

# NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Sunday, June 16, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Luka Doncic

Practice Day



**Q. Luka, can we talk a little about football? I just saw that you were watching the Euro. You've played for Real Madrid. Sometimes, and I'm talking about the football thing, when Real Madrid faces another team, we used to say that it's way harder because Real Madrid has a huge tradition. You guys are facing Boston Celtics that is a 17-time champion. I want to know if there is any comparison, when you guys face a team that has this tradition as the Boston Celtics, to when somebody faces Real Madrid?**

LUKA DONCIC: I would say Real Madrid is in a league of their own. They are at the top of the Euro. But obviously Boston has been -- I think Boston, Lakers, they are obviously the two major NBA teams in the league and they have been since day one. So it's obviously a little bit of comparison.

**Q. All year you've been facing back-to-the-wall games, going back to FIBA, Canada, as recently as OKC. I know it's the Finals so it is different. Could you reflect how it is different going into tomorrow night?**

LUKA DONCIC: I mean, it's obviously different because it's the Finals. Every team plays the whole season to be here. We are the one to be here in Boston, obviously. So it's a little bit different. But you've got to play basketball. You've got to give everything you have.

**Q. You've said that you have to believe until the end when you're down in a series. What's that discussion like in the locker room? Is it something you're trying to get your teammates to grab onto, or what's that dynamic like?**

LUKA DONCIC: Yeah, we talk about it. I think the most important thing is to show that we believe. I think we showed in Game 4. If not, if we wouldn't believe, we probably wouldn't have won that game.

So I think obviously the talk is easy to talk about it, but then showing it is another thing. I think we showed it.

**Q. What was different for you in Game 4? Because it seemed like mentally you were more focused and different. There were no interactions with the ref. As you watch Game 3, what did you feel like changed for Game 4?**

LUKA DONCIC: The change is we needed to win the game. I think we didn't play our best the first three games. So we had to change something and play better in Game 4.

**Q. How is your chest? How does it impact you? Also you're dealing with leg injuries. How are those and which one is tougher to manage between the chest and the leg stuff?**

LUKA DONCIC: At this point in the season, a lot of things going on. If I'm playing, I'm fine. No worries.

**Q. You seemed to be on a string defensively in Game 4. Who have been the biggest communicators on the defensive end when things get tight?**

LUKA DONCIC: I think everyone. Everyone. In the preseason, that was our key discussion, how to talk on defense. When we put it together and we play good defense, everybody is talking. Communication is a big part of our success on defense.

**Q. On the subject of Father's Day, this being your first as a father, any special feelings when you got up this morning or before you left?**

LUKA DONCIC: Not really. Just happy being a father. It's been the best thing in my life. So that's it. Just being happy.

**Q. Kind of a cool photo of Kyrie's dad and your dad after the game the other night. What did you think about that?**

LUKA DONCIC: It was a very special moment. I know they are both -- I think they are very proud of their sons. So they are happy that we're happy on the court together.

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