

# NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Luka Doncic

Media Day



**Q. Luka, when Kristaps was traded to you guys a few years ago, there were a lot of expectations for the two of you to be successful. Why in your mind did it not work out the way everyone hoped?**

LUKA DONCIC: I don't really know. I don't know why it didn't work out. We were still both young. We tried to make it work, but it just didn't work. So moved on.

**Q. You've talked a lot about what Kyrie has meant to you as a teammate. Did his leadership skills surpass your expectations?**

LUKA DONCIC: I mean, his leadership is amazing. The way he connects us. I think me and Kyrie are the leaders of this team, but he's the one that's been in the Finals. He's the one that won in the Finals. He's the one that is really leading it. He's keeping us all together and motivated.

**Q. One of your favorite players growing up LeBron James just called Kyrie Irving the most gifted player the NBA has ever seen. As your occupation, as your passion, your life goal, what is it like seeing the stuff he can break out in practice, in game situations? Do you guys kind of dip in each other's bags by being around one another?**

LUKA DONCIC: Some things he's done, I mean, especially in practice, it's insane. The things he even tries in the game, it's insane. I never seen nobody make those shots. I don't see nobody try those shots.

Obviously we know the handles. Just some shots are crazy. It's amazing just to experience this live.

**Q. I know you're locked in on the Finals right now. I respect that. By the time this series ends, you'll have played 95 games. Playing for Slovenia means a lot to you. Have you decided if you will play in the qualifiers?**

LUKA DONCIC: Yeah, I think we'll see how my knee is. But if it's a good, I'm going to go play, yeah.

More games. You forgot, what was it, World Cup before the season (smiling).

**Q. I'm going to ask the same question you probably got a thousand times: First NBA Finals. How does it feel?**

LUKA DONCIC: Amazing. First time here. Hopefully it's not the last game. But never take it for granted. You never know if you are going to come back, so just enjoy the experience.

**Q. You've played in front of a lot of hostile crowds. How do you expect the reception to be here? How does this crowd here compare with other crowds you've faced?**

LUKA DONCIC: I think it's very loud crowd. Everybody knows that. They been known for that.

It's hard to play in this place. The crowd is amazing for their team. All I got to say is we got to stay together. It's us against them. We got to stay together.

But it's going to be really hard to play in this crowd.

**Q. Entering that trade deadline, P.J. Washington and Daniel Gafford were on lottery teams, heading for another short end to their season. Now they're key contributors to your season. What does that say about the opportunity, given the right role on the right team?**

LUKA DONCIC: Yeah, it speaks a lot. You seen more examples, too. But I think they fit perfectly with us. The trade made us a so much better team, especially on the defensive end. So, they're in the perfect roles that we need.

**Q. You mentioned playing in hostile environments. You played a lot of basketball games. Is there one game or place in particular in your whole career, NBA, international, that was the most rowdy environment that you can remember? What was the craziest?**



LUKA DONCIC: Yeah, it was I remember it, it was quarterfinals of EuroLeague against Panathinaikos in Panathinaikos. The crowd went crazy. They started winning 20-0. Imagine that (smiling).

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