something. So both teams have what it takes to finish strong. So it's going to be a very interesting series. It's going to be fun games hopefully for everybody involved. We'll just see who are the winners at the end. Well, you know, there's been a lot made of what's my legacy without it, with it. I'm not really worried about all that. I'm trying to be on the best team. I'm trying to win it for this organization and for the owner and for myself and for the team. That's really all I'm worried about. I'm not worried about my legacy without the ring or with the ring. I'm living in the moment. We have another chance, and I'm going for it. Everything after that will fall into place the next couple of years. We can talk about my legacy once my career is over. I'm really just focused on winning and being on the best team left standing. I think what you learn pretty quick in this league, that nothing you can take -- you can take nothing for granted. There's a lot of things that play into our great season, injuries, the team and just the whole surrounding. The year after the Finals we won 70 games. We thought, this was our year. You run into a hot matchup or a bad matchup for you, some hot players, next thing you know you're a first-round exit. In this league you never know. You never know. It took a long five years to finally get back to this stage to be one of two teams still standing. It took a long time. Some ups and downs. But it's good to be back and hopefully we can make the most of it. I don't know what it's being looked at, we as players. I don't think we really care. We are facing a very tough team, a very good team with a bunch of closers and leaders. And so we've got to just go from there and bring our best game. But we as players, we're not really worried about who are the good guys or the bad guys, what the fans want. That's not going to matter to us anyhow. On paper they were. I think it took them a while there in November, December to kind of learn how to play off each other. I think D-Wade was basically hurt. He missed all pre-season. And then in November it was kind of natural, I guess, to struggle a little bit. Because they never had games with each other. But I think they're a completely new team now since the new year. They're way better defensively, and offensively they play off each other as good as anybody now. So, yeah, they're a different team than they were at the beginning of the season. Yeah, we were kind of fortunate I guess to play our two games early. We saw them in November and December. We haven't seen them since. Yeah, they're playing unbelievable basketball now both ends of the floor. I think Haslem is back now, a big key for them, a glue guy on both ends of the floor. So, yeah, they're a much better team now than they were. And they showed it in these playoffs. They got guys who close, they are good defensively. So they got what it takes to win it all. It's tough. Obviously you would love to keep those guys out of the lane. That's where Wade and LeBron are at their best, when they drive to get to the basket, they get fouled and go to the free-throw line. There's no defense for it. But obviously, that's the approach of 29 other teams, and nobody really could do it. Especially here in the playoffs. And they are both comfortable shooting the outside shot. I think LeBron is knocking down shots left and right now, which makes it tough to guard him. So it's not going to be on one guy. We have to have our defense set. You can't give them anything in transition. I think that's when they're tough, when they get run-outs. They are so fast. One or two dribbles they are at the other end laying it in. We have to make sure we get our defense set, make them attack against five guys. One-on-one, nobody can guard those guys. So we have to have five guys on the string and battle, and that's what we've been doing all year. With Tyson and Haywood for us in the middle, clogging up the middle, and the rest is kind of rotate around them and hopefully make it hard for them. Well, I think the experience has been a major key for us, just because we've been through a lot. We've seen a lot in the playoffs. You know, I always say in the regular season you don't want to get too high with the highs and too low with the lows. But in the playoffs, that's even more the case. You can get a big win, but you kind of want to forget about it the next day and go back because you don't want to lose the next game, the same with a loss. In the Portland series in Game 4, we blew a 20-point lead in the fourth quarter and came back in Game 5 and won a big game. Everybody said we're dead after that. But we're a bunch of veterans. We've seen it all in this league. And we recovered from both pretty quick, wins and losses. You know you have to keep an even keel throughout the playoffs. That's what we did and that's what got us here. A bunch of veterans, led by J-Kidd, who is a fossil, but he's amazing still on both ends of the floor and leading this team. He's been amazing. You know, they have two very good closers, two of the best in the game. Dwyane made some big shots there in the fourth quarter, and LeBron has been shooting the ball really well this playoffs. Yeah, he had some open looks and really made some tough shots. But what really killed us I thought was the offensive rebounds. Obviously those two guys are going to have you scramble some defensively. And we were just out of position sometimes to box out and get the rebounds. So even when we got the stop, we failed -- because we were scrambling so much, failed to get the rebounds. That was a tough break there. Especially in the fourth quarter. They had two or three at one time in a row. And that really hurt us. Well, you know, I think both teams didn't have a great offensive night. Both teams shot around 37, 38%. So it wasn't really an offensive battle out there. So I mean, both teams are good defensively. That's why both teams are in The Finals. Both teams scramble and they're able to flood the strong side and make the other team play on the weak side. I had my opportunities there. I had some good drives there in the first half. I just got to finish. I missed a righty lay-up. I missed a lefty lay-up that rolled around. I have to keep attacking and take my opportunities when they're there. We all know Haslem is a good defender at the four position. Probably one of the best in this league. I still got my opportunities there when I put the ball on the floor. I just got to finish. I mean, not really. We're a veteran team. So you can't get down with a loss. You have to come back strong on Thursday. I said it a couple of times this playoff run, if you're the road team, you're happy with the split. So we got another opportunity on Thursday to go get one. Obviously, we don't want to go home being down 0-2, which is a hole. So we would love to go home with a split. So we just have to be a little sharper there on Thursday in some areas. Didn't think we executed great there in the fourth quarter. And like I said, gave up too many offensive rebounds when it counted. Well, it was just a freaky play. Bosh got a bounce pass and I stepped in. I thought I stripped him clean, and then I kind of looked down and I couldn't straighten my finger out anymore. So I tore a tendon in there. I guess it will be all right. I have to wear a splint probably for the rest of the playoffs, for a couple of weeks. But it will be all right. It's on my left hand, so I'll be all right for Thursday. Yeah, I didn't think -- I actually thought coming in that our bench was going to be a key for us. They did a good job there on Jet. I think Jet did a good job in the first half. Got to some areas where he was knocking down some shots, and second half they didn't really let him get an open look. LeBron was on him some in the fourth quarter, to go big on him, and I guess bother his shot. And J.J.'s got to take his time when he gets in there. Obviously they are collapsing and trying to block his shot. I thought he was rushing some of his shots in the paint. And we just got to relax and, if it's not there, swing the ball to the weak side, because the shot is going to be there. I thought we rushed some shots there in the paint. We just got to finish. I already had an X-ray. I guess it's not broken, but there's a torn tendon in my finger. If you want more info, you have to talk to my trainer or doc. Well, I think, like I mentioned there, they're very good defensively. What makes them so good, they're so athletic on the wing that even when we swung it sometimes, they're able to cover a lot of ground, LeBron and Wade, and still run out at our shooters or contest the shots on the weak side. So you have to give them credit. They're long and active on the perimeter, and when we do get the opportunity to swing the ball, swing, swing, we have to knock the shots down. That's what it comes down to. They're very active and collapse in the paint. When we do have some looks, we have to knock them down. I'm not really worried about that label. I'm worried about winning. I'm not worried about my legacy at all. It's about me being on a winning team, on a team that's the best team that year and ends the season on a win. That's what I dream about. Everything else I'm not really worried about. I'm living in the moment. I'm not living in the past or the future. I want to make this work here and now. It took us five years to eventually get back to this stage. It's been a long and bumpy ride. So we want to make the most of it. That's really all I'm worried about. I don't think it's going to be necessarily bothering me on the shot. Obviously on the shot you only hold the ball with the left hand. It's not like you do anything crazy with it. It's going to be other stuff, dribbling, passing, catching, swiping down, stuff like that. I think it will be okay. I have this splint on for now. I think we're going to play around with some other stuff. Try tape, or try a splint from the back so I can feel the ball and not lose grip of the ball. We're going to play around with it today in practice, maybe tomorrow some in shoot-around. By then I'll have an idea how it feels and how it is to play with the thing. I'll be okay. I'm really not worried. It's not that sore, so it should be okay. I didn't know at all how it actually happened. It was like four minutes to go when Bosh slipped on a screen-and-roll and came towards me at the basket. I stripped him, I felt, clean. And, yeah, I was kind of talking to the referee about the play, and the next thing you know I run on offense after two free throws and I'm looking down and my finger was bent. I couldn't straighten it. It was a freakish play. I ran over to the sideline and showed our trainer. He knew right away what happened. We just taped it and went from there. So it didn't affect me afterwards. It didn't get as sore as I was anticipating last night. So it should be all right. Well, you know, the first thing is obvious: We gave up 16 offensive rebounds. I mean, that's way too many. They are already a very, very explosive offensive team with three superstars. But you can't give them second chances over and over. So we just got to protect the paint a little better. That's obvious. And then some of the other stuff, be a little sharper on the pick-and-roll coverages, rotate a little quicker. We lost Chalmers a bunch of times in the first half. He made us pay with some threes when we actually had a nice run there in the second quarter. And offensively, I think once we don't give up those 16 offensive rebounds, it should help us speed the game up some. If we get some rebounds, get the ball in J-Kidd's hands, I think that should play in our advantage. You look at his body. He's amazing. 6'8", 260, or whatever, and he moves like a football running back. He can guard any position on the floor. That's what makes him amazing on both ends of the floor. Yeah, he can guard multiple positions. He's quick. But he's also strong. Yeah, everybody knows that Jet is a big key to our success. When he plays well, we usually play well and we give ourselves a chance to win. Even though they put him on him in the fourth quarter, we have to keep going to Jet. He's got to produce for us. That's a big key why we're here. That's all right. I'm really not worried about that much. If they do, I have to fight through it. This is not my first injury I've played through in my career. And I'm not really worried about it. I think once the game starts, the adrenaline starts flowing, I don't think it will really slow me down much. I'm really more worried about ball handling with the left and finishing on some lay-ups with the left than about them swiping down, going for my finger. I think the mood is not great after a loss. I think that's natural. But it's the same way in the regular season. We're a veteran team that's seen a lot in this league. It was a tough loss. It was right there. As poorly as we played on both ends of the floor, I think we were only down four with a couple of minutes left. There's some positives to take out of this game. We just got to be a little sharper tomorrow. I think we've recovered from tough losses these playoffs already, and this is another one. We have to come back and be better. Hopefully our guys take the challenge. Everybody knows, watching me for 13 years, I like to go left and finish with my left. So I'm going to experiment around how the ball handling is going to be. But I'm not really that worried about it. It didn't throb as much as I anticipated yesterday. I don't think it's going to be that limiting. I think it's our whole bench has to play better. That's not a secret. I think they were the best scoring bench during the regular season, and that's for a reason. Because we feel like we've got some weapons. It's not only Jet coming off the bench. J.J. has been amazing in these playoffs so far. He had a subpar game yesterday, where he missed some lay-ups, missed some shots, with guys collapsing on him in the paint. Peja we feel had two or three good looks he can make anytime. We'll take those shots. If he's going to be open on two or three looks like that, we have more confidence in him that he will make some. I actually thought Haywood played well off the bench. Obviously, he's not a huge scorer for us. But he was active. He came in and had two or three blocks right away. Had some rebounds and made some of his free throws. So I actually thought he played really well. |
| We talked about it in our timeout. First of all, what a huge swing that was. I had a three. We go up three with 24 seconds to go. You figure we guard the three-point line, make them drive, and I don't really know what happened. We got to look at it. Chalmers was so wide open. Bangs the three. That was a big emotional play for us. Down the stretch, we talked about it, they had a foul to give. I actually drove a little earlier than I would have, knowing they had a foul to give, and made a move, and the foul never came. So I was able to get to the basket and lay it in. That was a big play. And then they didn't have a timeout left, so we had to scramble back, and Wade had to throw one up. So definitely a huge comeback for us. And we never gave up. So that was big. I'm not going to share that with the media. I'm sure there was a little cussing involved. Yeah, like I said, if you're down 15, you make an amazing run like that, and you're up three, you can't give up a wide-open three. It just can't happen. So we got to go back and look at stuff like that. Still proud of the team. Still proud of the team, how they battled, to be down 15 against a great team like that, and we kept plugging. Our defense finally got some big stops, and we rebounded the ball tonight, which we didn't in Game 1 finally. And that really opened up our offense there. I thought their defense was suffocating there throughout three quarters. We turned the ball over, made mistakes left and right. Couldn't really make shots. And then down the stretch, what helped us was our defense. It got us in the running game. It got us moving the ball a little better. Jet finally had some good looks. I had some good looks. And that really ignited our comeback. Well, you know, I think in this league you have to play till the end. Especially this is The Finals. You can be down 20. You have to keep plugging. You never know what's going to happen in this league. And we kept on fighting. And we got some lucky bounces there. LeBron went down the middle, had a wide-open lay-up, I thought. Short-armed it a little bit. We were able to get that rebound and go. So you have to be a little lucky, but we kept on plugging. And look, I said it all playoffs long, we're a veteran team. We don't get too high with the highs and too low with the lows. That was definitely a little hole we got ourselves in, but we kept believing, kept playing off each other, and that was big. Tyson has been our MVP defensively all season long. He's covered a lot of ground for us. We did a better job I thought of pick-and-roll coverage today. He really stepped out there, impacted the ball. We were still able to recover back some and scramble. Look, they have two of the best players in the game. So they are going to make you scramble. That's what we did and finally got some rebounds, which we didn't in Game 1. We can't turn the ball over against this team. They have two of the most athletic players I've ever seen. If you turn the ball over, it's one or two dribbles there at the rim, laying it in on the other end. So I thought finally there in the last couple of minutes we did a good job of not turning the ball over. And the defense was solid. We forced them into some shots that -- contested shots. And that was big. And rebounded the ball. We're not going to approach the next three. We're going to approach the next one like it's our last. You cannot get a split and get a huge emotional win in Game 2 and then go home and lose Game 3. As far as I'm concerned, the next one is the biggest game of them all. And hopefully our crowd will be rocking. They've been great to us and carried us throughout the playoffs so far. So we're going home to a great building, and hopefully get Game 3. It felt great. Like I said, I thought it wasn't going to bother me before the game, and it didn't. We were able to keep the tape a little lower, so I was able to keep my grip on the ball. Because my palm was open, and my fingertips were open. So I was able to get a good grip on the ball. Still didn't shoot the ball the way I wanted to tonight. Missed some open looks again, like in Game 1. I got to be sharper in Game 3 if we want to have a chance. Finger felt fine, and hopefully it's going to stay that way. You know, as much as '06 is still on mine and Jet's mind, during the game you don't think about anything like that. You're caught in the moment as a player out there. You compete right there. You take every position like it's the last in The Finals. You don't really think about anything else but trying to get this win. Like I said, we got some lucky bounces and we scrambled and that helped us. I didn't even see it that much, to be honest. Probably our other players saw it. I kind of had my head down. Obviously that was a big play to go down 15, so I must admit I didn't even watch it. Well, you kind of chip away one possession at a time. We talked about getting stops. That was the big thing. We scrambled on some pick-and-roll situations, where we forced them out a little bit. Offensively I think we made a couple of big plays in a row. Jet got open on the baseline once. He had a run-out. I had a run-out off kind of a loose ball that we were lucky to get. We had a three-on-one. I laid the ball in to tie it. I actually thought Jason Kidd had a big three on the wing when it was like an eight, nine-point game. They doubled me, I swung it out. He had a great look at three and made a three to cut into the lead more. If you're down 15, every play, every bounce of the ball could be big. We're lucky on a couple and it went our way. I mean, I can't really point one out. I mentioned that LeBron had a clean lane, went to the lane, and missed the lay-up. I thought that was big. I can't remember, I can't recall what the score was at that point. I thought we got really lucky. Obviously he's going to finish those ten out of ten times. That was a lucky bounce. But we had a couple of lucky bounces down the stretch. I feel we're a veteran team, and we've been through a lot already all season long. There were some ups and some downs we had to fight through and stick together. So we have come back before all season long on some deficits where we keep believing, where we stay together as a team, where we don't start pointing fingers. And we are obviously led by Jason Kidd, who obviously has seen everything in this league, who has been through everything. He's always calm out there. He's always pushing the guys in the right positions. He's always making the right plays for us. Well, I think we talked about it in the flow of the game that we just can't turn the ball over every time we mishandle the ball, it's an automatic lay-up against this team. It's one or two dribbles, either Wade or LeBron are at the rim at the other end, so quick and athletic. We talked about it during the flow of the game. Sometimes it just happens. They're so good. They have quick hands. They cover a lot of ground, the perimeter. And so turnovers unfortunately are a part of the game. But down the stretch, we did a good job, kept the ball in our playmaker's hands with Jet and Jason Kidd and did a good job of protecting the ball. Like I said, we got lucky down the stretch. Hopefully we can carry this momentum in Game 3. Which Jason? Yes, we have a kind of love-hate relationship. It is. It is. Because we ride each other a lot. We talk to each other a lot. We argue a lot, even during games, but it's all because we want to win, we want to play together. And I think it was big getting him. When we lost Steve, obviously this franchise was down, to lose a great player like that. But I give Donnie some credit. He brought in Jet, who has been a point guard in this league and a veteran and had a good career there in Atlanta. That was a big move. And for us he's been phenomenal. He's been our closer over the last couple of years. A great clutch player, and he's been our key guy for us the last couple of years. Like I said, we love each other, but we also argue a lot. Well, you know, I think we play to win. We always have. Our goal was to win it all since the last couple of years. We came so close in '06, and ultimately we kept the main core together, and we're just happy to be back on this stage. But Jet to me is a winner. I think he sacrificed for us coming off the bench the last few years where he could be a starter on other teams. That's ultimately what you have to do if you want to win a championship. I think we're a veteran team. We did a good job so far in these playoffs to kind of stay in the moment. We had some big wins, and kind of still recovered and came back and played a great game the next game. I remember the Lakers series we stole Game 1. It was easy to say let's get the split and get out of here. We went for it in Game 2 and stayed in the moment and were able to steal both games. So I think we just can't let up. We're not good enough to just relax. We need to play with an edge at all times in every game. So hopefully tomorrow with the crowd behind us, we're going to have a great game. Just looking at this one game. So we have to win tomorrow. Maybe. Maybe. Yesterday was good to get away a little bit, get a travel day. And today was all about refocusing on the task. We know they're going to throw everything at us. It's going to be a tough game. Maybe it was good to get away a little bit. Especially after an emotional game like that. I don't think either team got a lot of sleep after that one. Must have gotten like two or three hours, most. So it was good to kind of get away, have an extra day, get some sleep last night, and both teams will be ready to play tomorrow. Well, you know, I think they do a great job defensively really swarming me. The first two games I think every time I put the ball on the floor, there were two or three guys around me. They're so athletic. On the perimeter when I kick the ball to the shooter, somehow they're still there. They're still there to run our shooters off to contest the shots. They're really good defensively. On that last move, I spun and I expected actually somebody to be there, and there wasn't. So I was able to get to the left and get to the basket. That was a big play. If there would have been somebody there, I would have had to pass to somebody and hopefully let the weak side make a shot. Like I said, there was a big play. There was nobody there and I was able to take the lane and that was good. I actually thought he played phenomenal the first two games. He's making his three ball throughout the whole playoffs already, he's really shooting the ball well. He got down the lane a couple of times where we feel like we missed some assignments on the pick-and-rolls, and they got some run-out dunks. If you turn the ball over against this team, they're so athletic, it takes one or two steps, they're at the rim at the other end. Wade and LeBron, they're so athletic. Nothing like anything we've seen in the playoffs so far. You have to do a good job not turning the ball over. We turned it over 21 times. That's obviously not what we want to do, and that's not going to set us up to win. The finger is really good. Got to keep it straight. It was throbbing a little bit after the game the other night, but I guess that's normal. And it's going to be okay. Once the adrenaline always starts flowing during the game, I think I'm okay. It doesn't bother me during the game. That's the major thing. Ultimately if you want to go all the way, everybody has to step out of their ways a little bit and do a little more. I think that's something I grew into a little more and more comfortable with talking to the guys now. Obviously at the beginning I had a little language barrier. Over the years I got more comfortable taking the guys to the side and addressing something when I see something. I guess something that comes with experience. Just get it off the sheet. (Laughter). We didn't talk about it yet. He's been phenomenal just taking the challenge on both ends. I think it actually already started in the Oklahoma City series, when he had to guard one of the best scorers and the scoring leader with Durant. He really took the challenge on both ends of the floor. Just he can get up, he's athletic on the perimeter, he's long, he can contest shots. He's a good rebounder. But also on the offense, he's been phenomenal. He's been cutting for us, he's been posting up. He's been getting offensive rebounds, put-backs. So he looks really comfortable right now. He's got a bounce in his step, and it's fun to watch. So he's a competitor, and that's what he does out there against the best of the league. He's ready to play. |
| Well, I thought we had opportunities. First of all, we can't always fall down behind. I think we're always reacting. We did in the first quarter. We fell down big. Third quarter we came out slow, fell down big. Obviously it takes a lot of energy for us to fight back. But even down the stretch, I think there were opportunities. I thought Jet had a good look at the baseline. I think it was to tie it or go up two. And we had a mental breakdown, that one play Bosh gets the wide-open jumper the last minute. So I thought we had our opportunities, and just weren't good enough. You have to give them credit. Their defense is pretty good. They hold us to the low 40s every game, and they really take our shooters out of the game. We all understand that basketball is a game of runs. We have to stop the runs a little quicker. We can't go down 15 all the time and battle back. You can get like a five, six-point swing here and there. We can't always get in a deep hole like that. Well, be a little sharper at the beginning. I think they came out and were really attacking. I just thought it was a little too easy there. Wade got to the basket three times there in the first quarter. James did as well. So we have to be a little sharper at the beginning and not let them get their rhythm. And I thought the crowd pushed us forward. So we're going to need the same effort out of them. It's basically a must-win situation. Like I said, they do a pretty good job on our shooters. If we have the open looks, we just got to make them. We haven't made enough of them. If we're going to keep shooting in the low 40s, it's going to be tough to win. Yeah, I have to keep making plays, keep being aggressive and look for my shot. Cut it down a little bit. We're going to turn the ball over against that team. It's just gonna happen. They're so fast, long, athletic. They do a good job swarming the ball once we put it down. We're going to turn it over some. I already thought we cut it down from Game 2 to this one, so hopefully in Game 4 we can cut down a couple more and we'll be okay. Both good plays. Shawn Marion was in the corner, and Wade just left him. I still actually kind of wanted to shoot it. I think Wade would have blocked it kind of from the side. So I wanted to swing it, and Shawn is more like slash, a cutter. He was cutting and left the corner. So that was a tough play. And the look with four seconds to go, I think it was as good as you can get it. No. My view hasn't changed. This definitely was a big game. And a very tough loss. Emotional game, fought back, and to fall short at the end is tough. But they need two more. Hopefully we can play a better all-around game and finally get some shots to go down here at home and see what happens Tuesday. Like I said, this is a tough loss, and it's basically a must-win situation on Tuesday. We can't go down 3-1. He's fronting me everywhere, trying to keep the ball out of my hands. He does a good job. He's active, he's quick on his feet. Down the stretch, I think he stayed down and made me shoot a contested shot and a shot I can make, but unfortunately it didn't go. Sometimes I do that a lot. I go in the air and still kind of probe if I can get the shot up. If it's not there, I swing it. I do it all the time. At that point, yeah, I wanted to shoot it. But Wade really made a strong effort from the side, and I don't think I would have got it up. So I tried to swing it, and Shawn was cutting. So I guess it was a miscommunication. We messed up on the pick-and-roll in the middle and left I think James wide open. Tyson left the basket, had to rotate to LeBron, and he kicked it over to Bosh. I was over there with two on one, with Haslem and Bosh. Got to give Haslem credit. He set a god pick and Bosh was wide open. I don't really know what happened there in the screen-and-roll, but we definitely messed it up. I think Ian gave us energy. He's very athletic. He's quick on his feet. I actually think he played all right. But Haywood has been big for us in the paint over the last year and a half we had him. He's a big guy, and he can change a lot of shots at the rim. I actually thought Ian did his job tonight. Well, I think first of all, he's playing both ends of the floor. They keep sticking him on Jet in the fourth quarters, and he's been doing a good job. Jet hasn't really been a crunch-time, clutch player for us the way we need him to. So he's done a good job. Look, Wade has been great in the fourth quarter, so LeBron is being more of a facilitator. It worked so far. Well, I think they do a good job on our shooters. I think our ability to spread the floor and shoot is a big reason why we made it to the Finals, to really spread the ball around and shoot and make timely and big shots. But for some reason, they're so long and athletic on the perimeter that they're able to swarm me and my post-ups, and when we swing, swing they're still athletic and quick enough to get to our shooters on the weak side and run them off, or at least contest them. You have to give them credit. We just looked at the film. We had some opportunities, and if we do -- I remember J.J. had two or three good looks in a row to start the fourth quarter. And if we get those opportunities, we got to make the most out of it. You know, they're a tough team to guard, obviously. They've got three superstars, and their role players are really good and spread the floor. Chalmers has hurt us with some shots. So it's tough. But actually I thought we did a good job on Wade's pick-and-roll, and then at some point he just cleared it out and went one on one. That's where he's so tough to guard, because he stays in the middle of the floor. And then it's tough to send help. And he was able to like J-Kidd up a couple times and make timely shots. Look, he's a tough player. He's a great scorer. He can go both ways. He posted some yesterday. He got to the lane a couple time early in the first quarter. Kind of set the tone. He was in attack mode all night long. He was great. Well, he's one of the best defenders we have at the power forward spot. He's active. To me, it really hurt them him being out for so long. He's back in time. He's kind of a glue guy. He does all the little things. He sets screens, he does all the dirty work. He's a good rebounder. He's great in pick-and-rolls, showing. He does all the little things. They got him right back in time. We would have loved to have him. Unfortunately, obviously, he stayed there. I guess a good move on his part. Well, like I said, we have to find a way to get Jet some freedom and get him off some movement, and he's got to make some shots for us. He's a big reason why we're here, because he's one of the great fourth-quarter players we have in this league. But they've been able to really take that away. So if we can get him going and get him off some movement and free him and get him shots, and get our shooters some better looks, so when the fourth quarter comes they're going to step in there with confidence and be ready to play a little more defensively so we don't chase them down 15 all night long, which takes a lot of energy out of everybody. We'll see what happens tomorrow. Well, LeBron is tough. He's long, he's big. He guarded Rose unbelievable in the last series. So he's a very good defender. And he's big and strong, but also long to contest the shots. Like I said, we're trying to play off the movement. I think when Jet had his best fourth quarter in Game 2 when we didn't run a lot of plays, when he was able to run free in transition, we got some stops, pushed the ball up, he got some looks, got to the basket once or twice. And I think that seems to work best, if he's on the move. |
| It wasn't 103, but it was like 101 this morning. I didn't really have a good night's rest, so it was just under the weather a little bit, but just battle it out. I think it didn't look good there in the fourth quarter when we were down nine, but energy and defense really picked us up. Didn't shoot the ball well again. Had some good looks there in the fourth, but our defense grinded it out. There's no long-term. I'll be all right on Thursday. It's a little sinus infection. Hopefully I'll get some sleep tonight. Take some meds and be ready to go on Thursday. Just had a couple -- couldn't really finish around the rim. Had a couple of good looks today, but just really no lift. But like I said, the crew was outstanding. I thought Jet took it really upon himself today in the fourth when we were down nine. He made two back-to-back plays to get us right back in the game. So he was phenomenal today. Really, I was going to play the clock down, but I saw I had a little opening there. So I just went for it. I just went for it. Was able to rip through and go to the right. They really played my left, which obviously the whole league does. So I was able to rip through and get to my right and finally finish a lay-up. I thought I missed four or five good looks around the rim today. Kind of bounced around, bounced out. So that was unfortunate, but I was able to get one in. So that was good. You know, this is The Finals. You're going to leave it out there. Like I said earlier in the series, I think everybody -- it's June. We've been playing on a high level for eight, nine months. So everybody has a little something going, and this is The Finals. You have to go out there and compete and try your best for your team. So that's what I did. I never thought about MJ's performance. I was way off, looking at my line. I mean, that was a big free throw. First of all, I think we had a bunch of good looks there. I think Jet had one rattling out from the top of the key. He had one from the right wing, he had one from the left wing. And those are usually money for us in the fourth quarter. Then I think D-Steve had one in the left corner, who could have iced it. Wide-open look. So we had our good looks. Then Wade had a big run-out. And J-Kidd was able to get to him and foul him and, you know, the first one kind of bounced up and went in. And the second one a very fortunate roll for us. It was kind of in and rolled out and I was able to get the rebound that led to our last possession. And I was able to get to the rim. Hey, it's been always -- besides Game 1, all the games are like right there. A couple of bounces, a couple of defensive stops here and there could have gone either way. So sitting at a 2-2 right now. Obviously would love to get Game 5 at home before we go back to Miami. So that's a big game for us on Thursday. Phenomenal player. He's making tough shots this series from all over the place. He's getting to the rim and finishing like nobody else. Yeah, he's an unbelievable player. Yeah, I think our base did a good job helping on the screen-and-rolls. So that was big. And obviously, yeah, we would love to get Game 5 here. Don't want to go to Miami down 3-2, knowing they have two chances to close us out. Big game Thursday. Like I said, I thought our defense won us the game. To give up 14 points to an explosive team with LeBron, with Bosh and Wade on one team, if you give up 14 points in the quarter to close it out, I think that's huge. So hopefully we can carry that defense over into Game 5, and then we'll see what happens. First of all, I think they killed us on the glass in the first quarter. I think they had like ten offensive rebounds, or nine. Somewhere around there. And we obviously had to address that. We talked about it in between first quarter and second quarter, how we had to improve in that area. And then I think after that, we did a nice job. They only had a couple more, a handful more for the rest of the game. So that was big. Look, we're not a great rebounding team, so I think we got to have all five guys in there battling. Our go-to lineup sometimes is small with Kidd and Jet, one and two. So that means we're small there. We got to have five guys in there battling. We can't have anybody leak out. I think after the first quarter we did a better job protecting the paint and Tyson obviously with 16 boards was phenomenal. First of all, I think Kidd never ceases to amaze me. He can dominate a game without scoring one point. We've seen it the last three years here together, what kind of all-around player he is without even scoring. How he facilitates, how he defends, and how he runs the show is amazing. He's been great. I thought J.J. had some good looks again. But he kept attacking. You have to love the little guy. Fearless. Kept getting in there, had some tough finishes, tough lay-ups that went in. We need him to attack off the dribble, because he's good getting to the lane. Once you get to the lane against a team, they really suck in hard and open some of our shooters up. So J.J. has to keep attacking. Try to get out of here pretty quick, go home, take a long shower and just go to bed right away. I had some soup and had a good meal. Just drank some fluids, drank some tea and just feel a lot better today. I still got a little high temperature, but the fever is basically gone. So that's obviously the main concern always. Anything else, the sniffles or the cough, you don't really care about that as long as the fever is gone. That's the main thing you worry about. I felt I had an off-night really. Couldn't get anything going. Made my first three shots. After that really had nothing going all night. Was able to attack a little bit there in the fourth quarter, got to the free-throw line. But, really, I think our defense was what won us the game in the fourth. To give up 14 points on an explosive team like that, that was the key. I agree. Shooting 39% and getting a big win is unbelievable. I think Tyson added a lot to his defense. He's great in pick-and-rolls, he's showing he's still able to get back. He's so quick on his feet, protecting the paint and rebounding. Haywood some of the same things, when we got him last year in the trade. So I think those two guys are great for us in the back. And I think that really -- the front guys can be aggressive, if they know somebody is behind them that covers a lot of ground, that is able to be there for him. I think then J-Kidd can get up, Matrix can get up on their man and everybody is on the same page. Our comebacks have been really ignited by good defense. Well, I really like what Jet did there in the fourth quarter. We were down nine. He comes up two straight possessions, drove the ball at LeBron, got to the basket, finished, and then back to a five-point game. Then they had a timeout, and I think we kind of had the momentum after that. He really took it upon himself to really drive and be in attack mode. That's what we need out of him. He's one of our closers. Throughout the game I think we had our chances. We had our opportunities. We had good shots. For some reason this series we haven't made a ton of them, but we had opportunities. I thought Stevenson was great there in the first half. Gave us a lift. Made some big shots, corner shots, wing three. But we have to keep getting better. Hopefully tomorrow big game, hopefully we can make a couple more shots when they're there. Yeah, I said it already in Game 1 that everybody at this stage after playing eight, nine months on a high level has something going. Nobody is completely healthy. So it's time to fight through some stuff, and once the game gets going, the adrenaline starts flowing. I think everybody is out there and giving it their all. But the playoffs, I mean, we all know every game in the playoffs can be a huge momentum swing. So you always want to win the game. After the games you don't sleep much. So basically for a month and a half, two months, you're living on the edge every night. You're thinking about it, eat, breathe, sleep basketball, and that's what's fun about the playoffs, but also very draining. We have one more week to go, both teams, and we're going to go for it. Both teams are going to get their vacation afterwards. Yeah, I mean, they're a very explosive team. The thing is with them, who is going to have the ball? Is it Wade and he's going to take a shot? Bosh? Whoever has the ball, the other two can't have the ball. So sometimes it's hard if one guy is going, the other guy is hard to get the rhythm because you don't have a lot of touches. So they are obviously going to find a mix for everybody for them to attack in the fourth quarters, and we expect LeBron to be aggressive tomorrow and get to the basket and play his game. So we're got to be ready and we got to be a little sharper on the defensive end, especially early. Gave up ten offensive rebounds the first quarter, which was almost a killer. Where we actually felt we had everything going in the first quarter. We had the energy, we got stops and just the offensive rebounds were killing us. We have to be a little sharper tomorrow. It's a big game. Not much. I didn't do anything today. Slept in, basically, and just watched film and walked through some stuff. So that really hasn't changed from the other day. And then I'll probably come back tonight, get a little sweat for like 30 minutes, at least get the body used to sweating a little bit. And then I'll be ready tomorrow. Well, I think we have to be ready for anything. I think usually it's the team that loses that looks at the film and says, hey, we have to do this. Usually the team that loses has more of an edge, makes some adjustments with the coaches. So we've got to be ready for anything. Actually they did play a small lineup real quick. That was because Haslem had three fouls in the first half already. They went small for a second. So I think we got to adjust, and whatever happens happens. We all know if he wants to be, he's one of the best defenders in this league, because he can guard multiple positions, probably one through five if he wants to. He's long, he's strong, he's quick. So he's a great defender. Both. You know Jet, actually, it was earlier in the playoffs he said something, and I told him I was going to put him on a no-interview policy. But he didn't follow that either. He's a very confident young man. He believes in himself. That's what I like about him. When he has an off-night or going through a little slump, he's going to keep attacking, he's going to believe in himself. He's going to come back the next night and get some shots up in the gym, and he's a gym rat. He always works on his game. So Jet has been great here for the last six, seven years here we had him. Hopefully we can follow through. Yeah, like I said, it was great for me to see Jet like that. You can't expect him to always make huge, huge shots in the fourth quarters. But what I liked, he was just attacking. Even he missed some shots there at the end that kind of could have sealed it. But I like this mentality. We need him to be aggressive. We need him to get out and take those shots, because that's going to open up some stuff for our other guys. When he attacked and got some shots, that's actually opened the offensive glass up for Tyson, who was great there in the fourth. Had like two or three offensive rebounds. So, yeah, we need Jet to attack all the time. It makes us a better team. |
| Yeah, I mean that was a big win for us, obviously. We didn't want to go to Miami and give them basically two shots to close us out. So kept plugging there in the fourth. So definitely a big win for us. And now we have to go down there and basically approach Sunday's game as Game 7. You don't want to give this great team any hope or anything. So we got to play more of the same and keep attacking and we'll see what happens Sunday. Well, I don't actually think that was a good defensive night for us. All series long we're trying to figure out our offense. Tonight we're moving and shooting the ball well, but I thought all of a sudden we started giving up too many points. That's not how we won, and that's not how we want to win. We started trading baskets, even in the first half, when we were going well offensively. We traded baskets, gave up too many lay-ups. So that was a little disappointing. But at least we shot the ball well enough to get the win. I thought J.J. Barea was phenomenal behind screens, making shots, and Jet obviously in the fourth quarter made the big three top of the key to tie it. And basically made a tough one on the right wing to put the game away. Really, we kind of been waiting on an offensive night for us that we finally shoot the ball well. We felt like we had opportunities in the first four games, just couldn't knock anything down. So that was encouraging to see today that we made some shots. Jet was phenomenal. He was aggressive again from the get-go, I felt. Even the first half he came in, had a couple of pull-ups, got in the lane, got a floater, I remember. That's the Jet we need. We need him to attack and get in the lane. It opens up a lot of stuff for everybody else out there. It opens up Tyson on the rolls, that we actually hit him a bunch of times today. Our fives rolling, that was good. Also that opens up the corner threes and made a couple. We need Jet, Jet attacking. He was great. So did J.J. in the starting lineup attacking, got to the lane a couple of times, made some lay-ups. I thought that opened up his three ball. Well, I think if he just stands there and looks at him, I think LeBron is long enough and quick enough to kind of contest his shot late. So he's got to attack him. He's got to attack his feet. I thought the last two games he did a great job. We got to run -- obviously LeBron threw some screens when he's on him, screen-and-rolls for him. So LeBron constantly has to chase him and fight over some picks. I thought we did a better job of that tonight. We all know Jet is a confident young man. He always has a lot to say to us in the locker room. He's always talking. He's just an energetic guy. He loves to talk and he loves to hear himself talk. (Laughter). I thought we got in the fast break a little bit early. That was good. Had some good looks in the fast break. We were able to knock some shots down. But like I said, I thought in the first four games we looked at the film, we stepped into some good shots. We just for some reason we weren't knocking them down like we did in the first three series. I mean, if we would have struggled shooting the ball like that in the first three series, I don't know if we would have gotten here. Our ability to make shots in the weak side is a big part of what we do. Tonight we talked about it. Keep stepping into those shots when they're there. The J.J. screen-and-roll somewhere he stepped in and shot the ball great all season long. We kept telling him be aggressive and shoot those, and he was phenomenal, and so was Jet. J-Kidd had a big three there when we were up two. We swung it, swung it to go up five. That was a big shot. I thought we hit big, timely shots tonight. Yes, I think like I said, it's not a best-of-five series; it's a best-of-seven. So the first team to four wins. So we couldn't celebrate tonight, even though it was a big win for us. The series is not over. If you look at it really now, all that's happened, you can look they won their two home games, we won all three home games. That's how you look at it. They got two more. So far it looks like everybody protected their home court and they still have two games at home. So there's really nothing to celebrate. We're going in there Sunday swinging, like we did today, from the jump. And hopefully steal one Sunday. I really can't enjoy it much, because in the playoffs for some reason you're always on the edge. You don't sleep much. You think basketball 24/7. I can enjoy it hopefully next week when we're on vacation. As of right now, I'm always thinking ahead and thinking about the next game, what can I do better, what didn't I do and what I have to do to get other guys involved and more open. Hopefully I can enjoy it next week. Just stick with it. Just stick with it. First of all, this was the last home game in this building in front of our fans, who have been phenomenal all year and pushed us forward. We obviously didn't want to end this season here for them on a loss. I think we addressed that. We wanted to keep plugging, keep going. It was big, I think, when we were down four, the next offense I was able to get in the lane, get a pump fake, get to the free-throw line, kind of settle everybody down, make it a two-point game. And I thought that was big for us not to shoot a bad jumper and they go down in transition again. So it was good to kind of stop the clock, get two free throws and kind of set our defense. I thought that was a big momentum play. Well, we just don't allow ourselves to kind of be satisfied or be happy with anything. I think we did a good job in the first couple of rounds, always kind of keeping our edge to ourself. We won two games -- stole two games in L.A. and came back and still were able to win a big Game 3 at home. And I just think we're a veteran team, and we can't get too high with the highs. I've mentioned it all playoffs long. We addressed it today. Hopefully we'll be ready to play tomorrow. Well, you know, I never went back and watched the film. I never watched the celebration. But it is tough to always see another team win on your home court. It doesn't matter if it's a regular season or playoffs or championship. That's always tough in front of your home fans. Ultimately, that's what we got to do now. We've got to steal one more game on the road, hopefully the next one. We've been good on the road all playoffs long, we feel. We won a game in Portland. We won two in L.A. We won two in OKC and we won this series already. So we feel that we can execute on the road as well. We have a bunch of veterans that are road-tested, and hopefully we can get a big game tomorrow. Well, I feel like actually I haven't really shot the ball as well as I want to. I had some good looks, they just didn't go down. Just keep attacking. I think obviously my teammates are a big part of that. I think J-Kidd is able to give me the ball in situations where I want it. We got some good shooters around me. Tyson in the middle and Haywood have been great stepping in. So I don't have to force any shots if they're not there. Just swing it, run another pick-and-roll. So just experience, I guess, is a big factor. I just thought it was a little childish, a little ignorant. I've been in this league for 13 years. I've never faked an injury or an illness before. But it happened. It's over to me. It's not going to add anything extra to me. This is the NBA Finals. If you need an extra motivation, you have a problem. So we're one win away from my dream, what I've worked on for half of my life. This is really all I'm worried about. This is all I'm focusing on. And not really off-the-court stuff that happened. Well, kind of the same as yesterday or the day before that. I don't allow myself to sit back and relax now. In these playoffs, one win or one loss can switch the whole momentum. You don't ever want a snowball to start. I don't allow myself to sit back all of a sudden and be satisfied. We got one more big win hopefully to get, and then I can be satisfied. I think when we first started it was always about -- when you're 16 it's about other aspects of life, too. It's not just focusing too early on one thing and just get good at one thing and don't have anything else in life. So just challenging other aspects of the brain and stimulating it, and music is a big part and reading and other stuff, too. I just thought he was trying to show me other ways and not just on the court. That's tough. I love rock now. I have played the guitar for a couple of years. I listen to old-school rock. Led Zeppelin, Stones, stuff like that. Well, I think he's pushed the right buttons I think all season long. He's challenged us in ways. Sometimes he's backed off. Sometimes he's letting J-Kidd run the show. Sometimes he feels like things are not going the way he wants to and he's clamping down a little more. So I think that was the challenge the first two years, to find a good mix between play-calls and freedom and still play enough defense to win. And I just think he found a good mix and he found all the right buttons to motivate us every single night to get to this spot. I think every series, every time you go through a game, win or lose, you have to look at the film. You adjust. Sometimes it's major things, sometimes it's minor things the media doesn't even pick up. It might be little coverages. So I think every coach goes back after a game and adjusts, and we've done good so far. I think the major change was obviously starting J.J. He's been phenomenal for us attacking the paint. He was shooting the ball well last game. They were going under his screen-and-rolls. He was able to knock some big shots down. J.J. has been good in the starting lineup. You know, I feel we're a very close-knit group. We have a bunch of talent on the bench as well. Both of those guys bring us toughness. I think Mahinmi is very athletic, and Brian is a tough-nosed player who is very smart. They both gave us a huge lift last game, just by being in the right spot and kind of picking up our energy. Every player on the bench has been big at some point in these playoffs. I remember Brewer coming in and really changing Game 1 in L.A. We were down 15, or whatever, in the third. He came in and gave us a huge lift. At some point every player on this bench made a contribution. Well, I just think sometimes when you don't win, criticism comes with it. That's just a part of the game if you're the star or the face of the franchise. If you win, it's great for you, and everybody looks at you. And if you lose, you're going to get hammered. It's just the part of the business. I think we understand that. We've been around long enough. I got hammered the last 13 years, basically. So hopefully this year I can make the hammering go away for one year. Well, I don't know. I never really try to focus on other people, what other people say. I always try to worry about myself. Every summer go back home and try to work harder and come back next year, and during the series you can't worry about other stuff. You focus on the teammates. You watch the film, you talk to the teammates, see what they can do to help you, what you can do to help them. And that's all I was worried about in the playoffs, is trying to perform. I don't know. You never know. That's another thing I'm not really worried about. I said it before The Finals started, I said I'm not trying to win for my legacy or for anything other than for just me being on the best team there is for that year. You want to be a part of the best, and so hopefully we can fulfill that and everything else is kind of a side note to me right now. |
| Oh, man, I don't know. I mean, obviously that was one of my most disappointing losses in my career, to lose the Final series after being up 2-0. It took so long just to get here. I don't really know if it would have made a difference. Just this feeling to be on the best team of the world is just undescribable. Was he unbelievable tonight or what? Coming out right away in the first half and setting a tone. I think he watched me struggle there early, and he took it upon himself to really attack and look for his shot early and get going early. Man, he kept coming all night long. He was phenomenal. That one timeout he said to me, "Keep pushing. Remember '06." He said that to me in the fourth quarter. We kept plugging. It wasn't pretty for me, but I had to keep plugging and keep fighting. I don't really think that way right now. If you're in this league for 13 years of just battling and playoffs last basically ten years, 11 years, and always coming up a little short. That's why this is extra special. If I would have won one early in my career, maybe I would have never put all the work and the time in that I have over the last 13 years. So this feels amazing. I'm happy for Kidd. What a warrior he is at 38, chasing the most athletic players in this league out there and doing a great job on him, and also leading our squad. He's been in this league forever and had two chances. Just an unbelievable team. I said it all season long. We had great chemistry with the guys. We had fun in the locker room, on the buses and stuff. So this is a special group. We're world champions. It sounds unbelievable. Well, I just think we're a resilient bunch, and we saw it. This whole series we were down some. We kept battling back. Kept believing in each other. I just think this is a win of team basketball. This is a win for playing as a team on both ends of the floor, of sharing the ball, of passing the ball, and we've been doing that all season long. I'm happy. We never looked at ourselves as soft. Not for one minute. And we just kept fighting. Well, I think he's an experienced coach, and he pushed all the right buttons, and it took us a while to find a good mix. I think I mentioned that yesterday, of still keeping our defensive principles that Avery installed and also giving Kidd a little more freedom on the offensive end, letting him run the show a little bit, letting him create and letting him call some plays on the fly and push the pace up a little bit. So I think that he did a great job doing that, and during the course of the season, we had to adjust to some stuff. I thought in The Finals he did some phenomenal adjustments here to start J.J., and then decide to let Peja really sit for the series, bring Cardinal in, who has been phenomenal for us this series. Constant pro. Always stayed ready for us. It's an unbelievable team effort and the coaches and the whole organization. I give Mark a lot of credit. Cuban. He stuck with me through thick and thin. He brought all the right players always in, always trying to spend money and make this organization better and this team better. So Mark is the best. Man, this is what I obviously played for the last couple of years. I think when you come in in this league you want to establish yourself. All these All-Star Games and all those things are nice, in scoring, but when you get to a certain age, you've basically seen it all, and all you play for is for that ring. And I think that's the kind of energy we had from the beginning of the season this year, bringing Tyson in, who was unbelievable for us defensively again. Yeah, it feels amazing now to know that nobody can ever take this away from us again, and for one year we're the best team that was out there. That feels amazing. Well, I think in a lot of games we kept fighting back. All the wins we got in the fourth quarter, at some point we were down, besides today, and the way we kept plugging. Even in Game 5, we were up like 7 or 8. They made a huge run and they go up by a couple of points. And we had to battle back again and fight through it. So I don't really know where it happened, but we're just a resilient, veteran team that always kept coming. We never stopped playing, and we kept believing in each other. That was phenomenal. We talked about it in several time-outs, even when we were down, we have to keep executing, keep playing. You never know what's going to happen. And some of these wins we were able to come back. That was big. Well, you know, I think at the beginning I had some problems with the leadership role and talking. But over the last couple of years I think I've been more comfortable. Obviously my English is a lot better than it was when I first got here. So it's just being more experienced, more comfortable talking to the guys, talking to the fellows, and the experience of seeing something on the court that you want to address. And I just think it all came together for me with hard work and experience. It still feels unbelievable. It was weird. In the first half I had so many good looks. I can't even explain it. I had some threes top of the key. I had a wide-open three in the corner. I had some pull-ups. I had some one-leg fadeaways that I normally make. But like I said, the team always told me, stay with it, stay with it. You're too good of a shooter, too good of a player to keep missing. So finally there in the third I made a three, and there in the fourth I was able to make a couple of pull-ups. But like I said, this team every time somebody was down all season long, somebody else stepped in and picked them up. Mahinmi was unbelievable today, since Haywood went out a couple of days ago, and he gives us energy. All of a sudden makes some big shots today. So I think all season long if somebody was down, the team picked him up. So it was an amazing effort. I don't know. That's something I'll look back to and I can always look back to the '10-'11 season and say we're the world champs. Nobody can ever take that away from me. So that's really the best thing about this. Sticking to Dallas, that was the plan. We fell short so many times, and I committed for four more years this summer, and we didn't really know what was going to happen. We were a first-round, second-round exit a bunch of times. But consistency pays off. Like I said, Mark kept bringing in players. Losing Caron this year was an unbelievable blow. We kept playing, kept fighting through. Bringing Peja in, who was a big addition for us in earlier rounds of the playoffs. So it wouldn't have felt right to win it somewhere else. I'm happy. I obviously made the right decision. And this is also for the Mavs fans, who have been through a lot of disappointments with me over the last couple of years. And they always stuck with me and kept supporting us. And the gym was always full in Dallas during the regular season. This is for them. |