

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Sunday, June 8, 2025

## Oklahoma City Thunder Chet Holmgren

### Game 2: Postgame

Oklahoma City Thunder 123, Indiana Pacers 107

**Q. Chet, what have you learned about what it takes to operate with a lead against this Indiana team?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I don't think it's anything super tactical. I don't think it's anything X's and O's-wise really. You can't play like you're up and try to run the clock out, because they can put points on the board in a hurry. You have to try to continue to score with them and keep getting stops on the other end. Not even look at how much time is on the clock.

You've just got to continue to play like the game is tied, try to win the game each possession one at a time. Can't get caught up playing the score.

**Q. You were able to convert a lot more shots in the paint and at the rim than in Game 1. Thoughts on how you were able to accomplish that?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I think we did a good job of being aggressive and then playing more on two feet, making some decisions in that mid-paint area where in last game we were kind of just putting up those shots. I think we did a better job of finding some better looks, whether it was dunker's basin or kick-outs, whatever it may be, I feel like we did a good job of slowing down in that space.

**Q. Mark said Indiana's offense is a conceptual offense, you have to play conceptual defense against them. Tyrese, you have to have great on-the-ball pressure with him. What are the rest of you all doing to make his job harder, to make their offense more difficult for them out there?**

CHET HOLMGREN: We have to play to our principles. We've been working on them all year. We can't just forget who we are. We have to communicate. It's really loud in there. We wouldn't want it to be any other way. The fans bring us a lot of energy. But you really have to communicate when it's loud, especially when somebody's



up-guarding the ball. They can't see everything behind them. They're trusting you to communicate with them.

Whoever's guarding the screener kind of, whether they're in coverage or something else, they got to trust the people behind them to communicate with them what's going on, trust everybody is going to be in the right spots, try to execute over and over again.

It's a long game. There's a lot of possessions. They're throwing a lot of things out there every possession. You just got to trust that communication and execution will get the job done.

**Q. How good did the big-to-big lob feel, especially considering you didn't even go with the double-big lineup in Game 1?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I always love playing with Hart. Especially when he's throwing lobbs up to me. At the end of the day, it was just two points. It's a good play for us. We got to look for it whenever that situation is kind of given to us.

Try to keep emotions out of it.

**Q. Are you a guy that gets upset between games and fuels you if you have a bad Game 1 or you try to shake it off?**

CHET HOLMGREN: A little bit of both. You don't want to get so wrapped up emotionally that you can't process why things happened, good or bad. You also have to have a level of care. If you're just like, whatever, I don't think that's good either.

I'd say I have a good middle ground of not getting overly emotional but also caring enough to try and always be better next game, whether I have a good game or not.

**Q. Seemed like you and Isaiah were both setting ball screens higher, maybe closer up to halfcourt. What benefit does that provide for Shai or Jay Dub when they're getting downhill?**

CHET HOLMGREN: I wouldn't necessarily say that's a

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tactical point or anything. I can say that's just where the screens happened to be set.

**Q. How would you explain or describe Caruso's energy levels for a 30-year-old man?**

CHET HOLMGREN: Don't disrespect our G.O.A.T. like that, man [smiling].

He's one of those guys who you know is going to bring it every single night, whether he's 22 or 30, doesn't matter, he's going to bring it.

I feel like as a collective we really feed off of that. Then also his ability to kind of process things that are happening out there and relay it and communicate it to everybody else is really important for us.

Hopefully that doesn't fade away as the years go on [smiling].

**Q. Mark mentioned how he knew as a collective, you guys had improved from Game 1 to Game 2, but specifically you. When you think about his belief in you, how has he helped you grow on and off the court?**

CHET HOLMGREN: It's extremely important. When other people instill confidence in you, it allows you to play more confident, it allows you to have trust in what's going on, have trust in what he's telling me and us as a collective.

Then also a big part of that is he has to trust that I'm going to do everything it takes to be better after bad games or bad plays or whatever. It's all about trusting that the other party has the right process in mind.

He always has the right process in mind. I try, to as well. From there you can kind of build out a good working relationship, a good ability to continue to improve and be better together.

**Q. This is OKC's first Finals win since June 12, 2012. What does that mean to you? What were you doing in 2012?**

CHET HOLMGREN: 2012? I was stuffing in the back of an SUV going on 12-hour car trips for AAU tournaments, sitting playing -- what's that game -- Jetpack Joyride on the iPads in the back of the car. That's cool right there.

It's hard to think about stuff like that because we are in it. We won a game, but that isn't the end goal. We got to try to be better as the series goes on.

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