# Cinderella Man: A Story of Hope an Resiliency in the NBA Finals

*Questions on the bottom*

When you turn on the NBA Finals tonight at 9pm Eastern it is very obvious one guy doesn't belong on the court.



Photo Credit: USA Today

Matthew Dellevedova is listed at 6'4, but from the eye test he is probably closer to 6 feet tall. He is awkward when he runs. His shot looks all sorts of broke. And on defense he looks as if he is one second away from getting his ankles and knees broke simultaneously.

Flat out, he doesn't belong on an NBA court, and yet, the Cavs are 3-0 when he starts in the playoffs. He helped the Cavs do the somewhat impossible, beat the Warriors at Oracle arena.



Photo Credit: Fox Sports

Matthew Dellevedova should give everyone in the world hope. The reason he has survived up to this point is heart and resiliency.

He is like a cockroach. Every time you think you squash him, he comes back for more. In a league where guys are notorious for playing on cruise control until the fourth quarter, Dellevedova has to give every ounce of energy and effort, every single second he is on the court, just to survive and not be embarrassed.

The coolest part of his story is that he epitomizes the bright lights only reveal your work in the dark.

**I can only imagine how many practices where his teammates snickered at all the extra training they saw him doing because his chances of getting serious minutes were next to zero while backing up an NBA all-star.**

**I can only imagine how many times his teammates wanted, or flat out told him to chill out with all that extra aggressive, over zealous defense, because you are never earning a spot on this team.**
**I can only imagine how many times he wanted to cry himself to sleep frustrated and wondering if he should just give up on his dream.**


Photo Credit: Sportige.com

On Sunday night, on the biggest stage, we got to see all of his training pay off as he played extended minutes shutting down the league MVP (0-8 when he guarded him) all the way through a grueling game and overtime. Then with only seconds left in overtime he stepped up to the line and knocked down two clutch free throws to put the Cavs up by 1.

Photo Credit: NBA.com

*Thankfully he didn't give up and he didn't give in in the dark.*

*Thankfully he understands that the bright lights only reveal your work in the dark.*
*Thankfully young kids and adults alike can look at him and realize that just because you*
*haven't gotten your opportunity yet, it doesn't mean you should give up or that it won't come.*

*In Game 2 he came out and had 20 points, 5 rebounds, 4 assists, and two game changing hustle plays diving on the floor and sacrificing his body for the team. After playing 39 minutes in Game 2 he was taken to the hospital for treatment from severe cramping.

In this series Dellavedova represents hustle, grind, and perseverance through adversity in a manner usually reserved for Hollywood films. His time in the desert prepared him for this moment.

However, the hard truth for most of us is that most of us want to shine like Dellavedova, but we don't want to train and prepare like he has for this moment. We don't want to work in the dark. We don't want to be overlooked. We don't want to hustle and grind when everyone thinks we are crazy. We aren't willing to go through our desert.

So, my question for you is simple.

*How would you use your 86,400 seconds today, if you knew you were going to get the*
*opportunity of your dreams?*

"Those destined for greatness must first walk alone in the desert." -Winston Churchill

Once the opportunity comes it's too late. If you haven't been training in the dark you will be exposed under the lights.

**Questions**

1.) In four sentences, summarize the article.

2.) What does the quote "Those destined for greatness must first walk alone in the desert" mean to you?

3.) How would you use your 86,400 seconds today, if you knew you were going to get the opportunity of your dreams? (The opportunity could be in a sport, a job, etc.)

4.) Why don't you spend the 86,400 seconds you get in a day doing what you describe in question 3?