

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Sunday, June 8, 2025

## Indiana Pacers Rick Carlisle

### Game 2: Pregame



#### Q. How is [Jarace] Walker?

RICK CARLISLE: He's doing better but he's not close to playing. So he's on one crutch, hopefully going to be off crutches in the next day or so.

So I mean, it's a long series. It's 18 days. He's young. There's a possibility he could get back. But right now, it's been nine days, I think, since it happened. He's not there yet.

#### Q. We saw the release with Nellie [Don Nelson] and all that, and he's here. What does that part of it mean to you that you were able to buck the odds and get him here and some of us thought we would never see him on the Mainland ever again?

RICK CARLISLE: I think it speaks to the importance of the award, and you know, when I talked to Nellie, I wasn't sure if we could talk him into coming but he was absolutely excited from the first moment, and he said, "I'll be there."

So that press conference is in 25 minutes or so, and as many people that could be here, it would be appreciated. This is going to be a momentous one.

So I don't want to get into it too much now about his winning the award, but he was a massive game changer in the history of NBA basketball.

#### Q. The Pacers have one of the best transition defenses in the league. What are the key principles to having an elite transition defense?

RICK CARLISLE: You've got to go from offense to defense very quickly. You know, the first three steps are key. Communication's key. We work on it a lot. We play fast. What I've learned over the years is that teams that play fast tend to have a good kind of foundation to be a good transition team.

I don't know where you're getting your numbers. We

always feel like we can be a lot better, and so I do think the game is going to be faster tonight. I think Oklahoma is going to be more aggressive and faster. So it will be a key tonight.

#### Q. You guys are 7-0 in Games 1 and 2. What do you attribute that professionalism and preparation to that gets you off to great starts in these series?

RICK CARLISLE: I'm not interested in talking about the past. Each day, as you are on a playoff run, is like a new day. I find that looking back is a dangerous thing. We've got to keep our eye firmly where it needs to be, which is on now and the next thing.

And so, you know, this all comes down to us trying to execute what we do a little better than them doing what they do.

So it's challenging.

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