

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Saturday, June 7, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder Alex Caruso

Practice Day

Q. The first time I interviewed you was in 2020, and I asked you about your shoes, and you are still wearing those. Tell me why.

ALEX CARUSO: Yeah, they work for my feet, along with some insoles, obviously, but the fours, fives and sixes are the ones I feel and move the best in. I like the style. So it's a win-win for me.

Q. Is it harder for you and your teammates to take good shots when Indiana is playing full-court press?

ALEX CARUSO: Yeah, their pressure, at least with some of our main guys is more to get us out of rhythm. I thought we got good shots. Even on some of the attacks I was able to get downhill and get layups. And flowing into our secondary stuff is probably an area we can improve a little bit.

Q. The 12-2 run, what did you take away from that, the last three minutes and change when they seized control?

ALEX CARUSO: Give them credit. They made some big shots, some tough ones. There wasn't too many possessions where I think we had maybe execution errors, and obviously we missed a couple shots, and Shai got some great looks.

Some of that comes down to not putting ourselves in a position to where the game comes to that at the end of the game, being a little more efficient in transition and maybe not forcing it at the rim and playing off two feet early in the game and spraying the ball a little and extending that lead from 10, 12, to 17, 18, 20 points. So if they do throw in some shots like they did and we miss, we've have the game in control.

Q. You hinted at not converting the turnovers. When you watch the possessions back, why weren't you scoring off those?



ALEX CARUSO: Yeah, I think a couple times we were just a little unlucky. A couple times they did a good job of getting back. We had turnovers like maybe 93 feet, and it was hard to get the advantage. And then a couple times we just didn't have our greatest advance pass, cross-court pass game, and we almost tried to slow it down a little too much instead of kind of matching maybe the pace that Indiana plays at, which we've played at as well, and I think we're good at, I think we'll do a better job of that.

Q. How many times do you look at games that end like that? Is it memories, or do you watch it over and over and think about things you could have done differently?

ALEX CARUSO: You go back and watch film. You have to if you are going to try and improve. We've gone back and watched as a team a couple times on different scenarios. I'll go back and watch my minutes personally for most games just to see where I can improve and see how different areas of the game are being affected when I'm on the court.

Maybe that night after the game, it's a little hard going to sleep, you're thinking about plays you could have had back that add up to one or two points, and there's probably quite a few of them. After that, you have to flush it. You've got to get back to zero because next game is coming.

Q. Were you thinking more points or points you should have taken away on defense or offense?

ALEX CARUSO: It's both. It's missed a free throw, missed a couple open shots, I messed up a scramble in the third quarter, that's three points. Missed a coverage and gave up a layup. You can go through and add it up for both teams, depending on who you are and what the scenario is. It's a little of everything.

Q. Tyrese's last shot, did you think he was going to find Pascal? Are you watching the eyes and hips and everything?

ALEX CARUSO: Yeah, I was kind of playing to -- I wish I probably would have looked at the clock a little sooner to see what time it was. I don't know if he would have been



able to get a pass if I had gone and doubled or made the shot harder.

So I didn't know if he was going to have enough time to throw a pass to Pascal, and I didn't feel like it was a great deal of, you know, protection behind me at the time, at least enough for him to miss the shot. I just tried to peel off him and box him out.

Over my basketball career, I've probably lost more games off second-chance shots at the buzzer than guys making game-winners. Just trying to do my best to keep him off the glass, but obviously the shot went in.

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