

The Struggles Continue
By Jesse Almeida 12/30/21

After the Celtics horrendous season in 2021, I would have thought that there was no way for the Celtics to have as bad of a season as last year. Well, I was wrong. If you were to ask me, this is arguably worse than last year. The reasoning for that is because the Celtics went out in the offseason, made some upgraded moves for the bench, and they are still in the same position as last year.

The Boston Celtics are currently 16-19 at 11th place in the Eastern Conference. If the season was to end today, the Celtics would not be in the playoffs. Myself and Mike have given this team chance after chance. For Christmas, I was given two games of my choosing to go to, whether that was two Bruins games, two Celtics games, or one of each. Honestly, I want to do one of each because we have had requests to attend a Celtics game to record, but it is so hard for us to do that because of their performance. Why are the Celtics so horrible when on paper they are one of the more talented teams in the NBA?

People always want to give this team the benefit of the doubt by saying that injuries have played a role, the Health and Safety Protocol has played a role. While yes that is a true statement for the most part, however every team is going through the same thing as well.

The Los Angeles Clippers are missing Paul George and Kawhi Leonard (two of the top players in the league) and you could not beat them both times with Tatum and Brown or just Jaylen Brown.

The Celtics could not beat a weak Timberwolves team without Anthony Edwards (rising star), Karl Anthony Towns (top 5 center in the NBA) and no D'Angelo Russell (All star type player). The Celtics had Jaylen Brown, Al Horford, and Robert Williams. Yes you were missing Jayson Tatum, Marcus Smart, Dennis Schroder, and Josh Richardson, however the Timberwolves had no decent talent on the floor that night. At least you had Brown, Horford, and Robert Williams, you could even say Pritchard as well. The best player on paper for Minnesota that night was Malik Beasley who is a role player at best and you lost. You got beat by a team where the majority of the players

who played are on 10 day hardship contracts (a new rule implemented by the NBA to accommodate the Health and Safety Protocol). That is just flat out sad.

The Celtics lost to Phoenix when the Suns did not have Devin Booker (superstar player) or Deandre Ayton (one of the best bigs in the league as well), and they were at full strength minus Jaylen Brown. The Suns had Chris Paul and Jae Crowder as their main guys that game. Blaming the struggles on injuries and the Health and Safety Protocols is irrelevant because every team dealing with that right now and the Celtics could not take advantage of some of the match ups they have had.

The question that fans need to be asking is when are we going to hold the players accountable? The reasoning for that is because of how the Celtics function on the court. If you have been following basketball over the years, you have noticed that there are a lot more 3 point shots being attempted. Thanks to Stephen Curry and his ridiculous shooting ability, the 3 point shot has become more important than it has ever been in the NBA. The problem with the Celtics is that they do not know how to play this style of game. This style of game is played by ball movement, moving around without the ball and drawing defenders in to open up a shot. The players on the Celtics do not do this 80 percent of the time. As mentioned multiple times, they dribble the ball too much trying to break down the defender and pull up for three. Little to no movement is made whether it is by passing the ball or to dribble to the basket to create a shot. Ball movement is key in basketball. The Celtics are ranked 23rd in assists in the NBA. If the Celtics were scoring then that would be one thing, however they are ranked 17th in points per game. What makes this worse is that the Celtics keep on shooting threes even if they are not shooting the ball very well. Wednesday night against the Clippers the Celtics went 4/41 from the 3 point line. That is 10 percent. Why would you keep on shooting 3's when you are not making them. Drive to the basket and create shots rather than forcing shots. The Celtics are ranked 23rd in field goal percentage, and 24th in 3 point percentage. They are ranked so low because of the fact that there is little to zero ball movement on the court and when you watch Celtics games on tv or in person it is very noticeable.

For the next reason you can blame the coach and the players for this one, and that is the Celtics do not close out games. The Celtics have blown games over and over

again. Most recently against the 76ers on 12/20, On Christmas Day against Milwaukee and Minnesota on 12/27. The Celtics blew leads also against the Knicks on 12/18 and the Cavs on 12/22 but still got the win in those games. The Celtics seem to lose focus at some point in the second half of games, and that is on the players and the coaches. Everyone needs to be focused for all of the 48 minutes played in a basketball game. Opponents can sense this kind of activity and when they do, they attack and catch teams off guard. The Celtics get too comfortable in games. That is why they play the game. You cannot just go in and think that it is going to be easy and smooth sailing.

The Celtics have a long way to go still, however things need to change fast. This team has the talent in order to turn things around. The Celtics need to get it together and figure it out themselves. They are beating themselves right now and they are much better than what they have shown so far.

Sources:

[Teams Traditional | Stats | NBA.com](#)

[Boston Celtics Basketball - Celtics News, Scores, Stats, Rumors & More - ESPN](#)