

Emirates NBA Cup

Friday, December 12, 2025

Orlando Magic

Desmond Bane

Semifinal Practice Day



Q. Desmond, what defines this team?

DESMOND BANE: Defense. I think defense and togetherness. Those are our two superpowers.

Q. You walked by me when I was talking to Anthony [Black], told me to ask what a weasel is. Can you explain the background behind the whole weasel story? He didn't want to talk about it.

DESMOND BANE: He didn't want to talk about it?

Q. He didn't want to. Tyus Jones didn't want to talk about it.

DESMOND BANE: Oh, yeah, then I guess we're not going to talk about it.

Q. You're on the podium; you have to talk about.

DESMOND BANE: If they ain't answering it, I ain't answering it. Just know they're weasels, for sure.

Q. What does that mean? Is that like a junkyard dog type of -- what is that?

DESMOND BANE: I don't know, you have to ask them.

Q. I did.

DESMOND BANE: Ask them again.

Q. Well, since you punted on that one, now you have to answer this question. What does the money that's on the table mean to you and to your teammates, and is there something outside of the prize money that you like about the Cup?

DESMOND BANE: Yeah. I think that this is my first year where we've really been in the hunt for the Cup. I think it's something great to compete for in the middle of the season. Chance to have meaningful games. Games that mean something.

You know, all the games mean something. But like you said, this is a chance to win money, a chance to get to Vegas. I think that it was a great idea by the NBA. Super excited to be here and be a part of it. Hopefully bring it home.

Q. I'm not sure we've had the chance to ask you about that incident where you threw the ball and hit OG Anunoby. What was happening on that play, and was it intended to ramp up your teammates?

DESMOND BANE: Nah, it wasn't intended to ramp up the team at all. I thought it was a good basketball play in the moment. You know, when I go and watch the slow-mo on this, it still wasn't a bad one. I just think I threw it a little too hard.

Yeah, I'm chasing down a ball and I throw it off of them. My homeboy, he was joking with me. He said the Cincinnati Reds are going to be giving me a call. If y'all watching this, invite me to training camp or spring training this summer. Come check it out.

Yeah, there was no foul play intended.

Q. How physical is your new team, the Magic, in terms of the physicality it brings on defense and the physicality it brings attacking the basket?

DESMOND BANE: 1 through 15. That's our goal. To be the most physical team on both ends of the floor every single night. When we win, we usually do that.

Q. This is the fourth time you guys will have faced off pretty early in the season. This one has elimination stakes. Is there any sense that there's a rivalry brewing with these two teams?

DESMOND BANE: I think that it's two good basketball teams. Two teams that are trying to do something big in the Eastern Conference. I think that any time you have a team that's standing in the way of what you're trying to do, it should be a little something extra on the line.

Q. Over the last month, you guys have kind of come together and found your way. How much has this

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month and these Cup games helped build the confidence to be the team you thought you guys could be at the beginning of the season?

DESMOND BANE: It's huge. We are building a ton of momentum, trending in the right direction. Unfortunately, Franz goes down. But, you know, we still find a way to win some games. It's been great.

Q. Defense is the team's calling card. You, individually, didn't get off to a great offensive scoring start with this team, but what's allowed you to find your rhythm and be acclimated with this team over time?

DESMOND BANE: I think just the confidence from my teammates, confidence from the coaching staff, just to come out and be myself, be aggressive. Kept telling me when I'm aggressive, good things usually happen for us.

So really just tried to get in that mindset and that mind frame heading into games. It's paid off.

Q. How have you approached the increased playmaking responsibilities that you've had to do this year?

DESMOND BANE: I mean, I think it's kind of similar. I think that's why so many things that you go through in this league really shape you for different moments. You know, I had times in Memphis when Ja was out for extended stretches. Sometimes Jaren would go down. So I've been in multiple different roles. Played multiple different ways.

I just kind of feel like my game is in a place where I'm comfortable doing a lot of different things on that side of the ball.

Q. For those a little less familiar with your team's defense, how would you describe your team's defense when it's on its A game?

DESMOND BANE: Simple and physical. We are not really out there trying to have no elaborate scheme or anything. It's can you guard the man in front of you, and once the shot goes up, can you get the rebound.

Q. What would you do with the winnings, with the money?

DESMOND BANE: It's a good question. Probably break off a couple people that have helped me early in the season and probably go buy a new boat. Honestly.

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