

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Sunday, June 16, 2024

Dallas Mavericks

Daniel Gafford

Practice Day



Q. You guys seem to be in good spirits. What kind of energy do you expect to bring into Game 5?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Just piggybacking off what we did in Game 4, trying to take it to the next step, taking it one game at a time. Having a lot of patience and staying motivated, staying encouraged.

It's a long series. We can make it a long series if we do the right things. We have a small margin of error, and we are going to make sure that that margin stays small.

Q. Luka said he wanted to bring the fun back into the game. How much fun was that, and how do you get that on the road?

DANIEL GAFFORD: It was a lot of fun being around the home crowd, had a lot of energy in the arena and just doing the things that just kind of like made the game fun. You know, you put a lot of love into the game, you get a lot of love back.

Trying to stay consistent in those areas, what we succeeded in, how we were there for each other and how we picked each other up and staying positive. That game, we were playing desperate. We didn't want to go home. Just give us some type of life, and that's what we did.

Q. You had that emotional sequence in Game 4 where you made a few big plays and pounded the floor. What was that like for you?

DANIEL GAFFORD: It just brought me back to life in all honesty. I felt like I had a terrible start and I didn't really get to a point of playing until like the third because of the simple fact of the mistakes that I made out on the floor, which obviously, like at the end of the day, I'm never going to complain whenever they make that change, which is taking me often floor when I'm not out there being at my best.

Scored a couple of baskets down the stretch, got the

blocks, gave us a lot of energy at the time because I felt like I was actually doing something to impact and help the team win. It was a breath of fresh air, I would say.

Q. How do you feel like you and some of the other role guys figured out your place in the series? A lot of guys off the bench got going.

DANIEL GAFFORD: Last game, I felt like we got a lot more comfortable, wasn't worried about the mistakes or anything like that. Maybe I was worried about mine at the beginning but just throughout the game, just seeing how guys were playing and just the energy and the effort that was given out there on the floor it, would have been a big slap to the face to those guys if I would have never came out and did the same thing. Like I said, we got comfortable for sure just playing and having fun with the game, doing the right things.

Q. How much are you following the lead of Luka?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Oh, I mean, you know, I don't think he really said anything to the refs as much the last game. Just shows that he's taking that step in the right direction. We have to be able to do the same thing. When it comes to the path to success, there's a lot of failure in that. You have to use those failures as a lesson to really just go down that path and keep going and just find some type of way to be better than the last.

Q. Have you had a chance to reflect on your journey from being a second-round pick to bouncing around to a few teams and now being a major contributor in the Finals?

DANIEL GAFFORD: Not lately. I would say living in the past when it comes to something like that, I feel that would pull me further away from the game where I am at right now. I don't really worry about how my journey started off, I care about how I finish my journey.

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