

POSTGAME QUOTES

D A L L A S S T A R S C O M M U N I C A T I O N S

Sunday, May 5, 2024
2024 Western Conference First Round – Game 7
Dallas Stars 2, Vegas Golden Knights 1
[Game Summary](#) | [Event Summary](#)
Dallas wins series 4-3

DALLAS STARS

Stars Head Coach Pete DeBoer

On winning the series against Vegas

"It's obviously emotional. So many emotions going back to last year and losing, the mixed emotions. There are so many great people over there that I worked with. I have great affection for them, and we were happy for them to win, but we really wanted to win this series. We wanted our turn. We did all the right things all year to get the first seed and then you draw a team like Vegas which I honestly think has a deeper team than last year. To plow through the adversity of being down 2-0 – there is a lot there to unpack."

On playing a rested Colorado team in the next round

"I'm honestly not even thinking about it. A lot of times, in those situations, it can be an advantage rolling right into the beginning of another series. We'll hope that is the case. It's another big test, a huge test. There are some similarities to Vegas, and the one thing about them is we're very familiar with them. It's not like we need a lot of work on pre-scout. We're very familiar with each other. We'll enjoy this one in the short term and then start thinking about that."

On the Stars' defense in Game 7

"I really loved our team defense tonight. I really thought we buckled down. I liked our game the entire series, even when we were down the first two. In Game 6, they probably tilted the ice the most that they had in the series over a game. They did it in moments and periods of some of the other games, but we were pretty solid tonight. We were outstanding – our details defensively were outstanding."

Stars Captain Jamie Benn

On winning against Vegas

"It feels great. These are the best games to be a part of. The Game 7s are what you dream about when you're young and playing the backyard. What an atmosphere to play in front of our fans and get a big win."

On third-period defense

"We take a lot of pride in playing good defense. We know we can score goals. You've got to play 200-foot hockey and take care of your own end first. Our goalie was our best player in the third period. The guys did great at locking it down and doing what it takes to win a hockey game."

Stars Forward Radek Faksa

On his game-winning goal

"We were actually watching video right before warmups on their two-man cycle they plays. That style of defense is hard to beat, so I tried to cut the middle and [Craig Smith] passed the puck back to me, and I received it on my skate. I just put it on the net, you never know, and luckily, I got a lucky bounce. It was a big relief. A huge goal for us and a game-winner. I was so happy I could help."

On returning to the lineup after injury

"It's huge. It's tough to watch the games from up there. To be honest, you are more nervous watching the games from the seats than when you are on the bench playing. I had a tough time watching the game, so I was just happy to be back. It means a lot to me, and I am happy we won the series because Vegas has a hell of a team. They have so many good guys, and it was a big war every game. Every game was so close, and a huge credit to them, but we are happy. It was a big redemption from last year, and I am very happy we could move to the next round."

Stars Forward Wyatt Johnston

On being a key player this series

"Every guy in the room had a huge part in that. For me, it's coming in and just trying to be a part in that and do whatever I can to help the team win. Whatever that is, if it's a penalty kill, if it's blocking the shot, if it's just getting the puck out. Just trying to do my part in helping the team win. That's the focus for me. It takes everyone to win a series."

On the Stars' fourth line

"They've been awesome. They scored some huge goals, some game-winning goals tonight and in Game 4, too. They're just coming up with some huge plays – not only the scoring – and generating that momentum. Playing in a defensive zone setting, and setting the next line up in a positive way. They've been huge, no matter who's been in that spot and in that line. They've been amazing. Coming up with some huge plays, obviously getting the game winning goal in the third. You can't start off the third any better."

Stars Goaltender Jake Oettinger

On the mental toughness of this series

"It had a lot of ups and downs. I had some dark moments in the regular season. I felt like I didn't play my best game in Game 1 of the series. After that, I felt really good about my game. With how good of a team we are, if I do my job, we're going to be a tough team to beat. I'm trying to be a small part of this team and do my job. There are still some things I can clean up. I'm excited to have played well and help this team move on."

On DeBoer being undefeated in career Game 7s as a head coach

"He obviously has a message that works for many different groups of guys. For us, we felt like we were the better team the whole series. If we played our best game, we would be happy with the outcome. Just the focus on the defensive side of the game is what I was impressed with from the message. If we take care of our own end, those 50-50 plays, if we go to the defensive side like he was talking about, we were going to score. We have a lot of great guys that can put the puck in the net. That's what I liked about his message. This time of year, that is the type of hockey you need to play to win. We did that the whole series. They're a great team, and it's not easy to knock a team like that out. That's why it was so tight. It's a cool stat, and I'm happy for Pete. We didn't want to be the ones that ruined that streak."

VEGAS GOLDEN KNIGHTS

Golden Knights Head Coach Bruce Cassidy

On Vegas' performance in the series

"We started with two road wins. Coaches always want to get to another level, but it was good enough to win two hockey games. If you look at the whole series, the margins were slim. Game 3, we didn't like our game and we acknowledged that, and after that we lost some games. There was a game up in our building in Game 4 – they scored a goal from the goal line off our goalies head. That is probably the only goal in his life he is going to score like that, so there is a bit of a puck luck, and then one went off of [Ty] Dellandrea's shoulder. Today, the winning goal goes off our defenseman's shin pad, top shelf. We got to our game at times, and so did they. I don't think either team can sit there and say they dominated the series or were truly at their best the whole time. Certainly Game 6 was our best game. I would hope that would bleed into today, and it didn't enough. Second period we got going. It wasn't enough, but here we are in Game 7 with a one-goal differential in the third period. I am not going to sit here and criticize our guys all night. It was a tough team we were playing against, and there was not a lot of room out there. I don't think you saw either team truly hit their max, but some of that credit has to go to the opposition."

On trying to defend their Stanley Cup Championship this season

"There are some obvious difficulties and obviously some positives. We came out of the gate really well. Our full team was together, and then the adversity kicked in. We had nine guys have surgery this year. Nine guys. Your roster is only 23, so nine players. Two of them internal surgeries. You never know how those are going to play out. Some other ones were a little more defined, but I give our guys a lot of credit. They played through a lot of injury and trying to find chemistry with guys in and out. It took its toll, eventually. Some of those surgeries are obviously correcting a problem, but it takes a while to get back up to speed. That would be the unfortunate part. They came and did get healthy enough for the playoffs. That was the positive, and now you are trying to get a team up to speed in a hurry. I didn't do a good enough job of that, but that is a lot of surgeries in one year for guys to overcome, and it defines your game. If we could've built it a little better in March and April maybe it is a little smoother in the playoff round, but that is the hand you are dealt. We needed to be one goal better. At the end of the day, that's it. We needed to be one goal better, and we weren't tonight. A couple of our players will probably not sleep tonight, because if you look at what transpired in the game, we hit a post and they come down and score 10 seconds later. We miss an open net at the end of the second, and they score the first shift of the third. They played well, but it's an unfortunate bounce off our guy, but that is a little bit of hockey sometimes when two close teams play. Full credit to Dallas. I wish them all the best going forward. It was a hard series, and I wish we could've got that break, but it didn't happen. They may be

saying that about us last year, so at the end of the day here we are.”

Golden Knights Captain Mark Stone

On losing the series

“Going into this series as an eight seed playing against the top team in the conference, you’re expecting it to be a long series. Once you get it up 2-0, if you regret one thing, you would have liked to get a game at home. At the end of the day, we gave ourselves a chance in Game 7 to win the series against a very good hockey team, and we didn’t get it done. We had a team that had a chance to go on a long run. We probably would have been better off putting ourselves in a better position in the regular season. It’s never easy coming in as an eight seed and trying to beat all the top teams at the start. If you look at last year, we had that top seed and were able to win in five or six and win series quick. I’m proud of the team. We’ve battled a ton of adversities and injuries, unfortunately. We had a hard time staying healthy. Still found a way to get into the playoffs, and we did give ourselves a chance to win the series with a one-goal loss in Game 7 against the top team in the conference. It’s disappointing. That’s really the only way to say it. It’s disappointing.

On the Golden Knights’ performance throughout the series

“I thought in Game 6 we were really good. It’s tough. There are four or five guys coming in and trying to get chemistry, it’s a little tougher. There’s a lot of us that would have liked to produce a bit more. It was a tight series. We could have won all seven of these games, and we could have lost all seven of these games. It’s just the way the series was. The goalie was out in all the games to try and tie it for all teams. I’m sure from a fan’s point of view it was a great series. It was great hockey and unfortunately, we didn’t come up on the right side of it. I’m proud of the group. A lot of the guys helped us get here. I’m disappointed though. It’s one of those teams you feel like you could have gone on a pretty big run.”

Golden Knights Defenseman Alex Pietrangelo

On tonight’s Game 7 loss and where Vegas could’ve done better to win the series

“Up 2-0, it would’ve been nice to find a way to win one of those three games. They made some adjustments that I don’t think we adjusted well enough right away. That’s on us as players to find a way when we’re up 2-0 to get the job done. We made mistakes along the way, but credit to them. They had a good season, too. They have good players, but I don’t think anyone in this room thought we weren’t going to have an opportunity to win. Even tonight, we played a pretty good game. It’s a 2-1 game, and a lucky bounce there on the last goal.”

On his reflection on this team and this season with players likely moving on from Vegas

“We have a lot of good people in this room, and the longer you play, the more you appreciate the people. You obviously like playing the game, but it’s the people that make it fun to come to work every day. It’s an unfortunate part of the business, but there are a lot of good people in here and we’d like to keep everybody together.”