

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Saturday, June 7, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

Practice Day

**Q. Shai, before Game 1, you talked about playing with the other Canadian guys and how you've been doing that over the years. What was it like to share the floor with Andrew in Game 1?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, it was fun. The stage, the moment, what's at stake, it's all things you dream about as a kid, and it was everything I imagined it to be.

**Q. You guys exchanged a little shove back and forth; what does it say about what's at stake here?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Nothing more than two guys wanting to win. No malicious intent behind it, just wanting to win.

**Q. Do people underestimate the competitive fire that Andrew has, just given his demeanor and how he carries himself?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, he's a competitor. He's a winner. Plays the game the right way on both ends of the floor. Really good player. Yeah, he's a winner for sure. No doubt.

**Q. Mark just said that after a loss, nothing really changes with you guys. I'm not asking you to contradict him, but it seems like in those times where you are coming off one, there's more fire there the next time out, for whatever reason. Does anything change coming off a loss? Whether it's a win or a loss, do you find a way to go into every game the same way, or is there something extra?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, it does feel like that. Now we -- like day-to-day interactions, like our moods, I think he's talking more so like those don't really change.

The losses are a little bit louder, obviously. Like they hurt more, and you try to -- like you try to get better through



them. And it's a lot easier to learn from a loss than it is from a win just off of like the emotional aspect of it, and I think that's probably why it looks the way it does.

Yeah, Coach is right. Nothing really changes. We just -- losses hurt a little bit more, I would say.

**Q. The other day we saw a video comparing your moves with Kobe Bryant's moves, and they were pretty similar, the pump fake, the mid-range shots. They were very similar. I wonder how much you studied Kobe's games to become the MVP that you are right now, and did you have the chance to meet him and maybe get some advice from him?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, he is probably my favorite player of all time. Never got the chance to meet him, to answer your question.

But yeah, he -- not only me, kids all across the world, his influence has gone through the roof, and it's like I said, he'll be remembered forever because of the competitor and the basketball player he was. Yeah, hopefully somewhere close to that as a basketball player one day. He is a special talent, special person, and God rest his soul.

**Q. Going into Game 1, I felt as if you were ultra-aggressive, and going into Game 2, I want to know how you balance being aggressive while also obviously trying to get your teammates involved, obviously being the focal point of the offense. How do you have that balance, and does it change game-by-game?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: I always -- I always try to be aggressive and I never, like, predetermine it. I always, like, just let the game tell me what to do.

So I guess last game, I felt more often than not, I had a shot or a play that I could attack on more than in the past, and that's just the way it went.

So the same thing will happen in Game 2. I will read the defense and I will play off my feeling and my instincts, and if it's calling for me to shoot or if it's calling me to pass is what I will decide to do.

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**Q. Curious, after you miss a shot that you know you make and you've made a million times, is it easy to put those away, or do they stick with you? And did this one maybe stick more because it was Drew?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, they are easy to put away now. There was a time in my career where it wasn't, and you grow and learn through that.

I've just grown to learn, like you control what you can control. I shot the ball, I missed it. It's written in history. There's nothing I can do now. That is a missed shot, and all I can do is try to be better the next shot. That's what I focus on. That's my mindset. At this point, it's like second nature. I shot the ball. I tried to make it -- every shot I shoot, I try to make, and sometimes it just doesn't go in.

**Q. On the same wave, at what point do you let it go? Have you let it go, Game 1? And also as the leader of this team, do you come in the next day trying to get everybody else right mentally?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, I let it -- like I let -- you talking about the whole game? Yeah, I let the game go. As soon as I, like, learn the lessons from it. As soon as I watch film, take what I need to take from it and we do it as a group. After that, I let it go because the lessons are learned. There's nothing else you can do.

And then, honestly, the team has the same demeanor. So there's no -- like this team makes it easy. You don't have to rile guys up or lock guys in. We all have the same goal in mind and we all know what it takes to win games, and we just -- that's what's on the focus of our mind. That's what we focus on the next day, like being better and trying to win the next one.

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