

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Thursday, June 5, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

Game 1: Postgame

Pacers 111, Thunder 110

Q. Obviously you had a chance to put you guys up three. What did you see in the sequence where they take it down and Tyrese hits the shot?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, I thought I got a pretty good look, felt good; didn't go in. Then they got a look, and it went in. I don't know.

Basketball ups and downs. It is what it is. Can't do anything about it now. Just got to be better for next game.

Q. Was this reminiscent of Game 1 Denver at all for you? If so, can you draw back on that experience?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, we just got to focus on being better. The series isn't first to one, it's first to four. We have four more games to get, they have three. That's just where we are. We got to understand that and we got to get to four before they get to three, if we want to win the NBA championship.

It's that simple. It's not rocket science. We lost Game 1. We have to be better.

Q. In being better, what do you feel are some controllables, particularly on the offensive end of the floor, given the number of looks you got in the paint downhill?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, honestly I'm not too sure. It's hard to, like, have that answer 20 minutes after the game. But yeah, for sure, definitely areas to get better on both ends of the floor.

That's what's next two days are for, to try get better, come out here understand be a better team for Game 2.

Q. When you've had games that have slipped through your fingers in these Playoffs, you've found a way to come back. In the Finals, with the pressure being what



it is, how can you make sure that you do that again or is this kind of an unknown because you guys as a group haven't been to this point yet?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: As much as we can, we just got to treat it like every other game, every other situation we've been in. Yes, we haven't been in this situation, but that doesn't mean our character has to change, or what we did last time. It's still basketball, the game of basketball we grew up playing. The rules don't change because we're in the Finals.

We've been in this situation before. In other situations, we handled it well. We were better for Game 2. That's the goal.

Q. I'm sure you are aware just the crazy clutch run that Haliburton is on in the Playoffs. All season long really. He's got the ball in his hands, last second is ticking down, what's that feel like for you?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: I don't know. It happened so fast. I feel like we got matched. He got down going right. Pulled up from middle. Knocked down the shot. I don't know, it didn't feel like anything crazy. He just made a play with the time winding down. Made a good play.

Q. You had a long layoff. You talked before the game about trying to fill that time. How do you feel like you responded to the energy in the building, the energy the Pacers brought in the early part of the game?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, I thought we were pretty good. We had control of the game for the most part of it. It is a 48-minute game. They teach you that lesson more than anyone else in the league, the hard way.

But yeah, I thought we came out with the right intentions, energy. The crowd was amazing, obviously. Just got to do a better job of closing.

Q. The looks that you got, do you feel those are normal or do you feel like they were doing anything specific to throw you off?

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SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: No, not really. They played their style of basketball. We played our style of basketball. I feel like we got some looks that usually go down that just didn't. But that's never an excuse. We won plenty of games despite not shooting as well as we know we can. That's something that we don't hang our hat on.

There's definitely so many areas to be better on. That's what we have to focus on for Game 2.

Q. You were in the situation, a similar situation before, when Aaron Gordon hit the game winner. What is the similarities? How can you bounce back after such a hard...

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, like me personally, how you lose doesn't really matter. Obviously it sucks, last-second shot. The energy in the arena and stuff like that. But we lost at the end of the day. We lost Game 1. We've lost Game 1 before. On the other side of that, we came out a better team. That's our goal. That's our mentality, to try to learn a lesson from the loss, like we always do, and move forward and be better.

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