

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

Boston Celtics

Payton Pritchard

Media Day



Q. Reflect on the journey of getting here. This is your second time in the Finals, but what does it mean to play on the stage?

PAYTON PRITCHARD: I mean, it's crazy. This is like the biggest stage in basketball. To reach this point, have the opportunity to come out here and perform and help my team win the championship, it's an honor. Hopefully we can get it done.

Q. Some players think they were always going to be here. If I ask you, did you always think you would be here on this stage?

PAYTON PRITCHARD: I would have the belief in myself that I could do it. I always dreamed of being in the NBA. I knew I worked really hard to make it. So I guess in a way, yeah, I believed in it. It's the only reason I would work every day like I did, I had the belief in that dream, so yeah.

Q. Is there any bad blood left between the locker room and Kyrie?

PAYTON PRITCHARD: I wasn't here when Kyrie was here but there's no bad blood. I think a lot of the guys that played with him have admired the way he plays the game. I definitely admire it, too. I take a lot of things. The way he plays basketball is very beautiful. He's an unbelievable player.

There is no bad blood from us at all.

Q. What do you make of the reception he gets when he steps back on to the parquet?

PAYTON PRITCHARD: I think it's the nature of Boston and the NBA. When a player leaves like that, fans and people can be frustrated. I think at this point we should just realize how good of a player he is and just give him his flowers for that aspect of it.

Q. How significant is the experience of having been in

a Finals before when you have a different role, important role? What can you take from that experience?

PAYTON PRITCHARD: It just helps that you've been through it. I think the difference this year, too, is we got a little bit more rest going into this series than the last time we were in the Finals.

Just kind of the circus with the NBA Finals, the media, everything that comes with it. So just going through it realizing what the routine is going to be like. That helps.

Just in the basketball game, I don't think it's any different necessarily than the playoff series we played before. Same thing, we getting up and down. Definitely helps, though.

Q. In a week's time, could you go over the possibly combinations of coverages you could have for Luka and Kyrie?

PAYTON PRITCHARD: I think we have to realize they're unbelievable players, and we're going to try to make things very tough for them. You're never going to completely stop them. We're going to do our best.

Q. Other than playing in the Finals, what is your favorite Finals memory watching as a kid?

PAYTON PRITCHARD: That's easy. The reason I fell in love with basketball in the first place is I watched Dwyane Wade win his first NBA Finals versus the Mavericks. I was really young at the time, I might have been seven, something like that. I can vividly remember watching them come back and how incredible he was that series.

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