

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Wednesday, June 4, 2025

Indiana Pacers

Pascal Siakam

Media Day

**Q. Pascal, obviously this will be Finals appearance number two for you. I was curious if you see any similarities between the 2019 Raptors team and the current Pacers team you're on?**

PASCAL SIAKAM: I feel like I get asked this question a lot [smiling].

I mean, I think you got to be a great team to get to the Finals. I think two great teams. Obviously different in a lot of ways, but also just some similarities in terms of just, like, playing the game the right way, having some level of defense, which ultimately gets to winning.

I think the mix of veterans and also young players, which I thought we had also back in 2019. Yeah, it's different in a lot of ways, but also some similarities.

**Q. On that theme, you were one of the young guys; now you're a vet. Do you find yourself kind of drawing on some of the experiences you had alongside Kawhi or Kyle? As the playoffs get deeper, do some of those lessons resonate even more?**

PASCAL SIAKAM: Yeah, for sure. I think one of the things for me I learned just from those guys is like no matter what, we just always felt like we had a chance. When we got down, I mean, we were down 0-2 against Milwaukee, we've had series where it was really tough. We had to go in Philly and win games on the road. I think all these experiences definitely stays with me. Trying to, like, transfer that spirit to my team in terms of being down or whatever in a game, or whatever happens, just always playing the right way and understanding that you always have a chance.

That's something I'd probably say I learned from those guys, for sure.

**Q. You guys got off to a slow start this season. You really turned things around. What led to the big turnaround? What are those things that you think will**



help you in this series?

PASCAL SIAKAM: No, I thought obviously starting the year, we didn't start the way we wanted to. We had a lot of guys in and out the lineups, some injuries and things. We just always just stuck to the plan. We have just continued to be ourselves. When we got everyone back healthy, we just started playing good basketball, playing together, defense improved. Just a lot of things that you need as a team to be able to be successful.

I thought we started rocky, but we just stayed steady and just kept being ourselves. Eventually we got better.

**Q. A lot of people are asking about the 2019 Finals. It's been six seasons since then. For yourself, that journey that you've had from that first Finals run to now this one, what have you learned about yourself and your game and how you've developed?**

PASCAL SIAKAM: Yeah, I mean, it's been an incredible journey I would say. A lot of tough times, for sure. Just learning from adversity. It just wasn't kind of always pretty, which I think made me who I am. Just being in this moment now where I can just know that I've been through almost everything as a player. A lot of highs and lows. That makes the journey sweeter.

For me, I enjoy all those moments. It makes me just appreciate everything even more and just play freely out there.

**Q. How do you compare your journey and the amazing obstacles you faced to make it into the NBA versus what African players and resources they have now? Also, what kind of role model are you for aspiring African players to get to the NBA?**

PASCAL SIAKAM: Yeah, no, it's been interesting. I think for me coming in as a young player, not really having played any basketball really, having to learn on the fly. I think at that time it was mostly like when you was a big guy from Cameroon, you came in, you was a big, you ran, you dunked. That's pretty much what it was.

I think for me I can see that evolving now with guys my size

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

being able to do different things. Now with the NBA going in Africa, there's just so much more development and guys are getting a lot better. The skills are being learned early on. Something that I had to do really late in my career.

So it's evolving. I hope I can be one of those guys that some young guys can look at understand look at his journey and the things he's able to accomplish and how he did it. They can take it as an example.

I really don't look at myself, like, I'm a role model or anything. I just feel like you can look at my journey and be like, man, he did it, he did it the hard way, there was no shortcuts, someone that gave everything, just worked hard, put his head down. No matter the obstacles, he just kept working.

I think that's something I want to tell young players, it's not going to be easy, nobody's going to give you anything. You're probably going to have less opportunity because you come from where you come from.

**Q. Talk about your relationship with Tyrese Haliburton.**

PASCAL SIAKAM: It's been great. I remember when I first got here, on the phone, we talked, we just didn't care about nothing else. He's selfless and plays the game the right way. And it feels great. He's a great person to be around and a great player to play with.

Our relationship has been growing and we have the same mindset.

**Q. You guys haven't lost back-to back-games since March. Tyrese talked about some of the brutally honest film sessions. What are those film sessions like with Rick Carlisle after a loss?**

PASCAL SIAKAM: I think we just look at ourselves. The film is there. It doesn't lie. You look at it and you see what you can do better. Just being honest about what you need to do to get better. I'm glad that the guys have been able to turn the page on whatever, as it happened before and just move on.

**Q. The Pacers and the Thunder have the two best records since January 1, yet the Thunder are a decided favorite in this series. Do you look at them as this historically great team, this huge undertaking and challenge, or do you see this as more of a series that's evenly matched? How do you view this coming in?**

PASCAL SIAKAM: I think we focus on ourselves. I don't think we expect anyone to pick us. It's been that way the

whole playoffs, the whole season. Think nothing for us changes. We just continue to be ourselves, focus on us. It's always been us against everyone. Doesn't change.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports