

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Tuesday, June 10, 2025

Indiana Pacers

Tyrese Haliburton

Practice Day

Q. Myles, since the day he got here, he's been in trade rumors. When you got here, it kind of opened things up for him in a way. Can you speak to knowing what it's like to be in his shoes, what he has meant to you, your tandem?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Yeah, I can't really speak on knowing what it's like to be in his shoes, honestly.

I think since I've gotten here, he was hurt when I got here, I think he got to watch me play and felt like the success that I was having, that if we were playing together, it would be a lot more.

Our first experience playing together has been a lot of fun. We feel like our synergy and connection has grown over time. We constantly are sending each other clips of how we can be better in pick-and-roll, how I can help him, how he can help me, whatever the case is. We get along really well. I think that that has given us a lot of success.

To be honest when you, when I first came in the league, my big was Richaun Holmes. I love Rich. Rich is not a pop guy, but he's a roller. Has a really good floater, push shot. I always thought in my career I was going to be best with a guy who plays above the rim and a pick and real roll threat.

Now having experience playing with Myles so long, I feel like he unlocks a lot of what I do. It's been an interesting dynamic to play alongside him. Myles is not going to catch a ton of lobs. I've probably thrown him like three alley-oops since we've played together. But it's been a lot of fun, a fun experience to play with him and get to know him better.

It's different. Our league is different. He's a pop guy more times than not. When he does roll, he does open things up for me, as well. It's been a lot of fun.

Q. What goes into the mental game for you before a game like the Finals with the atmosphere and the buildup? Has anything changed for you from the



regular season to the Finals in your routine?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: No, honestly I try to approach everything the same way. I feel like if I try to do something different, I'm not like superstitious or anything, but I feel like you got to treat every game the same way, honestly.

I still eat Goldfish at 60 minutes on the clock. I still go to chapel. On the road, I don't go to chapel. I kind of do a private chapel session. That's really the only thing I change.

Everything is pretty much the same. Just try to treat it the same. The minute I try to switch it up or put more pressure on myself or our group that really needs to be applied, then I feel like guys can get nervous, whatever the case is. Let's just be loose, play basketball.

Q. When someone is at your level, we often hear there's not a defense you haven't seen. I assume you've seen everything Oklahoma City is doing with you. What makes them different? How do you try to combat that in such high stakes here?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Yeah, I feel like at the point of attack they got more guys than most teams in the NBA that are high level at the point of attack. They're really connected on the defensive end. I feel like they mix up coverages. I think Coach Daigneault isn't afraid to do things on the fly. He doesn't do everything that's like very traditional. If you're trying to get a 33, he'll come double just out of nowhere. They've really done that all year.

But I just feel like they're willing to mix things up. I think the biggest thing is just personnel. Their personnel is different than everywhere else.

I think playing two games against these guys is really good. It gives me more film to watch, see where I can be better. I feel like I haven't been great by any means the first two games. I'm just trying to take what I can to prepare me for Game 3, just trying to be the best version of myself.

Keep watching film, see where I can get better. The answers always lie in the film.

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

Q. How important is off-ball execution, just to try to keep the swarming of the defense out of the paint?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: You got to mix things up. You can't give these guys the same dosage, the same look of anything. If you try to run high pick-and-roll all game, they just crawl into you, really pack the paint, nothing is open. There's got to be a mix of things. Got to be off the ball, playing off the pitch, coming off ball screens. You can't run the same thing consistently against these guys. You got to mix it up.

We got to do a much better job of that. I feel like I probably got caught in too many high pick-and-rolls where they can really pack it in and end up getting shots late against the clock, especially the first half of both games.

That starts with me just getting us in better positions, playing out of different spots, all those things. Yeah, definitely got to mix it up against these guys.

Q. We saw you limping pretty good after Game 2. A couple minutes ago, Rick confirmed you were feeling some discomfort. I assume you're good to go for Game 3. If you could tell us what's going on.

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Yeah, I'm fine. Really just a lower leg thing. I'll leave it at that. I don't think there's anything more to elaborate. I feel fine and I'll be ready to go for Game 3.

Q. You and Rick have talked about after the trade, had dinner, Rick put the ball in your hands. That's not always come easy for him or been his ethos. What do you remember about that conversation? To have a coach give you that kind of confidence and trust, what did that mean to you?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Yeah, I think when he told me that he didn't -- really the first dinner we ever had was when I first got traded here. Me, Buddy (Hield), Tristan (Thompson) and him at Prime 47. That was just more getting to know us, more things than not.

I think especially that year, like, we weren't very good. Weren't going to make the Playoffs or anything. More times than not, I feel like Coach was letting us play and learn as young guys, which I think is important. We played a lot of young dudes. It was like baptism by fire almost. There were a couple experiences that year where I just had to figure out how we were going to be at our best.

Going into the following year, before training camp, he met with me and said he didn't want to call plays anymore. I

was surprised because I know what the conversation around Coach was, especially from players and point guards specifically.

When he gave me kind of that nod, that was like the ultimate respect. That was like the ultimate trust that I could get from anybody, because he is such a brilliant basketball mind. He's been around such great guards, great players. So for him to give me that confidence, I think has really taken my career to another level.

He's just a basketball savant. We meet, we talk all the time. I think he's really helped me learn how to watch film, which I think is important. I think that's something that's not talked about enough. Especially young basketball players, you can just watch film, but if you're just watching and trying to find your highlights, that's much different than really trying to dissect things.

I feel like when I first came in the NBA, I would get them to clip my shots, clip my assists, clip my counting stats. That doesn't really do anything. What are the possessions where I'm getting nothing, holding the ball for 15, 16 seconds, getting off it, now somebody else has to make a play against the clock.

Coach has really helped me to watch the film the right way. Watch the whole game, not just my minutes, but watch the other guys' minutes, see where I can help other guys. All that stuff is really important. Really taken my career to another level.

Really appreciative of him, and our relationship is going to continue to go.

Q. You only allowed four fast break points in Game 2. You've been excellent with your transition defense this entire season. What goes into being so effective in that area?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Just next-play mentality. I feel like you could say that around why we've had these comebacks through the course of the year. You could just say, I think that we try not to dwell on things. As NBA players, just as basketball players in general, it's easy to make a mistake and dwell on it, give up a bucket or whatever. I feel like we do a great job of getting to the next play. Coach always preaches that. It's really important here in our organization.

We talk about that a lot. Honestly, if you make a mistake as a basketball player, the first response should be how to fix it. More times than not, if you turn the ball over, make a dumb play offensively, if you get it back defensively, that kind of makes up for it a little bit, I guess.



Yeah, I feel like we've been good in transition D all year. We've had a good series that way. We have to figure out how to be better in transition offensively. We have to do that as well.

We're doing a great job. Guys are taking charges. Really hustle back, getting back into actions and things. I don't think there's really a scheme or anything. It's just that next-play mentality that's important.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports