

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Sunday, June 16, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Dereck Lively II

Practice Day



Q. (Question about finding themselves and getting on the same page in Game 4.)

DERECK LIVELY II: We just take it as -- being together, in film and just understanding the flow of the game. But even before the game, Coach Kidd said, I hope you packed your bags because we are going to Boston.

Just having that mentality of doing whatever it takes. We've definitely been changing our ID from playing free to playing desperate. Doing whatever we can to get a bucket or get a stop. That energy, that focus is going to propel us into transition buckets, transition steals and trying to get into the game that we play.

Q. Many people say Luka and Kyrie need help from every other player on the team. How do you feel about that and how can you help them?

DERECK LIVELY II: We definitely need to help them. They have a lot of weight on their shoulders. They're controlling the ball the majority of the time. They have the majority of the points. No matter if it's the offensive or defense side, we're backing them up.

They can have their foot on the gas as much as possible knowing that if they have to take their foot off the gas a little bit, we're going to pick it back up. There are going to be times when they get tired or they're not going to bring the ball up the floor. That's where we are their backup as role players, as people on the bench doing what we need to do to take a little weight off their back.

Q. What was the difference in defense?

DERECK LIVELY II: We were playing like how we play. We were running and talking and playing free. We were just trusting one another. We were getting back into the mentality of trusting the pass, trusting the next pass and, on the defensive side, just trusting the person behind you, trusting the person who is talking.

Q. Can it be better?

DERECK LIVELY II: Definitely can. We're not going to say that Game 4 was our best game. Game 4 was a good game, but we're not hanging our hats on it. We adjusted, and now it's just taking what we did in Game 4 and adding a little bit more aggression into Game 5.

Q. You know the history of being down 0-3. How much do you feel like this is a new series? When you think about if you're able to get back to Dallas, you could tie it up on your home court?

DERECK LIVELY II: I wouldn't say it's a new series. Everyone just counted us out after the first three.

We are not going to count ourselves out. We are going to double down and put ten toes down and make sure that we are giving it our all on the court. Put our heart and soul on the floor and do whatever it takes to win.

Q. Will having experienced the environment in Games 1 and 2 help in Game 5?

DERECK LIVELY II: I mean, it's going to be loud and nasty. You do your best not to focus on the crowd. There's going to be a lot of people talking to you. Social media, walking down the street, you're in the hotel room, you're in the hotel, you're going to hear people talking to you, you're going to hear people talking to you coming to the arena. It's part of the game. Part of the job. You have to deal with adversity and people always telling you you can't, and you've got to do it.

Q. What surprises you most about this whole Finals experience?

DERECK LIVELY II: That's a hard question. Just being able to be here and learn with my family. I wouldn't have expected myself to be in this spot whenever I looked at the draft a year ago. It's June 15, and the draft is a week away. Last year, a week away from the draft, my heart was pumping because I didn't know what was going to happen. And now I'm playing in the NBA Finals. So now it's just trying to just learn as much as I can, enjoy the moment and then just bring the energy and just make it



lively in Boston.

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