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| Well, those guys, they came out on fire. They were passing the ball well, knocking down shots. We just wanted to continue to keep playing. It's a long game, and every time our coach was just saying play harder, play harder, and that's what we did. It's a game of runs, man, so you just have to make sure that every time we got a good shot on the defensive end, we've just got to contest up and just play hard. We've got to continue to do that. I mean, we're just trying to take it a possession at a time. You know, this is a tough series. This level of basketball is the hardest we play, and we just want to take it slow, and take it, like I said, a possession at a time. Guys got to just continue to believe in themselves. If we do that as a group, we'll be all right. Like Russ said, it kind of took us a couple minutes to get the nervousness out of us and the jitters out of it. We've just got to play our game. Next game we've got to start a little better because this team is going to come out extremely hard. He means a lot to us. He's been sacrificing his body, taking charges all season. Just playing hard. He could care less about how many shots he takes or how many rebounds he gets, he's just going to play hard and do what the coaches tell him to do. He's just a great teammate to have. We've got to continue to just give him confidence by feeding him down low on those dump off passes for dunks and he's going to come back down and give it his all on the defensive end. We need that from everybody. Like I said, we've got a long ways to go, we've just got to continue playing. Well, coach just told me to match up with him early on. They do such a great job of going small, going big, they can play different ways, and Thabo did a good job of just making it tough on them. You can't really stop a guy like that, just got to play hard and contest. For me he got a few lay ups, but I've just got to continue to stay in front and play my hardest. It's a tough match up, but I've just got to play with some fire, and we'll see what happens. Well, he's such a versatile defender, he can guard one through five, and we used Perk in a lot of screen setting, and they switched a lot of it, and he guarded Russ, he guarded me, he guarded one through five. You know, I'm not worried about, like I said, the one on one match up, it's just about the team, and he does such a great job of guarding everybody. We've got to figure out a way to try to get some easy points and just play hard on both ends. I can't worry about which guy is guarding me, I've just got to play my game. Well, Russ came out, like you said, he wasn't makes his shots early, but he didn't let that get him down. He just tried to do other things to help us win, 11 assists, eight rebounds. He's a guy that can come out on the floor and do that for us every night. He controlled the game on the offensive end. Like I said, he wasn't making shots, but he was trying to get everybody else involved. We've got to do a better job of finishing for him. But he came out and made some big shots for us. We've got to continue just leaning on each other. It's a game where everybody is going to have to chip in, and Russ was just making sure everybody did so, and we followed his lead. Well, I'm not trying to force anything. For this whole Playoffs, I'm just trying to play my game, be aggressive, and if I see a shot I have to take it, and if I see a pass I have to pass it. I have to go back tomorrow and watch film and see how I can get better, and hopefully I have a better game, too. I wish I could tell you. You know, just being in The Finals, we kind of was nervous, I guess. That's something we can't it can't happen next game or the rest of the series. Just got to come out with a lot of energy, and hopefully we do it next game. But I really couldn't tell you why. Just not think about it. Just play. Pride myself on working hard and learning and being coachable. I have faith in all those things that I do day in and day out, coming in, working hard, believing in myself and my teammates, and believing in the system. Whatever happens after that, it happens, as long as I know that I come in and give it my all every single day. I can't worry about what other people say or expectations they put on me. It's just all about how I view myself and how my teammates view me, and we'll go from there. I'm just all about getting better and all about believing, man. If that stuff comes along, then it does. I have faith that if I keep doing what I'm doing and continue to just learn every single year, anything can happen. I don't want to sound like a jerk or anything, but I really don't care what people say outside the locker room, outside of this organization what I need to do or what I didn't do. I really don't care. You know, I'm a guy that lets the game come to me but is also aggressive at the same time. I know when to take shots, when to make the right play. People can say this and that. I learn to just tune it out and just play my game. I just know it's going to come back around. I'm just taking it a day at a time. It's just a blessing to be here, not just in The Finals but being in the NBA, having this opportunity to do something I love to do, and just take it slow, take it a day at a time, keep working every single day, and at the end we'll see where I'm at. But I can't think too far down the line. Just got to be ready for the next day and prepare myself right for whatever happens. We'll see. I love to do everything you just said, but I've just got to take it slow, and we'll see. I kind of figured they would mix it up a lot, throw different defenders. They did a great job of since Chris Bosh was out a few series back, they did a great job of just playing a lot of guys that can defend different positions. LeBron can defend one through five and Shane Battier can do the same, and Haslem is good at defending some perimeter guys, as well. They're just mixing it up, and we've just got to find a way to kind of offset that. It just goes down to playing hard and make the right basketball play. Yeah, I think, like I said, they're going to mix it up a lot. I've just got to be patient and be aggressive, and I just really can't worry about who's defending me, I've just got to play within the concept of the team and play my hardest. That means a lot. My goal as a kid was to be the best player ever in my area. That was my first goal before even thinking about going to college or the NBA. So that means a lot to me. But I don't think I'm up there with those guys. Elgin Baylor and Dave Bing and Adrian Dantley and guys like that yet. But I've got to keep working and hopefully I get there. That's always been a goal of mine, and hopefully I achieve it. Everybody has been physical with me since I got into the league at 19. I don't expect it to be any different. Those guys bump me, pushed me, confronted me and denied me the ball, and I expected it to be the same. But me, I've got to start the ball off better on the defensive end and the offensive end, just being stronger and trying to get the ball and making the right plays. I turned over the ball a few times I shouldn't have turned it over, but I've just got to be stronger. I expect them to be a lot more physical, so I'll be ready for it. Only adjustment we made was playing harder. I can tell you guys Xs and Os and the schemes, but it just comes down to playing harder. Those guys got open threes, open lay ups. That's not what we pride ourselves on. We can't do that to a championship caliber team, can't give those guys open shots. So we just tried to step it up on the defensive end and know that they're going to be aggressive and make shots, but we can't get discouraged, we've got to continue to play our game. And we just tried to step it up a little bit, get our karma behind us some, as well, and kind of push us over the top. He has a chip on his shoulder, and he wants to be the best. That's the best part about our team, we have guys that want to be the best. I don't know how many points he had, but he had eight rebounds and I think 11 assists. I don't know if you can talk too much about a guy who does that, who can do that night in and night out. He had great shots last game, missed a few lay ins and a few easy jumpers that I think he can make. We're not worried about what people are saying on the outside, we're just worried about coming together as a group, and he did a great job of controlling everything last night. Only thing I remember was that everybody ran on the court. That's probably one of the best moments I've had so far in my life, playing at the mecca of basketball in New York City, and I hit a few shots then. It felt like everybody just swarmed me so quickly, man, and it was just a fun moment for me and something I'm always going to remember. That's something we've been preaching for a while, always just staying together. And teams win, you know, individuals don't win basketball games. You may win a few here or there but you don't get to where you want to go by just one guy, so we've got to do it together. We know that. We don't care who takes the shots, we don't care who gets the rebounds or assists, as long as we do it together. We just believe in each other. We trust in each other, and we've got to continue to keep building that if we want to get to where we want to get to. We've just got to keep doing it. I absolutely hate it. But I've gotten used to it over the years playing Shane, ever since he was in Houston. Last year in the Playoffs against Memphis. He does it a lot. You've just got to be disciplined on your shot, and I think shooting so many shots, you know once you kind of let loose, you know where it's going to go. Got to free myself up from him. He is a good defender. But it's something that you can't control him doing, he's going to do it whenever he plays. I've just got to be confident in myself and in my shot. He's probably the only guy that does that, so I'm used to guys contesting the shot, but putting a hand in your face is a little different. I've just got to play through it. I tried to approach it as a regular game. I think all the stuff before the game kind of made me a little nervous, the intros and all the media here, so many people here. I never seen this many people here in Oklahoma City before at a basketball game. So it's a little different. But you got used to it once the ball is tipped. It goes back to when you're a kid playing a game, just playing. All that stuff is out of the way. We've just got to be focused on Game 2 and be ready to play. None of that stuff is going to change. All we're worried about is basketball. Well, it took us some time. I think we're both willing passers, but we do know when we have to be aggressive. Russ is great at knowing when we're down, he has to be aggressive. When we're down, I have to be aggressive. But when we have a good flow in the game, that's when everybody is touching the ball, we're moving it, we're finding a good shot, finding a great shot. But it's kind of weird, but I think it just kind of clicks for you when you know you have to shoot the ball and when you have to pass it. We've got to continue to watch film and see if we can get better in that area, and hopefully we do. |
| Oh, man, that was the game. We can't start off down 18 to 2. Thinking about it, though, I think we got some good looks. We missed a few chippies, lay ins, but we can't get down that much, especially at home. We've got to correct it. We've got to just stay positive, man. That's the whole deal. We've got to come ready Game 3. Defend. We weren't taking the ball out every time down the court. We weren't getting stops, getting down in transition, playing our game. It's tough to do that when you start off a little slow, you fall back and try to get the game at the end. It's tough to play with five, play with four in the third. It's tough, but I've got to stay aggressive. I tried to stay aggressive. I tried to keep my team in it. They believed in me, and we had a chance. We had a chance, man. It's tough. It's tough to lose that one. But like I said, I've got to stay positive. We've got to stay positive and watch film and get better. Well, we were supposed to run a little pin down play, but Fish made a great pass. I was open, and I missed the shot. You know, I think I shot a good shot. That's a shot I shoot all the time. I just missed. I was just worrying about the shot. I really couldn't tell you. I've got to watch the film, I guess. Yeah, it was just me. It was just me. I've got to make shots for my team. But I think on the defensive end, we all have to be better, and we can't really worry about the offensive end. We missed shots, but we can't let it dictate our defense. But I've got to stay positive, keep working, and we're looking forward to a Game 3. I missed the shot, man. Was that a question? We've just got to help each other out. We've got to close the paint out. He's a strong guy, he's getting to the rim and he's getting the calls, and we've just got to do a better job. Yeah, they're tough. They're tough. They're two good players. You know, LeBron made a tough fall away off the backboard, Dwyane made a tough fade away. I think with two or three minutes to go, Shane Battier hit a banked three. Made a few jumpers in the fourth. But we gave ourselves a chance, so we've just got to stay positive, keep pushing. |
| I think our defense was good. They got a few offensive rebounds early on we wish we could have back. We put ourselves in a position to win. That's what it's about. Tough loss. This is not over. It's not over. We've got to be ready for next game. Not foul. I mean, I don't know, I'm just trying to play aggressive on both ends, and unfortunately I'm getting some fouls called on me, but I've got to play through it. Two games in a row, man, so I've just got to play smarter next game, and hopefully I don't get no fouls called. Just making bad passes. We've got to do a better job and correct it. It's not like they're forcing us to just turn the ball over. We had 11 tonight, but we had some tough ones. We've just got to do a better job. I know I have to do a way better job. We've just got to own up to it and get better. Yeah, he did. He was tough all night, got 12 rebounds, played well for us. We just need that from him for the rest of the series. Also Serge and Nick, and guys are playing hard. Guys are playing hard, so we've just got to continue to keep playing together and believing. We'll be all right. That's Coach's call. I had four, I think, I want to say four or five minutes to go in the third, and we had a nice little rhythm going. I had a nice rhythm going on the offensive end, and for it to just stop like that by me going out of the game because of fouls is kind of tough. It was frustrating. Of course we had a good lead and they came back and made some shots. We fouled shooters on the three point line twice. It's a tough break for us, man. You know, I hate sitting on the bench, especially with fouls. Just got to do a better job next game of staying out of foul trouble. We're missing. We've just got to be focused and disciplined and knock them down. Last game we missed seven and lost by four; missed nine, lost by six. Just got to be disciplined. The fans are good. You know, but we can't really worry about that. We've just got to stick together as a group. No. I try not to concern myself with the officiating. They're going to make their calls, and there's nothing we can do about it. We can't change it. Just got to play through it. There's going to be some calls they may miss. They're human. There's going to be some calls that they get right. Just got to play through it. Today we could have been better, of course. Russell got a wide open three on the left corner I mean, the left wing. Looked good. But we missed some shots, missed some shots. But we put ourselves in a position to win. |
| Well, we're going to keep fighting. Frustrating to lose like that. It was just frustrating. But we're going to keep fighting, man. That's how we've been since I got here. We're going to keep fighting and just take it a possession and a game at a time. We'll see. Yeah, he had it going since the beginning of the game, and when a guy has got it going, we've got to keep feeding him. He was making shots and keeping us in the game, and we just tried to play off of him. He had a really, really good game. Unfortunately, like he said, it doesn't matter if we didn't get the win. We've just got to keep pushing and keep fighting. We did some good things. Well, we shot 49 percent from the field. We were 3 for 16 from the three. But we got confidence in everybody to make shots, and we're going to keep passing them the ball. We had 98 points, we didn't have 100. It was two points away from 100. We've just got to keep playing, keep passing the ball, and hopefully make some shots. I wasn't worried about that. I was just trying to rally our guys together and try to get a win. Unfortunately we lost. Yeah, they are. They're sitting guys in my lap. When I catch the ball, sometimes they're doubling. But I've just got to keep being aggressive. My teammates are going to keep looking for me. I find a way to score, I find a way to get the ball, and we'll be all right. We've got to keep believing, and that's what I'm going to keep doing. That's the message I'm going to feed to the guys. Me and Russell are going to tell them to keep believing, and next game is a must win. |
| It hurts. It hurts, man. We're all brothers on this team, and it just hurts to go out like this. We made it to The Finals, which was cool for us, but we didn't want to just make it there. Unfortunately we lost, so it's tough. It's tough, man. That's the only way I can explain it. But as a whole, I'm proud of the guys on how we fought all season. During the lockout we came together as a group and worked hard, and we will continue to work hard. I wouldn't want to play with anybody else. I wouldn't want to play for any other city. I'm just blessed to be a part of this organization, and hopefully we can get back. Well, whether we would have won or lost I was going to come back this summer, everybody was going to come back this summer and work extremely hard, win or lose. Tonight those guys were hot, Mike Miller's seven threes, they got hot at the right time. They made ten last game and 16 this game. They got hot. You've got to tip your hat to them. They came out and played a hell of a series, won four games in a row to take the championship. They played well. But we've just got to continue to keep working, keep working, and like I said, hopefully next year we come back stronger Their defense is really good. Those guys are really good over there. I didn't want to admit it during the series, but now that it's over, those guys are really good. Last team standing, so you've got to tip your hat. It was unfortunate for us, man, we wanted it so bad. But we've all got to keep our heads high. I'm a positive guy, so I am going to continue to keep my head high. Well, we're not frontrunners. We're not guys that are just happy when things are going well. It's the toughest time we've ever been through, and we want to do the same thing we would do if we won the game. We hug each other, tell each other how much we love playing alongside each other, and thank them for what they've done all season, every guy down the line, coaches, everybody that worked with us every single day, and we worked together and worked hard every single day. We just thanked each other for this season. But we all know this hurts. We've got to continue to keep working. He played extremely well, extremely well. Like I say, I'm not one for giving guy credit during the season, but it's over with, and that guy is an unbelievable player and an unbelievable person. I enjoyed working out with him this summer. It was fun playing against him in The Finals, but you could just tell he was very focused from the beginning of the season. You know, it was a storybook season for him, MVP, I'm assuming he got Finals MVP. Hopefully we can get a gold medal together this summer. That guy played phenomenal basketball all season, and congrats to them. I'm going to find the positives and the negatives. It was tough losing The Finals. We got to The Finals, had a tough road to get here. But we've just got to move past it, I guess, man. It's going to hurt for a little bit. We've got to move past it. I didn't think I would get that emotional. It was a tough, tough game, tough series. My mom and my dad have been there from the beginning. So like I said, win or lose, they're going to always be there for me. You know, I'm not going to just hug them because we won a game. We lost the series, lost The Finals, I'm still going to thank them for all their support they've showed me. They hurt like I hurt. That's what you want your parents to go through. It's tough for me, and I could tell in my mom's face and my dad's face, it was tough for them just to see us lose. I'm going to continue to be me. I'm going to continue to work hard every single day, and like Russell said, hopefully we get back, but we're just going to take it a day at a time. |