

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Saturday, June 7, 2025

Indiana Pacers

Pascal Siakam

Practice Day



Q. Pascal, just for my point of view, I was at the 2011 Basketball Without Borders, and to see what you've achieved so far, it's pretty amazing. This is your second Finals, three-time All-Star and MVP of Eastern Conference Finals. I just want to say, it's amazing to see that kid become what you are now. How do you reflect on that transition?

PASCAL SIAKAM: First of all, thank you, appreciate that. That's very nice of you.

I think it's pretty hard to reflect when you still are in the journey. Obviously, I'm super blessed, like you said, that little kid that was in Basketball Without Borders, I had dreams, but nothing near what's happening to me in my life and what I've been able to accomplish. I'm grateful. For me, it's amazing, and I'll forever be grateful to everyone that helped me throughout my journey. And it's great.

But it's hard for me to reflect on because I'm still in it and I'm still chasing every single day. But definitely, I am super grateful.

Q. Kind of going on the first question, in 2019, what are your fondest memories of bringing the trophy home to Cameroon?

PASCAL SIAKAM: What was my memories?

Q. Your fondest memories of bringing that home for the first time.

PASCAL SIAKAM: Yeah, it was crazy. It was pretty cool. I mean, I think getting to go back home where you're from, I just -- for me I mostly think about the inspiration that it gives to all the other kids out there just to know that I'm from where they are, and I'm able to do these amazing things.

So it was just like a super humbling moment just to go back and seeing the reception and just thinking about the next generation for sure.

Q. When you look back on those playoffs and what happened so far, such great moments and clutch moment, do you believe there's something different about these Pacers?

PASCAL SIAKAM: What do you mean?

Q. Like a championship aura.

PASCAL SIAKAM: Oh, I don't know. I think for me, for us, we just focus on us, to be honest. We try not to look ahead. It's all about us, the moment, and yeah, I don't really think about those things. I just think about us, and for us, it's Game 2, which is the most important thing right now.

Q. You spent a lot of time working with Jenny [Boucek]. I know she's got a big impact on the staff. Curious what your experience had been like working with her over the last few years and her overall impact on your group as a whole?

PASCAL SIAKAM: Jenny has been awesome. For me certainly, being able to talk to her, get insights on the games. I think when I came in, I was used to a lot of different things. She mostly does defense and stuff, but I was used to a lot of things from Toronto, the stuff that we used to do.

And coming back to Indy and having a different system and different things, so I had to really adapt to a lot of things, and she's been really helpful for me in that matter. We talk a lot about those things, and she gives me super great insights on -- on what we want to do and what we want to accomplish as a team.

She's been great that way. She's a great communicator. And also, I like her positive just energy about everything. It's mostly needed; even in those moments where sometimes it felt like we didn't do well or whatever, she's always bringing that positivity, which is needed for coaching.

Yeah, she's done amazing for us, and she's a big help, not only for me but for the whole team.

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Q. You've been in the league long enough to know when it starts 10-15 or starts poorly the first couple months, doesn't always get right. Sometimes a team starts bad and stays that way. What is it about this group that allowed the opportunity to turn things around?

PASCAL SIAKAM: I think when you look at those games, I mean, there was a lot of people in and out of the lineups. We had injuries. We lost a lot of games, like just on some mistakes.

So I think when you look at the overall record, it looks a certain way. But for us, we just continue to chip away. Continue to work hard, continue to improve as a team. Then when we got everyone back together mostly, like everyone healthy, it started to get better for us.

And I think it's just we're resilient. We're not going to give up no matter what, and that's kind of like what helped us to just continue to chip away, chip away, chip away, get better.

For me, I always tell the guys, come April, May, June, we always want to be our best. And that's the goal as an NBA team. Obviously you want to be in the mix but just want to play your best basketball at the right moment.

Q. Let's talk about the last play, you guys had a lot of corner threes, you made a right corner three the last game. But the last play, Alex Caruso was guarding you and you made a cut to the basket, instead of staying at the corner. What was the decision-making process?

PASCAL SIAKAM: Well, I mean, I think, what, it was like the end of the clock. I thought -- I knew Tyrese was going to shoot it. So, I just tried to get a rebound, to be honest.

Q. The first time, last time you were in the Finals, obviously you were a young kid, third-year guy. What's the difference of the feeling of being a veteran now who has been here before versus being a third-year guy? There was a lot on your shoulders at that time as well.

PASCAL SIAKAM: I think it's a difference just because again, at that time, I was really -- I won't want to say naïve, but you go into it thinking, it's year three for me, we always had good teams and we always won. It just felt normal, like this is how it's supposed to be. That's how it felt for me at that time.

I think for me now coming back, I have a little bit more

appreciation for it just because of the journey and like on understanding how hard it is, and how difficult it is to get to this level and to this point.

So I think just in terms of just maturity and just knowing all the experience that I've been through, to get me back here, I have another level of appreciation for it. I think the level of grind and play and just grit is the same because I always had that. But I just think the level of appreciation, probably a little bit different.

Q. Rick gives you guys a lot of freedom on offense to sort of just do it and figure it out on the court. What kind of advantage do you think that guy gives you or why do you think that worked so well for you guys as a team?

PASCAL SIAKAM: Well, I think it's cool. Obviously, we have a point guard that obviously runs the show for us and get us in position and also is not just looking to get his. He's moving the ball. Like, he's doing everything for the team. So he starts the engine for us, and we have T.J. coming off the bench doing the same thing. Obviously, we have a lot of guards.

The personnel is just people that just go out there and play. For me, I like that type of play. You know, fast, I'm running, and just being us and playing free basketball. I always love that.

So yeah, it's good that we have that freedom. But I think it's still organized in a way where like we have point guards and we have guards that get us into whatever we want to get into.

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