

NBA Finals: Celtics vs. Mavericks

Monday, June 17, 2024

Boston Celtics

Kristaps Porzingis

Game 5: Postgame



Boston Celtics 106, Dallas Mavericks 88

Q. Kristaps, what did it take for you to get out there tonight? What was your desire to do so, and what does this championship mean to you?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Man, from day one when I came in, my mindset was I'm going to give everything to this team and this city to try to win a championship here because I knew these guys have already been so close.

Yeah, once I got hurt, it was a heartbreaking moment for me. I didn't want to accept the truth. It was like, no way it happened, right.

But, yeah, tonight was the night. I was like, listen, I'm going to give it everything I have. And, yeah, I'm just super happy to be a part of this and give something to the team, and I'm super thankful for the support I've gotten from the fans. And tonight the arena was electric. It's been unbelievable playing in front of these fans.

Q. What was the process today to get yourself on the court, and when did you realize or decide you were going to make sure you were out there today?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: You know what, like since last game, I've been thinking about, like, how can I get my body ready for next game. Like, no matter how it is. And today I was like, I'm going to try everything possible to get out there.

So from this morning, I was preparing myself that I will go out there. And, yeah, the medical staff was, like, unbelievable support for me and got me back out there somehow.

And, man, I'm super thankful for them. And, yeah, I gave everything I could. I gave everything I could. And, man, it feels great to be a champion.

Q. The reputation of this team is that it scores, shoots,

spreads the floor. You could make the argument, though, that you won this series with defense and toughness. Can you talk about toughness. And, you know, obviously you watched a lot of games here the last couple of months on the bench. Can you talk about how toughness really mattered?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Yeah, we have like a super-composed team. We don't have any like, loud, like, guys. Like, we're super confident but also, like, down-to-earth people in this organization and in this roster.

Everybody had the mindset of, like, we are going to do whatever it takes, each of us individually, to get the job done. Like, we want to win a championship for this city.

And everything, you know -- we did everything possible for that, and now we get the fruits from our labor.

Q. Throughout this whole year with us, it seems like with you guys, too, Joe has focused on don't look past the next day, don't look past the next day. Curious that now there is no next day, how he reacted, and your thoughts on the job that he did with the team getting them to this point?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: There is no what?

Q. Next day.

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Next day?

Q. It's over. You guys won the Championship (laughter).

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Yeah, finally, finally, man. It was a long road to get here, to be honest. To be the last team standing, it feels amazing. Like, all that work paid off.

As I said, when I was still on stage and stuff, like it still felt surreal. Like, I couldn't -- and us as a team, I think we couldn't really, like, settle into that.

But then once we got back to the locker room and started celebrating, I think that's when everybody realized we actually did it. We did it. And, yeah, Joe is an animal.

... when all is said, we're done.®



Q. All year you guys have talked about the importance of AI and how much he means to you guys. What was it like to see him finally raise that trophy?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Yeah, I know, great question. AI is an unbelievable teammate, unbelievable person. Everybody loves him. He's a great leader. You know, knowing how he has been chasing this for so long in his career and finally get it done, and playing at a high, high level at his age, man, I don't even know, like, words I could use to describe him.

You know, everybody loves him. And he gave everything to this team. He deserves it more than anybody.

Q. Now that it's over, can you be honest about how bad the injury was?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: No. (Laughter).

No, obviously, like, what was put out, it was the truth. It was, like, something torn. And then my tendon is just out of place. And it, like, pretty much hurts on every step. Like, I would take a walk in Dallas, and my leg would swell up.

I was like, I don't know how I'm going to play, if I'm going to play. But my mindset was always, I'm going to try to find a way how I can manage this.

And, yeah, somehow I got it going for this game. A lot of it was for sure like the adrenaline from just playing at the Garden and playing in front of our fans and having that opportunity to close it out. And, man, I got it going.

Q. I'm sure you've played this moment over in your head a hundred times, a thousand times in your life. How is this moment different from what you are anticipating?

KRISTAPS PORZINGIS: Good question. I don't know how to answer it yet, to be honest. I think I'm going to need a little bit of time, and then I can kind of reflect.

Because right now I'm just so in the moment and enjoying this. Man, this team, like, you know, it's just a special team and, like, everybody gave whatever they could for us to get here. And right now, we are just so in the moment. I think once I'm back home and settled, everything settles, I'll be able to compare better.

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