

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Saturday, June 7, 2025

Indiana Pacers

Andrew Nembhard

Practice Day



Q. What was it like to be out there in Game 1 of the Finals and to play against Shai?

ANDREW NEMBHARD: I think playing in the Finals is a crazy experience. Walking onto the court was something you live for. The crowd was amazing. The noise was the most I ever felt in a game. It kind of all just came together. The nerves settled in, and it was a fun game.

Q. Can you talk about your relationship with Jenny Boucek.

ANDREW NEMBHARD: Our relationship is great. I love Jenny. She's done a lot for me since I got here on and off the court. She's somebody who is always going to be by my side going forward. I have a lot of love for her. Her knowledge of the game is one of the best I've been around.

Q. Part of your job is always picking up the other team's best player. What was it like physically and mentally after whatever number of minutes guarding Shai?

ANDREW NEMBHARD: It's definitely a job that has no breaks. It's a consistent 48-minute job for our whole team. Starting this series, we got lucky to win our first series a little earlier. We had a week off or so, so it's taken me out of shape a little bit. The first game was getting back into shape and really feeling that pace again.

Q. Afterward, how did you feel?

ANDREW NEMBHARD: Felt good. I'm only 25. So popping back pretty quickly. Getting the right stuff in my body and understanding how to pop back in the right place.

Q. Seems like you get attention for the defensive work. Did you dial that up over the years?

ANDREW NEMBHARD: I think ever since I've gotten into the league, I've taken those responsibilities since my rookie year. My success with them has probably gone up, and

that's what you guys are seeing. I've just gotten more comfortable, more experience understanding the game in the NBA and work around the foul situation. That's something I've tried to lean on and the thing that put me on the court initially.

Q. Ben Sheppard was here saying there's not just offensive basketball IQ; there's defensive basketball IQ. How do you look at that?

ANDREW NEMBHARD: I think it's a feel thing. It's understanding tendencies, what guys like to do and what we are trying to accomplish as a team and being in the right spots early. And then also just figuring out on the fly when things don't go well in emergency situations.

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