

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Wednesday, June 5, 2024

Boston Celtics

Kristaps Porzingis

Media Day



Q. How are you feeling right now mentally as you get ready for the NBA Finals?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Feeling good. It was a long road to get to this point for me. But feeling good. Looking forward to today's practice, moving around a little bit more, then being ready to go tomorrow.

Q. How badly do you want to be able to contribute to this run with this team against the Mavericks?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Of course, of course. Burns inside of me, you know, not being able to be out there. But tomorrow finally I'll get the chance and I'm excited.

Q. Are you feeling like yourself at this point? Are you feeling well enough to play and to contribute?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: It's tough to say. I haven't played. I haven't played for a while. Tomorrow will be my real, like, first real minutes in a while, you know?

I did as much as I could to prepare for this moment, but there's nothing like game minutes and game experience that I'm going to get tomorrow.

It will be tough to jump into the Finals like this. I did everything I could to prepare for it and we'll see tomorrow night.

Q. Are you apprehensive at all, the uncertainty of knowing if you're quite 100 percent ready to go?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: What does "apprehensive" mean?

Q. Cautious.

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: No, no, no, not cautious. I mean, no. I've come back from multiple injuries. I've had these first games back, of course not at this stage. At the end it's just basketball. Of course, the intensity is a little bit

higher. I have to go out there and play like it's a basketball game, an important basketball game, and that's it. I don't need to think too much or, yeah, overthink. Just go out there and hoop.

Q. Just to be clear, are you saying tomorrow you will decide based on you going hard whether you're going to play or not?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: No, I'll play tomorrow.

Q. You will play tomorrow?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: I will play tomorrow.

Q. What is your relationship now with Luka?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: No, it's good. It's always been good. Yeah, as I said, he's one of the best players in the league, in the world. It will be a tough challenge for us to try to stop him. Just following his career when he came in the league, already made a huge impact. I had the opportunity to play with him for a couple years, get to know him. Just knowing what type of person he is, what type of player he is, his mindset, he's a special player.

We have a big challenge ahead of us competing against somebody like that.

Q. What are some of the ways you've tested the calf physically? Scrimmages? Do you feel you've tested it every way possible?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Yeah, no, I mean, I did everything, right? You have to check all the boxes to even get to this point. Of course, as I said, you cannot imitate the same intensity in practice as it's going to be tomorrow in the game.

I have to feel confident to go out there and leave it all on the floor and expect that I'm going to be healthy and completely fine.

Q. How does this weigh on you mentally, watching the guys and wanting to be a part of this? How is that going to challenge you from a mental standpoint?

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KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: No, obviously it's been tough. No, I've never felt like I'm not a part of this. I am a part of this. I've tried to be with the team, like, in any capacity I could. Guys so far have been, like, playing great, taking care of business, guys stepping up. AI has been unbelievable for us.

Yeah, I just look forward to add more to complete the mission.

Q. To get here to this point all season long, when you step onto the court Game 1, what is going to be going through your mind?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: It's going to be goose bumps, for sure, especially not playing for a while, then coming back in this kind of environment. It's going to be special. Going to be goose bumps, for sure.

I'm really, really, really looking forward to it.

Q. Your time in Dallas didn't work out. How do you see your time with Dallas and now that you're here?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Not all of it was, like, not good, right? We had some good moments. We had some decent moments. Yeah, overall I think it didn't work for both sides. It wasn't perfect.

But, like, I would say everything, teammates, locker room, I know at that time there were some rumors there's like something in the locker room. It was never like that. It's all just noise at the end.

It wasn't just perfect for us playing together, it didn't work out, that's it. We moved on. There's no, like, ill will from their side, for sure from my side. I don't think there should be.

Just didn't work out. But I have nothing but love for Dallas and for the teammates and for everybody there.

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