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| First of all, I'm honored to be here again. Now with this franchise, it's an honor. As a player we worked hard. I worked hard individually to get to this point. I had a lot of visions of being at this moment and the now it's hit me. Being on the floor and seeing the championship logos, The Finals logos, I'm very excited. I got an opportunity to see the trophy yesterday and take pictures with it. Hopefully we can bring it home. Yes. They make you do everything with it. Besides take it home. I mean, it's great satisfaction to be here. But we have a lot of work to do still. It's been a great ride so far throughout this postseason. We played some great teams starting with Philadelphia, then going with Boston and then Chicago. Three great teams. And being able to be in this moment, we've all had a vision where we all worked hard, from the start of training camp on the Air Force base. And to be here is very humbling, it's very satisfying at this point. We want more. I don't know. That's something for you guys to break down and look at the numbers and the everything. I'm hungry for one. That was my goal coming into this league. It's been my goal. I've seen the vision over the last few years. I haven't had an opportunity to get there. I played in The Finals before; didn't win it. I got to the Eastern Conference Finals before against Orlando; lost. Had some years where we were the best team in the league in Cleveland and we didn't get back to that point. I have had this vision and now I'm back here and I'm looking to change the outcome. I feel different because I'm older, more experienced. I'm a better player at this point. You know, going into the Finals with the Spurs, I said it at the end of that Finals, I said they were a better team than us. It would have been a lot harder to digest it if we had came into a Finals with a team that we felt like wasn't better than us, didn't execute better than us, wasn't a veteran club and would have beat us. I thought the Spurs were a better team than us and took advantage of all our weaknesses. They've been to that position before. Right now I feel more comfortable because I feel like we have a veteran ballclub and we have three guys that have had rings, Eddie House and D-Wade and Udonis. We have guys that have been in the postseason year after year after year. When you have that experience, when you have guys that can make plays and take over games, you like your chances. We don't know. We don't really get into it too much. You know, we've got a lot of flack this year over mostly because of myself. And we've tried to use that as motivation every day we get on the basketball court. But just play the game of basketball. That's all we can do is play the game of basketball at a high level. Play Miami Heat basketball. That's defending at a high level with speed and athleticism. And then sharing the ball and being the team offensively. As far as this villain thing and things like that, we don't -- it is what it is. People are going to say whatever they want about us. We just got to continue to go out there and just play our game. You hear it all the time. Always say, to go down as one of the greats, you have to put a ring on your resume. I mean, as an individual, you have those dreams and you have those goals. You want to be a champion. Do you care as much as what people say about your career as far as your body of work? I don't know. I think you look at Dirk's numbers, they speak for itself over his 13-year career. You look at my numbers so far in my eight-year career, you know, it kind of speaks for itself as well. As individuals, myself and Dirk, we both are competitors, and we both know the ultimate feeling is to win, is to win a championship. Not for whatever everybody else think, but for the people we have around us. That's our teammates, our organization, our families to be able to have that moment and have that feeling. Well, I mean, it all depends what type of guy you are. For me personally it's driven me. It's gotten me better. I go back and look at some of those games, I look at myself and say, you are a much better player than you were then. That comes from playing games, playing postseason games, losing, winning. But I took from that Finals that I just need to become better, not only as a basketball player, but as a leader on and off the court. Just use it as fuel. Is it going to happen the next year? It can happen to you individually where you become a better player. But does it always get you back to the Finals? It doesn't. There's a lot of guys that have been in The Finals, and lost and never got back. You look at Allen Iverson who got to the Finals and took the 76ers to The Finals. He was great every year, every year after that, but he was never able to get back. I'm humbled. I'm blessed that I'm able to get back to this point and to be able to redeem myself for that time when I was in The Finals against the Spurs. I'm looking forward to guarding anybody. I don't care about guarding anybody. I mean, that's what I do. I'm a defensive guy. I'm not sitting up here and saying I can stop Dirk. I don't think no one can single handedly stop Dirk. He's a shot maker. One of the best shot makers we've ever had in this league. Whoever Coach puts me on or whoever I need to take the challenge on, it doesn't matter to me. As far as what? I don't know. Dirk is a great player. There are a lot of great players that have played in this league. Dirk is one heck of a player. The things that he's able to do out on the floor, the shot-making ability, everyone said, you forced me to a bad shot. Really it's not a comfort shot for him. It looks like a bad shot if you don't know basketball or you don't know his game. One-legged fadeaways off the glass and pull-up jumpers off the dribble, pump fake, pump fake, fadeaway, things like that. He's a great player. Ultimately for me it was about being in the position to compete year after year after year. And not only being able to do that, but being able to do it with one of my best friends, one of the best players we have in this league today in Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh. I know what this league is all about, about having multiple guys on the court that can dominate a game. With teaming up with these guys I feel like we can compete for a lot of years to come. We've proven a lot of people wrong so far. We have a lot of work to do still. Ultimately that's what it's about. Me being happy and also being able to compete at the highest level. That's what there league is about. This league is about. No, I mean whatever. Whatever it takes for our team. You know, if I need to be on Terry or anyone on their team, I try to take the challenge. Our defense is pretty good. It's never me just guarding someone individually. But I do take the challenge on any individual matchup that I'm against. And tonight happened to be Terry mostly in the second half. We needed to lock in. We came out in the third quarter not paying attention to detail. Gave them an open three. DeShawn Stevenson hit an open three. Dirk hit an open shot at the top of the key. We just weren't paying attention to detail about how we were going to defend this team coming into the game. Once we slowed down and got back into what we know, what our strong point is, and that's getting stops, we were able to get out, D-Wade was able to get an and-one. Make another shot and we made a run. Defense. I think in order for us to win basketball games, we have to defend and we have to get stops, and our offense will speak for itself when we continue to get stops. I think for me going into the fourth quarter, I know it's winning time. That's when the game is won. So I got to try to dominate my individual matchup defensively, and then try to execute as best as possible. Try to get good looks, not turn the ball over. And we did a good job of doing that tonight. We got stops and we executed on the offensive end. D-Wade said that to me. Congratulated me after the game on my first Finals victory. I mean, it feels good because it's the first game. And we played well as a team. We got a lot of work to do. We'll come in with the same mindset on Thursday, and looking forward to this challenge once again that's in front of us. It's one in the books. We're excited about this game. Tomorrow we prepare for Game 2, and obviously there's ways we can get better. They play a lot of zone, and the zone is to pack the paint, keep our drivers out of the paint, myself and D-Wade. And dare us to shoot threes. I think our bench came in and did a great job, Rio (Chalmers), Mike Miller did a great job against that zone, knocking shots down. We needed that boost off the bench. We know how strong their bench is, and our bench matched them tonight. And they played extremely well. When they were in the zone, they knocked down shots. Rio gave us a big boost. Mike Miller gave us a big boost, and everyone contributed. Pretty much. Yeah, dare me to shoot, that's pretty much gone. I think people will still live with keeping myself and keeping D-Wade on the perimeter, but it's just my confidence. I put a lot of hard work into it, and understanding that you got to be a two-way player in this league. You have to be able to shoot the ball, you have to be able to drive and do other things to not only get yourself involved, but get your teammates involved. Tonight once again I shot the ball extremely well from the outside, but more importantly, it helped our team get a win. That's what it's all about. I think it was left unsaid. They understand I've been in some big games. I've been in the Finals. Didn't win a ballgame in '07, but I've been in big games before. So basically it's the same conversation we had before every game. Let's get ready to go out and continue to improve as a team, as individuals, and help lead this team to a victory. He's right-handed. He'll be all right. Dirk is right-handed. He shoots the ball extremely well. That left hand is just a guide hand for all shooters. We all know that. It won't affect him. He's still going to be great. He's still Dirk. I mean, just to answer about D-Wade, when D-Wade is dribbling the ball, dribbling it and he gets in his rhythm, and pulls up for a three, once that went down, I knew he was feeling really good. We're rhythm players. When we get in a good rhythm, we get in a good groove, we feel like every shot we take is going to go in. Those are two cases of it. We always said that. We always said we would figure it out. We always believed in our abilities. We always believed as a team. Everything we went through, the pitfalls and the downs was going to turn and make its course. We just stuck with it and understood it. We have guys that have closed games before. We just had to figure out how to do it together. We've done it by ourselves. CB has closed games in the past. D-Wade has closed games in the past. I've closed games in the past. What we had to figure out is how do we do it together to maximize our team potential. Those pitfalls early in the season has helped us get to where we are now in the postseason. It's not like we have big deficits at halftime. I seen the stats last night, down two points to Chicago, three points here, two points to Boston, one point to Boston. It's not like it's a huge deficit that we're trying to come back from 12 or 14 points down. Usually it's just good basketball at this point in time. We happened to be down. We've played I think -- if I'm doing my math right, we've played 16 games. So we have had ten other games we wasn't trailing. We just got to continue to play our game and not worry about if we're trailing or not. We don't want to trail. We don't want to trail at all throughout the whole game, if it's possible. But we just got to maintain our focus. Like I said, it comes from failure throughout the season. Having games where we felt like we could or should have won games late in games and we just didn't execute. I said last night I was used to closing out games in the last seven years. CB was used to closing out games and D-Wade was used to closing out games. One thing was figuring out how to do it together. We were used to doing it individually early on in the season. Me making a play or CB making a play or D-Wade making a play going back to our last few years. Once we figured out how we were going to do it together for the better of the team, we started to close games out, figure things out, figure out certain sets that would work for us in late-game situations and go from there. That's what it's about. We understand that Game 1 is over. We played well, but there were some things we could have done better. We now move our focus to Game 2 and approach that game like it's our last as well. We continue to come into our home court and try to protect home court. We understand Dallas if comes in here and does a great job of stealing one of our games, then they feel -- they forget about Game 1 as well. So we have to come in with the same mindset. Huh? What do you mean "cool"? He cool. There you go. It was great. I had an unbelievable meeting with not only Pat but Micky and Nick Arison and Coach Spo and Zo came. It was a great meeting. Basically gave me the blueprint about how this organization is ran, both on the court and off the court. The great thing I got out of that is about how important family is. I'm a big believer in that. Always have been throughout my life. I appreciate that, and also the product they can put on the floor as well. With D-Wade and also at the time they were talking about they could get CB as well and another free agent. I thought it was the right move. No, not at that point. I definitely seen something at that point when we were all talking about the players in this organization, I definitely have something to look forward to. I think it was just a big shot, period. It was a close game at that point in The Garden. To be able to make that shot and tie the game up, it was a huge shot. It definitely was a shot that we needed at the time, and I was able to knock it down. And I just kind of just took that momentum from that game, and moved on to Game 5. Now I'm here, made a big shot in Game 2 in Chicago and a few key shots in Game 5 also in Chicago from behind the arc. And then last night I was able to make a few, also. It's not my game, though. I'm not a three-point shooter. I'm an attack guy. If a defense is going to allow me to sit and measure up a three-pointer, I'm going to take it. I have that much confidence in my shooting ability. I'm an attack-first guy. That's what I'm best at. I don't care how many threes I make, I understand that my game is in the paint. Yes. It was a bunch of them. I don't know. I guess reading the situation. Taking what the defense gives me. They played a lot of zone. So in the zone it is to keep your perimeter attackers out on the perimeter. I was able to make a couple just swing, swing situations where the defender ran at D-Wade or ran at Mike Bibby and I was sitting in the corner by myself and I was able to hit a couple. I made a couple off the dribble. One at the end of the third and one right before the end of the third. I think like a minute on the clock I was able to pull up for a three. Just try to take what the defense gives me, and not force anything against this defense. They play so many styles, from man to zone to matchup and things like that. You have to kind of be patient and go with it. Just play our defense. This is the most challenging offense we've played in this postseason, because of the firepower that they have offensively. They have multiple guys that can shoot, multiple guys that can put the ball on the floor and create for others. They have guys in the paint that also can create in Shawn Marion and Tyson Chandler, who gets into the paint, and makes some things happen around the rim. It's a challenge for all of us. We come out with a game plan, Coach Spo and the coaching staff gives us a game plan and we go from there. Kind of just use our instincts, our athleticism and our communication defensively to try to read and react. Just seizing the moment. Understanding this is a great opportunity for not only myself but for our team to seize the moment and try to take full advantage of it. Am I going to make every shot or close every game out from now on? I hope so. I don't know. But I do put myself in the position, I do have the confidence that if I have the ball in my hands or if I get the ball in my hands that I can make a play, not only for myself but for my teammates to help us win that game. We're a really good team down the stretch now. It has a lot to do with our team as far as trust, it has a lot to do with myself and D-Wade and just the position Coach has put us in in late games to have us have an ability to come down the stretch and make shots for our team. I guess it's a confidence of closing games out, but it's also the trust you have for your teammates. When they look at you and see you need to close a game out. No matter if you fail, they look for you again to do it again. |
| It was no celebration at all. I was excited about the fact that he hit a big shot, and we went up 15. The same thing we've done over the course of the season. There was no celebration at all. We knew we had seven minutes to go still to close out the game. As far as celebration, that word has been used with us all year. But we knew how much time was left in the game still. I think offensively we just weren't in a good rhythm. But it's not even -- offensively we've been out of rhythm before. At the end of the day, we hang our hats on our defense. I think they were 1-for-10 the first four or five minutes in the first part of the fourth quarter. It was 88-73; end up scoring 22 points in the last seven minutes. They only scored 24 in the whole fourth. We're up 15. If they go on a 12-0 run for the rest of the game, if we don't score another basket, we still win by three. Defensively we just have to be more in tune and not allow a great team, a great offensive team to get as many great looks as they did down the stretch. Jason Kidd had an open three. Jason Terry had a leak-out lay-up. He also had a corner jumper. Dirk 90/90 he hit a wide-open three. That's not our defense at all. We have to do a better job and be more in tune. It's a different mindset, of course. It's a ballgame now. With the series tied 1-1, we're looking forward to the challenge. It's going to be a difficult challenge for us but we're looking forward to it. We're a confident bunch. We play great on the road. It's going to be a hostile environment. Their fans and team are going to bring everything they have. We have to come out with it all. Play as close to 48 minutes as possible on both ends. Absolutely. We're a team that's confident. Every time we have had a pitfall, we've figured out how to bounce back. Right now we have another one. As a veteran ballclub and a team that's been through a lot, we understand how important this next one is with Game 3 being in Dallas and we look forward to the challenge. It's not going to affect us for Game 3. It hurts right now because it's right now. We're competitors. We want to win the game. We feel like we have a 15-point lead in the fourth quarter, that our defense will prevail. That's how much confidence we have in our defense. It hurts now, but we'll be fine. I don't feel like our confidence will be down going into Game 3. We'll be back to square one and figure out how to win the game. No, I don't think it's an issue. We were asked about it after Game 1, I said it would be a non-issue. He's a great scorer. He understands he can use both hands. He got the left-hand lay-up to tie the game up at 90, and then the game-winner going left once again. So as you can tell, it has no effect on his left hand at all, if any. They did. They did a great job of playing two on the ball. They used Tyson Chandler to come off pick-and-rolls, Tyson Chandler or Dirk. They blitzed me and D-Wade's pick-and-roll. Something different. Something we can go to the film to figure out how to exploit that or do a better job of executing later in the game. They didn't do that till the fourth quarter. They picked up the aggression and it got us out of the flow of the offense where we were taking shots at the end of the shot clock. I know I took a few fadeaway threes at the end of the shot clock because we couldn't get into our offense. It's something we'll work on and be better on in Game 3. That's part of the game. We're an emotional team. When we make plays, we can congratulate one another. I don't see why this whole thing has been blown out of proportion. I just look at it in the case of I think -- I've seen Dallas go on plenty of runs before. You know, if JT hits a three and they make a big run, if he runs down the court doing the whole wings expanded, do we count that as a celebration as well? I just think everything gets blown out of proportion when the Miami Heat does things. It's been our motto, it's been our make-up all year. In the playoffs it's a win or a loss. However it comes by, it's a win or a loss. We've moved on from Game 2, seen the mistakes we've made. Seen some of the great things we've done as well. It's a win or loss. The series is tied 1-1. We never get too high or too low in the series. We haven't gotten too high or low in the regular season as well. We move on to the next challenge and go from there. It's very important. We understand that. We are coming out with that mindset, like we had in Game 1 or Game 2. The same mindset. It starts defensively. We have to be in tune as close to 48 minutes as possible, especially versus this team who shoots the ball extremely well, who plays extremely well, especially at home. But it's a sense of urgency. That's the only way we have approached games. We've never went to a game saying this isn't a must-win for us or it's not a sense of urgency. That's the only way we know how to play, when we feel like we're desperate. It's the only way we approach games. Right. I think it was a few minor breakdowns we don't have. And once those minor breakdowns happened, it allowed them to get into a rhythm. Even though we played great defense in some of the later possessions, they were in a comfort zone at that point. We gave up two wide-open threes without contest to J-Kidd and to Dirk. A wide open lay-up to JT off a missed shot, a missed three, and he got a wide open lay-up. We did a lot of things uncharacteristic. It happened. I don't know why we couldn't score on offense. At the end of the day there's been times we haven't been able to score for quarters on offense, but we've been able to get the stops. That's the make-up of our team. We understand no matter what happens offensively we have to be in tune. We lost our edge. I don't think offensively -- after rewatching the film, we got into a lot of great sets. Besides two or three possessions out of our last 14 possessions, it was pretty good. We had a few shots, I missed a lay-up at the rim. Mario Chalmers missed a wide-open lay-up. We ran some offense where Chris Bosh got in the post. He mishandled it out of bounds. UD got an offensive rebound with a minute left and mishandled it, saved it and they got a lay-up to tie the game. So we had some really good possessions. They just didn't go down. At the end of the day, that's not where we lost the game. Like I said before, our team -- there has been times we haven't been able to score offensively, but it hasn't stopped us from keeping that same concentration or even more of a concerted effort to play defensively in the game. A little bit of both. I know I'm excited for the game tomorrow. It hurt. We had time to let it hurt us as much as it could yesterday after the game. But today is a new day. And we're back and focused. We're a confident bunch. Me personally, I'm looking forward to the challenge. It's going to be fun. I think Shawn Marion has done a great job. Especially offensively. He's picked up his game offensively. Hanging around the rim, getting some lay-ups, getting some tip-backs, playing around the rim. His activity throughout the first two games has been pretty good. I take it upon myself to not only lock in at the beginning, but whoever is on him to lock in a little bit more. Because he's been very effective. I don't feel like it's one guy in this league that can stop me one-on-one. There's always a defense that's looking at me when I have the ball. He's the guy that's guarding me, but there's no one-on-one guy that can guard me. Obviously, we look at it as we have enough guys not only can guard Jason Terry, guard Dirk. It's a team thing. It's not LeBron versus Shawn Marion, LeBron versus Dirk Nowitzki or LeBron versus JT or DeShawn Stevenson versus Dwyane Wade. It's not about that. It's about the team. Even though you have a one-on-one matchup on the court, there's a team defense that's put behind it. So if I get caught on him, it's not like I'm playing him one-on-one. We have a team defense and guys help each other. That's how you become successful in this league by being able to have a back line behind you. When you guard someone as great as Dirk or as great as JT is, you have to have a back line. It's never one-on-one. It's not a one-on-one thing. We get caught up on the one-on-one matchups a lot. There's always a defense that's behind it. I think personally I do have to be more aggressive in the paint. Six free-throws in two games -- I do that in my sleep in one game. So that's not me. So I'm going to make a concerted effort to be more aggressive to try to get to the rim, create some more opportunities for myself and my teammates. I understand that. But I think we just had a few -- they extended their defense late in the game. They did some things defensively that they hadn't done throughout the first two games all the way. They started to blitz me, D-Wade's pick-and-rolls, a lot of our sets kept us on the perimeter. We didn't get into our sets early enough to give us more time. So we had to take contested long-range threes. I think I took two. D-Wade actually took one. So I think the best thing about our team and the best thing about me and D-Wade individually, we get an opportunity to watch the film and know when that happens again, we know how to attack it. And to not settle as much or to get the defense moving a little bit more where we can create not only better shots for ourselves but for our team, and we're not forcing things at the end of the shot clock. |
| It's all about trusting your teammates. D-Wade, we ran a two-three pick-and-roll. They put two on the ball. D-Wade hit me first. I had Tyson Chandler closing on me. I saw CB wide open. I don't care if he missed 15 in a row, he was wide open and that's his sweet spot. He was able to knock it down. It's the trust we have in each other's ability, no matter what the point of the game is at. It's not even that. We play our defense. This is the toughest offense we've played all year as far as how many guys they put on the floor that can make plays. Not only for themselves, but for others. Unbelievable shooting team. And they make you stay in tune. You can never relax or they make you pay. Our defense always tries to extend offenses further than where they usually start. That's just our defense. It has nothing to do about them not being a paint presence or anything like that. It's just our defense. That's how we played all postseason all year. I think you're concentrating on one side of the floor. All you're looking at is the stat sheet. Honestly, I'm a two-way player. Since D-Wade had it going offensively, so we allow him to handle the ball, bring it on offensively. You should watch the film again and see what I did defensively. You'll ask me a better question tomorrow. Like D-Wade said, we had all the confidence in the world in our defensive scheme. UD wanted that matchup in Game 2. So we knew when he got this matchup, he was going to make Dirk take a tough shot. He made that shot before. He will make it again. At least we just make him work for it. Make him take a turn-around jumper. UD stayed in front of him and it rimmed out. It was a huge stop for our team. It's just we're teammates. At this point there's no room to hold anything back. There's nine or eight days left in the season. I think our friendship allows us to don't care about that moment. It's living in the moment. That situation he had every right to say what he had to say to me. As a competitor, you love when guys challenge you. He challenged me in the locker room at halftime. He challenged me on the court. As a competitor, like I said, I respect that. Something that -- I don't know if my kids are asleep right now. No, my kids stay up late. It didn't look well. All game you could see it watering. You could see him messing with it. Just trying to keep a tissue during time-outs to keep it padded. But he fought through it. And then you definitely respect that. CB is really hard on himself. He's his own critic. He knows when he's not playing well. As teammates we try to keep him upbeat, let him understand how important he is to this team. He's grown. Not only just this series but throughout the whole postseason. This is the furthest he's ever played in a postseason. So he's excited, and he's done some great things for our team. He's going to continue to do great things for our team. We always say he's the most important player to our team. No, I did win. We won. (Laughter). That's all that it's about. You know me, anybody that knows me throughout the years, all I care about is the W. No matter if I'm scoring. I'm not just a scoring guy. I've got a lot of points in my career. I have had some teammates who have given me great confidence and ability to go out there and score a lot of points. But I've done other things. I don't have to score points to be effective. Not only did Chris Bosh make the game-winning shot, but D-Wade had a hockey assist. I got the assist to CB and Udonis Haslem set the screen on Dirk to get him a wide-open shot. That's what it's about. This is a team game. Even though I know I get a lot of the headlines, bad headlines, D-Wade gets a lot of the great headlines, CB gets a few headlines, this is a team game. We understand as a team we have to play together to win. It's not just about me. I don't think it can't be too many. I think there are slight adjustments both teams make from game to game. Like I said, Game 4 of The Finals, which you've been working on all season since training camp is what you have. There's not too many things you can change. You can make slight tweaks offensively, defensively that can make you be a little bit more on point when you see a situation happens. But right now it's about the team that's going to play hard, going to use their instincts and just play on a string. You have to trust one another as teammates both ends. Not only us, but Dallas as well. I think when our communication just -- we didn't care about -- it's all about winning. Once we started communicating that -- I think it started early in the season when we just were struggling. We were trying to be too unselfish. I've always said that trying to change our game, I thought that was going to be for the better of the team. At the end of the day, we had always just say whoever has it going, we kind of just go to. D-Wade had it going last night. I have had it going at points in this postseason where they've come to me, come to me and I've been able to close for our team. It doesn't matter. At the end of the day, it's the win. If it's D-Wade making a crucial basket or me making a crucial basket or last night, CB making the game-winning shot, that's all that's about. No, I just want to win. Individual, I think my individual stats will take care of itself. Like you said, in a series I've averaged 38 points a game and we've lost in the Eastern Conference Finals against Orlando. This is a team game. My resume will speak for itself after I'm done with this game of basketball. What me and my teammates are trying to accomplish now is the only thing I'm worried about. When I'm done, I'll let you guys figure where I should be placed. They're very similar, because they force you to help -- they have so many dynamic players on the court at one time. You look at Boston, Ray Allen, Paul Pierce, Kevin Garnett and Rondo, these four guys can all break you down at one time. So everyone is live. You can't relax off anyone of them because they'll all make you pay. That's the same with this Dallas Mavericks team. When you are coming down the stretch and you have Jason Kidd and Jason Terry, with Dirk also and Shawn Marion and Tyson Chandler who also can create things off the glass, you never have a chance to relax, ever. So mentally you have to be in tune, because if you do, like we've done a few times in this series, they make you pay. I think the difference is he had a super duper green light. Like he told you before, he had no conscience in '06. He knew that he really had to go out and score 30 every night to give his team a chance to win at times. He's a smarter player now. That just comes with age. It comes with experience. It comes with games that you play throughout the course of your years. I mean, he's the same great player I faced my first seven years in the league. A guy that can break you down off the dribble, create at the rim, can make shots from the outside. At the same time, a two-way player who also plays defense at the same high intensity. I just think he's a little older, but not old at all. Just a little older. Not at all. I've never been afraid of constructive criticism. From my coaches, from my high school teammates. I had four best friends in my high school team. Those guys would get on me all the time if I ever did anything wrong. Something I've been going through my whole life. When you have good friends and you have friends they are not afraid to tell you when you're wrong. That's on the court or off the court when you're doing stuff that shouldn't be done. So it wasn't hard to adjust to. I understand that if he's yelling at me or trying to tell me to do something better, it's for the better of the team, to help me get better individually, vice versa. It didn't take no time to get used to. I know I'm not bigger than this team or I know everything. I still got a lot of improvement to do. The only difference for me in '07 and now, it takes a lot more preparation. Being young, I wasn't ready for the preparation for the NBA Finals at that point. Being my first time. I wasn't prepared mentally. Coming into this season, I prepared from day one. Being around two guys who had already won rings, three guys including Eddie House and Udonis and D-Wade, I knew how to prepare throughout the course of the season to get to this point. So it is great when you are around guys who have been in this moment and who actually got to the mountaintop, to lean on at times. We have a luxury. We have a luxury here. We got guys that have been in this moment before and not afraid to be in it again. |
| Definitely didn't play great offensively. I got to do a better job of being more assertive offensively, not staying out of rhythm offensively the whole game. But I think one thing I try to concentrate is, if I get two guys on me, try to make my teammates better, hit those guys for open looks. They made some great looks, but at the same time I have to keep myself in rhythm while I'm doing that as well. You know, with these games, every other day, there's not much gym time you can have. You want to try to stay off your feet as much as possible. If I feel like I need to come to the gym and get some extra shots up, I will. Absolutely just to get my shot back going and my confidence with my shot going. If I feel I need to do that after practice, tomorrow night I will do that. I'm confident with my ability. It's about going out there and knocking them down. When you have the opportunity, you have to knock them down. Your teammates give you the confidence. They give me the confidence all year, all postseason. So I have to go out there and make them count. I don't think anything is commanding in this series. These are two games teams trying to figure out a way to make plays down the stretch. We've seen in this series seven or eight-point lead is nothing. You just got to continue to execute offensively, continue to grind defensively. And put yourself in the best possible chance to win late. I think they haven't changed their coverages on me. Me just being more assertive, that's what it's about. I got the ball in the post a few times, and I seen double-teams. I tried to kick it out to guys and they've made shots for us. At the same time I can't let that stop my aggression when they bring two on the ball. I still got to make plays for my team, but also make plays for myself to keep me in the rhythm of the game. I think the fact that it happened in a loss is the anger part about it. That's all that matters to me. If I had had eight points and we won the game, I could be satisfied. I don't really care about that. The fact I could have did more offensively to help our team, that's the anger part about it, and myself. I'll come back in Game 5 and do things that needs to be done to help our team win. We've always been a good bounce-back team. Anytime we have a loss or we feel like we could have did better in one game, we've always been able to bounce back. Individuals have been able to bounce back, including myself, D-Wade and CB and the guys. We understand it's a golden opportunity. Game 5 we come here and we play as well as we did tonight, we execute a little better down the stretch, we give ourselves a good chance to win Game 5 and go home and be able to close out. Jason Terry is a great player. When he plays well, Dallas plays well. He's the reason why these guys are in The Finals and that's the reason why he's been one of the top guys and Sixth Man Award every year, because he plays well for this team. It's a good show tonight by both teams. They made one or two more plays down the stretch than we did. We look forward to Game 5, and try to come out here with a win. I don't think -- what do you mean? We have matchups. We have schemes. It's not one guy that's hurting us. I think Tyson Chandler had an unbelievable game last night. Offensive rebounds, he had nine offensive rebounds. Dirk made shots. He can make shots against anyone. He can make shots against me. He can make shots against anyone in this league. Just try to make it hard on him. We did that. You can always use -- if you can get a minute or two minutes there, it helps anyone. It would help me as well. I feel like I'm in condition where I can still be effective. I just have to figure a way I can be effective on both ends of the floor. Last night, you know, eight points is definitely inexcusable for myself. I hold myself up to a higher standard than that. I had to do a better job of putting myself in situations where I can benefit myself and my team, no matter how many minutes I'm out on the floor. You're at a point where you just not in a good rhythm. You start aiming shots, you start thinking about plays too much. You start thinking about the game too much and instead of going out and reading and react and playing the game. It happens to all of us where you get to a point where you feel so out of rhythm, you try to impact the game some other way than offensively. I try to rebound the ball, try to defend. If I wasn't -- had it going offensively, just trying to get guys to defend, to play two on the ball where I can give it up to someone so someone else can make the play. When you're out of rhythm, it's tough to get back into the flow in that particular game. I guess the best thing about it is you try to watch that film, see the things you can do better the next game and then go after it. You just have to pick your spots. At times -- I watched the film again last night when I got back to the room. I watched the film today with the whole unit, and there were times I definitely could have attacked. When you're out of rhythm, I guess it feels like you have nothing going offensively. You just try to focus your play somewhere else. At the same time I have to make sure I keep myself active, some way, somehow. Getting offensive rebound, the put-back, cutting when someone else has the ball. Figure out a way to still be effective even if I'm not bringing the ball up or initiating the offense. I think it's that time. I think it's that time that I try to get myself going individually. But at the same time still play my game. And when I say be more aggressive, that doesn't mean be more aggressive and have to shoot the ball. It just means being more aggressive and looking for opportunities to get a look. And if I bring two defenders and give the ball up. That's something I've done my whole career. Still be aggressive but at the same time get guys involved and have to do that. I like when I smile and the flashes go off and -- it's pretty cool. (Laughter). Like I said, I'm not -- DeShawn, he's been talking for a long time, since out Washington-Cleveland days. I don't let that get to us. Those guys are playing well. We're playing well. It's a three-game series. Talk is cheap. You have to play the game of basketball. Let the scores and the plays define the game. We don't get caught up in that too much. Just mental. It's just a mental -- your mind state going into the game tomorrow night. You watch film, you watch too much. You don't want to drag on what happened last night. You get into the books, you get into your studies, and then you move on. It's a new day. Tomorrow is a new game. And just like when we moved on from Game 2 to Game 3, we will move on from Game 4 to Game 5 and try to come out with a better outcome. No. Not really. Just being back on the court. Just rushing the opportunity to be back -- having another opportunity. If it was the Super Bowl, I would be kicking myself in the foot. We have one game. That's it. The great thing about this, it's a series. No matter if you can have a bad game, you can always make an imprint on the next game. Game 5 is a huge game. I haven't read anything that was written. I didn't play well, especially offensively. I know that. I've got to do a better job of helping this team win basketball games, especially late, no matter what it is. If that's getting an offensive rebound, like I said, making a couple of baskets, being more aggressive to give my guys opportunities to get open looks. I have to do that. That's what my job is. That's what I'm here for. You can. Because you know you have other guys. You have other options. You feel like you don't have to take over games. You don't have to take as many shots. Sometimes you can get out of rhythm doing it. I think we've all seen that at this point -- at some point this year. Kind of waiting and waiting and waiting, and then it gets to a point you're just out of rhythm. We've all been through that. But we figured it out through games, through practices, how we can all be effective at the same time. And we need to put it together now. I have. Both series, the Boston series and the Chicago series, there was a couple of games I didn't play well. You come back and you just do better the next game. I understand that I have the ability to go out there, my teammates give me all the confidence in the world to go out there and try to help them win a basketball game. You definitely relish the next moment. I'm looking forward to it. It's a challenge. But at the same time like I said, you have to figure out a way to still be active in the offense. That's cutting behind the defense and making yourself closer to the ball. You have to do that. D-Wade does a great job sometimes of cutting baseline getting dunks, getting lay-ups. I try to flash behind the defense at times when I don't have the ball necessarily and get some looks for myself or for my teammates. You can't ever feel like you're not in the offense even though you're on the weak side. You always have to be like the ball is coming to me, the ball is coming to me even when it's all the way on the other side. You have to stay in tune with whatever is going on if that instance. Absolutely. I criticized myself. I was hard on myself all last night. Anytime I feel like I could have played better and the team loses, that's what it's all about. If I have a bad game and we win, I'm hard on myself, but at the end of the day we win the basketball game. That's ultimately what it's all about. When we lose and I don't play well, and I feel like I could have did one or two more things to help our team win or get over the hump, you're definitely hard on yourself. That's just me. That's just the make-up of who I am. I have no idea. There's always opportunities you feel like you can get more in the paint. I had a few times -- I can always get more, be more aggressive. I said that last night after the game. I have to be more aggressive, even if that takes for me getting out in the open court sometimes, getting the rebound, getting out in the open court where I'm at my best or playing in the post. I'm playing a lot in the post, too. So I'm in the paint there. They're bringing double-teams, I'm able to get it out to a lot of our shooters. I don't know the exact number. I don't know at what instance I felt like I was out of rhythm. I think what bothered me the most is that it resulted in me being out of rhythm. It resulted in us having a loss. That's what it's all about for me. At no point should I ever feel like I'm out of rhythm, because my teammates key on me and they look at me to come through for them. There's times when you're out of rhythm, it's hard to get back into it. But you have to figure out a way to still be an impactful player on both ends of the floor. Like I said, if that's getting a defensive stop, if that's creating a charge defensively, or getting an offensive rebound to get us another possession, you have to figure out those ways to do it to help your team win. I didn't do that last night. Those are the things that I pride myself on that hurt me the most. I'll just be hard on myself and figure out a way to do it better the next game. |
| No, I don't think so. I don't believe so. I know I'm not. We as a team, we played good enough to win again. Put ourself in position to win down the stretch. Everyone, guys made plays. They just made a few more than we did. That's what it came down to. I don't think it was a case of offense again tonight. There was enough offensive play. We shot 52%, they shot 56%. We scored 103 points, they scored 112. The offense wasn't a problem. He made big shots. He made some great three-point shots tonight. A hand contested in his face. Some of them was open. He's just aggressive. We always said when he plays well, they're very tough to beat. That's what he's done the last two games. Well, it starts defensively. We've had a few breakdowns late in games in this series that we didn't have in the first three series. So it's something we know we can do. We just got to push through it. At this point we have no choice, honestly. We got two games left, and we worked hard all year to get home-court advantage. So we have to take advantage of it. Just try to work our same offense. I was able to get into the lane a couple of times, hit out for threes, hit out for guys that got some lay-ups, and also I was able to get to the rim a couple of times, put a little pressure on the defense. But it's nothing that you really can change. It's our habits we've been working through all season. With him being out, we just try to do the same thing as if he was in, but knowing that one of our scorers is down. But guys had to come in and try to make plays and pick up the slack while he was out. Absolutely. The only thing that applies to me is a win. A win or a loss. I could have made a couple more plays for my team. But at the end of the day, all it's about is a win or a loss. Triple-double means absolutely nothing in a loss. So we will be better in Game 6 on Sunday. Like I said, it's never a one-on-one matchup. I said that when he was struggling in the first couple of games, the games that we won. I said it's never a one-on-one matchup. JT is the reason why, like I said, in the top vote-getters of Sixth Man of the Year every year. He does a great job of staying active, staying in rhythm and they get him the ball in the fourth quarter. So I take pride in it. Like I said, I'm not going to always stop him or hold him under his average. I would hope so. He gets enough looks, he gets enough cracks at it, he's going to make a few in. We have to make sure we stay locked in and not allow him to get open ones like he had tonight. Honestly, we just worked our game. I was able to get the ball in the post a few times in the first half. It worked. Some of them didn't work. Second half with D-Wade being out to start the second half, I took it upon to be a little more of a ball-handler, get guys into our offense. But we just try to take what the defense gives us. We have nothing to say about our offense tonight. We shot 53% from the floor. These guys shot 57. Shot almost 70% from the three-point line. Offensively had nothing to do with why we lost this game. We just couldn't get enough stops down the stretch. I didn't think about it. D-Wade gave it to me, I had enough room and I shot it. Shots I made before. I just didn't make it that time. The last 48 hours have been thinking about Game 5. Some of the opportunities we had to win. Some of the opportunities I had to make plays, and either made them or didn't. At one point we look at it we're up three with three and a half minutes to go. We had an opportunity. We played well enough to win that game, even though with them making 13 threes, unbelievable shooting for them. We still had an opportunity to win. I thought about that and also kind of shifted my focus to how can I be better and how can our team be better in Game 6. We worked all year to get home court, and even though we're in an elimination game, we feel like we still have a great opportunity with this series coming back to Miami, two games on our home floor. I don't think it's too much. I feel like I'm in world-class condition. Like I said, anytime you get a little rest here, a little rest there, it definitely helps. I wouldn't say it's too much. I don't think so. I don't feel like I'm hurting my team for the time I'm out there. I don't feel like it's too much. It's frustrating, of course. When you look at the three games we lost, we all had the opportunity to win. Game 2 being up 15. In Game 4, we had an opportunity. And in Game 5 we had an opportunity. It is frustrating when you look back at the film and you watch and you see some of the mistakes that you had, not only individually but as a team. But it's something you can't -- you have to try to move on. But also learn from those games where you had an opportunity to win and seeing the games where you won, where you took advantage of them. So I think it's a new game, Game 6 being tomorrow night, and we're looking forward to it coming back to our home floor. At this point I don't think technique has anything to do with it. Shots go in, shots don't go in. I don't stop to think about my technique or anything like that. One thing about me, you just be aggressive. And when you have the shot, you take them. Some of the same shots I've taken in the other series, they went in. They're not going in for me right now, that won't deter me from taking that opportunity once I get them again. I think the game of basketball can be pressure. It doesn't matter if it's The Finals or the Conference Finals or first round. Playoff basketball is all about pressure, how you can handle it. There's a sense of urgency because we're on an elimination game coming into Game 6. But it's something if I sit here and say we haven't seen everything to help us out to get to this position this year, I would be lying to myself and lying to our team. This is a position -- I mean, we wouldn't want to be in this position being down 3-2. But at the same time we're going to relish the opportunity being back on our floor. I mean, honestly, J.J., he shot the ball extremely well. The guy hit four threes, three of them was at the end of the shot clock with him not even holding his follow-through. A guy like that once he gets into the lane and he gets a few lay-ups, get into the flow, his outside shot becomes better, just like a lot of us. Myself and D-Wade, if you allow us to get two or three lay-ups, we feel like we're in a good rhythm. So we have to do a better job of trying to keep him out the paint. If you keep him out of the paint early, that's better for us. He doesn't shoot the ball as well as he would if he gets a few lay-ups here, a few lay-ups there, a couple of free-throws. He's a key. We always say he's a key. J.J. being a key and J.T. being a key to their success. I've seen myself being less aggressive at times. A few reasons is most of the time I feel like D-Wade has it going. In situations where in the past in the last series there was times I had it going, in the Chicago series or in the Boston series, and our team just rolled me offensively. Guys just try to pick it up, some way, somehow. D-Wade has been playing extremely well in the fourth quarter. CB has played well. And just haven't found my niche in the fourth quarter thus far. You look at it, tomorrow is another opportunity for me to make an imprint on this series in the fourth quarter and help our team win. It's nothing that I've seen over The Finals that I didn't know coming into this series. I understood this is a huge series. It's a huge stage. I want to play well, of course. I want to help this team win a championship. That's all it's about. The things that you can't control, the ball going in for you, or you playing extremely well every single game. The game doesn't happen like that. If I wanted to be that way, I would love for it to be. I have to do what's best for our team to help put our team in a position to win ballgames. That's the only thing I can control. The losses do. That's all it's about for me, winning and losing. Of course, I get on myself, I'm hard on myself about wanting to play well, because I feel like that's what I need to do for my teammates. But to answer questions about what's written about me or anything like that, I don't really feed into it. It's going to be written no matter what, no matter if I play well or not. I had a triple-double last game. I had a bad game in a lot of people's eyes. I understand that. That's just the situation I'm in. That's the bowl I'm in right now. I can only satisfy my teammates. That's the way I look at it. I'm not feeding into that. If you guys want to feed into everything that not only myself or D-Wade or the Miami Heat do, I think that's a non-issue. There's bigger issues in this series than that. I don't think so. I think we have figured it out in the sense of what makes our team successful. Just like in the last series, I feel like D-Wade was out of rhythm, I just tried to pick it up offensively. And it's kind of vice versa right now. I haven't been in a good rhythm offensively. He's tried to pick it up. Guys have tried to pick it up in my absence offensively. That doesn't mean that we're back to square one. We've worked to playing too many games to go back to square one. If I make a few plays here, make a few plays there, then the whole course changes from me being 8-for-19 last game to being 10-for-19. You just got to be able to stick through it, watch film and figure out ways that you can help this team win offensively, because that's what it's about also. |
| I mean, sometimes you got it, sometimes you don't. And that was this case in this series. I was able to do things in the last two series to help us win ballgames. Wasn't able to do that in this series. Once you get to the playoffs, every game is pressure. You want to win. You have to win. And I mean, we've seen some of that in the Chicago series, we seen some of that in the Boston series. Even though we lost Game 4, we lost Game 4 in Philly, there's pressure in that series as well. So it doesn't matter which round it is. Once you get to the postseason, every possession counts. Live in the paint. They did a great job of every time I drove, they brought another extra defender in front of me. They did a great job defensively. Very underrated defensive team. Took me out of a lot of things that I'm capable of doing or used to doing. It took us out of a lot of things we're capable of doing, that's getting points to the paint and getting to the free-throw line. So they did a good job. Much respect to them. It hurts of course. I'm not going to hang my head low. I know how much work as a team we put into it. I know how much work individually that I've put into it, when you guys are not around. That's something people don't see. I think you can never hang your head low when you know how much work, how much dedication you put into the game of basketball when the lights are off and the cameras are not on. No, that doesn't bother me. I understand this is a huge stage, and you want to perform well for nobody else besides your teammates. That's ultimately what it's about for me. If I can play well for my teammates, help my teammates win basketball games, then I'm always satisfied with that. It hurts me, and I get on myself when I'm not able to play well and help my teammates win. Absolutely not. Because at the end of the day, all the people that was rooting on me to fail, at the end of the day they have to wake up tomorrow and have the same life that they had before they woke up today. They have the same personal problems they had today. I'm going to continue to live the way I want to live and continue to do the things that I want to do with me and my family and be happy with that. They can get a few days or a few months or whatever the case may be on being happy about not only myself, but the Miami Heat not accomplishing their goal, but they have to get back to the real world at some point. I don't think so. I pretty much don't listen to what everybody has to say about me or my game or what I've done with my career. I don't get involved in that. This is year after year after year for me. Me as an individual, people write or say what they want to say about me. It doesn't weigh on me at all. Like I said, the only thing that weighs on me is when I don't perform well for my teammates and the guys that I play for every day. That's the only thing that weighs on me. Because I take pride in going out there and doing the things that need to be done to help my teammates win. That's it. Honestly, it was about fourth-quarter defense and trying to get buckets. We got into a good groove to start the fourth. I think J.J. Barea's three at the end of the shot clock was a huge shot. Put them up seven. That was a huge shot. I think it was 81-77 at that time. He hit a shot, the three at the end of the shot clock. We played defense 23 straight -- great defense for 23 straight seconds and he hit a shot like that. So it took a little bit out of us. You don't want to dig a hole like that against anyone. Especially on your home floor going into the fourth. Any time you feel like you get to the top of the mountain and you fall off, there's definitely a personal failure. It was a failure in '07 when we lost to the Spurs when I was in Cleveland, it's a failure now for myself losing to the Mavericks. Absolutely. I can only prepare myself each year. In the summertime I'll put a lot of hard work into my individual game, try to bring my individual game to a team, and I work hard every day as an individual to go out there and perform at a high level for my teammates and for myself. I got close. Won two more games than I did in '07, and hopefully next time I get here I'll win two more games than I did in '11. I've been in this league eight years. There's no distractions that can stop me from trying to chase an NBA championship. Not you guys, not anything that goes on that's not focused on my team and my teammates and what we're out there -- what we're out set to do. Like I said before, I work hard to try to put myself in position to play at a high level. When you go out on the court, does the ball always go in? Absolutely not. But the one thing I know, I never hold my head low in saying, I didn't do it the right way or I wish I would have did this. It's not about that. I put a lot of hard work into this season individually. We all did. So we have nothing to hang our heads low. Just use this as an extra motivation to help myself become a better player for next year. |