

# NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Saturday, June 8, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Daniel Gafford

Practice Day



## Q. What did you see on the film from Game 1?

DANIEL GAFFORD: For sure, I've seen a lot of things that we can adjust on and be better at. We have to push guys in, play inside the perimeter. That was pretty much just the main thing. Better transition defense and taking care of the ball.

## Q. You've been good all playoffs long in Game 2? How confident are you?

DANIEL GAFFORD: I have a lot of confidence in this team. We have always found ways to take that next step in the right direction, because we like having adversity and always came together instead of tearing apart. That's the main thing we focused on going into Game 2.

## Q. Why is this team so good specifically in Game 2?

DANIEL GAFFORD: We always get hit in the mouth in the first game. Leaves a bad taste in our mouths. We have to come out the next game to rinse that out.

## Q. What is the personality of this team that allows you to do that?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Just the energy around it. We know that there are things that we can be better at from the first game.

## Q. How much are you and Dereck meeting and working together to figure out how to improve things in the frontcourt?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Pretty much every day, just like after media. We are going to be watching film after this. It's always easy to sit down and go through the things that we can obviously do better and be better at. When it comes to the coaches, we always kind of like joke around here, like, oh, do it again. But this is what it takes to be able to survive at this stage. This is the last series of the year for us. Survival of the fittest.

## Q. Anything you saw as a rookie, you want to use as a veteran mentorship opportunity to help him improve on tomorrow?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Not necessarily. I feel like he took the right approach to everything he did. He was in foul trouble, but he stayed poised. A lot of guys, they will get in their own head, get aggravated, frustrated. He stayed with it, and that's something that shows maturity on his side just being a young guy.

## Q. How much can you build on how well you played to start the second half?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Just shows the better of the two sides. In the first half, we didn't really play good. We came out in the second half with our heads on straight. It just shows that we can take that step in the right direction, just put us in position to withstand for 48 minutes. We don't want to come out and just let anybody punch us in the face. We have to find ways to react the right way.

## Q. Porzingis is a unique player. What has to change for you to neutralize him in Game 2?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Be as physical as we were the first game. And just pray he doesn't make all his mid-range.

## Q. The Celtics took away the lob. Is that what you expected from them and how do you adjust to it?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Really just have the confidence in our offense, making sure that we have poise and really just not getting sped up when it comes to the pace offensively. They are a scrappy team defensively. We have to find ways to get around that.

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