

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Indiana Pacers

Myles Turner

Game 1: Postgame

Pacers 111, Thunder 110

Q. We talk a lot about the Pacers offense and how you guys are explosive but tonight you only conceded two points in the last two minutes. How proud are you of the defensive effort?

MYLES TURNER: You know, our defense is something that we decided to hang our hat on about a year and a half ago. We knew if you ever wanted to be on this stage, it's something we had to tune up. I think we did a good job in the last closing moments but still got a lot to work to do.

And even myself I know I made a lot of mistakes tonight. That's the beauty of being on this stage, when you make a mistake, you have to move right on because the game moves so fast.

Q. Can you just tell me about the importance of Obi Toppin in this game?

MYLES TURNER: Man, just his confidence never shook. He started the game with two or three turnovers and what not and he was able to make an impact, hit a couple threes right after that. Defensively was able to move his feet and get out and run. He's someone that's very important to our system.

I think it was a huge confidence boost for him, especially Game 1.

Q. Knowing what you knew about Oklahoma City coming in and their defense and propensity to force turnovers, but the end of the first half were you disappointed in yourselves or more stunned how that had gone?

MYLES TURNER: Absolutely not. You just said it, we knew what this team was. I think on this stage you don't have time to be stunned. You don't have time to be disappointed. Again, you have to move on. We came in there knowing we could be better and you know, again, it's



probably historically bad, I'm not sure what the record is but we weathered the storm. We're resilient and we were able to find a way to win at the end.

Q. Some guys might get one of those shots in a lifetime. Ty has had four in these playoffs in the last 1.4, whatever. What's it been like to witness and how do you explain it as someone who has seen a lot in this league what he does in that moment?

MYLES TURNER: Ultimate, ultimate confidence in himself. Some players will say they have it but there's other players that show it, and he's going to let you know about it, too. That's one of the things I respect about him. He's a baller and a hooper and really just a gamer.

When it come to the moments, he wants the ball. He wants to be the one to hit that shot. He doesn't shy away from the moment and very important this time of the year to have a go-to guy. He just keeps finding a way and we keep putting the ball in the right positions and the rest is history.

Q. Would you like to have more touches in the low post, like a traditional pivot for the Game 2?

MYLES TURNER: I think for the way our offense is structured, you know, it's 0.5 seconds. You have a decision. You try to make a decision, if not, you're coming off it.

In the course I'll be down there battling and what not but also know that when I'm facing the ball there's two guys behind me at times, you know. So, I'm not seeing it's there. So, I'm very patient with our offense.

I think the only thing I said was stop so many bounce passes. That's the only place these guards can get the ball. Outside of that, no, man, I think our team did a good job making reads tonight and need to keep rolling.

Q. You kind of mentioned earlier that you guys felt like after 19 first-half turnovers something changed and wasn't maybe dramatic but can you be more specific, to go from 19 in the first half to only two in the third quarter, was it something you felt like you guys as a

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team did better at stopping what they were doing with physicality? How do you explain just the difference there?

MYLES TURNER: Just valuing possessions. I think that obviously this time of the year is so important. This is a one-point game tonight. So those possessions matter so much. I think our biggest thing is our response, you know what I mean? Like we know things are going to go bad at times, things are going to go good, but you have to be even keeled, calm waters, you know what I mean.

To answer your question, I think that we just knew we had to value the ball a lot more. We started to put two hands, two eyes on the ball, whoever passing it started to keep the ball high. It was just all the elementary stuff. Sometimes that's what it's about in this game is going back to fundamentals. Chin on the ball, stuff like that.

Q. You obviously had some struggles in the first half but in the second half hit two big threes late down the stretch in the fourth quarter. What was the keys to get you going that whole second half on both ends of the floor and obviously what was your biggest takeaway?

MYLES TURNER: Confidence, confidence, confidence. Supreme confidence in myself. I've worked my entire life to get to this stage, so there's no holding back. When I saw opportunities, I was going to be as aggressive as possible and I was able to hit two big shots or you know, whatever you want to call it.

It's just supreme confidence in myself.

Q. You guys never get too high, never get too low. How much of that comes from Rick and just where does that mentality come from?

MYLES TURNER: A lot of it does come from Rick. He instills it in us. He's not like a rah-rah guy but his speeches, his preparation gets us in tune. I think I like his overall mentality when it comes to getting us prepared for moments like such, and you know, again, that's what this time of the year is about, someone who has actually been there before, six times to be exact.

Q. You put out that Tweet, nearly 12 years ago to the day saying, "What if the Pacers would fall."

MYLES TURNER: Oh, yeah.

Q. How does it feel to be three games potentially correct with that Tweet?

MYLES TURNER: One step closer. It's a funny thing

when stuff like that happens. I remember I was watching that series against the Heat and what not and they were playing really well and I just -- they were my favorite team in 2k at the time, so I just wanted it for them [laughter].

But we have a lot of work to do, man. Again, we are one step closer. It feels good to get the first one underneath your belt because now you have a baseline and you can make adjustments and you do what you got to do.

Q. I know you guys have supreme confidence whenever Ty gets the ball in late-game situations. How similar is your confidence when Drew is guarding the MVP one-on-one with no help with the game on the line?

MYLES TURNER: It helps that they are Canadian teammates. I think that Drew probably has seen a little bit of what Shai can do. At the end of the day we have ultimate confidence in him to go out there and be him. He hit a big shot, had a big stop and he's continuing to put himself on the map.

Q. Do you remember when you fell in love with being a defensive player? We've seen it throughout your whole career.

MYLES TURNER: Yeah, man, my pops, he always told me that's what you're going to be able to make your bread and butter on. He saw an elite timing. I played YMCA basketball, when they give you those wristbands. What the other team would do is have their kids stand at halfcourt, so I had to stand with them and it used to frustrate the hell out of me.

But from that moment on, he was like, yo, listen, man this is what you are going to make your mark on. At the time, shot blocking, it's something that's innate, either you have it or you don't.

I think I really fell in love with defense really back in the YMCA days, seeing how much of an imprint I was leaving on the game and my dad just spoke a lot of it into existence.

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