

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Sunday, June 8, 2025

Indiana Pacers

Rick Carlisle

Game 2: Postgame



**and you talk about being a paint-to-great team. What are the Thunder doing so well that keep you guys from playing the way that you want in there?**

Oklahoma City Thunder 123, Indiana Pacers 107

RICK CARLISLE: Another bad first half. Obviously, it was a big problem, and we just played poorly.

A little bit better in the second half but you can't be a team that's reactive and expect to be successful or have consistency.

So we're going to have to be a lot better on Wednesday.

**Q. After not going with the two bigs in the first game, they played a big stretch of the game with Hartenstein and Holmgren. Do you feel like this had a big impact on the result tonight?**

RICK CARLISLE: I don't know if there was any lineup that they used that wasn't impactful for them.

**Q. I guess just asking about Tyrese, he kind of struggled to get engaged with the game the first couple quarters. He does kind of find it there in the fourth quarter. Does anything change with him from your perspective in terms of just being able to get a little bit more engaged and see some of those shots fall?**

RICK CARLISLE: There's a lot more to the game than just scoring. So everybody's got to do more. It starts with the best players. It starts with, you know, Tyrese and Pascal and Myles, who will be in here to talk to you guys, and then it goes from there.

So people shouldn't just look at his points and assists and judge how he played, or judge how any of our guys played just on that. That's just not -- that's not how our team is built. I mean, we are an ecosystem that has to function together, and stats -- we've got to score enough points to win the game but who gets them and how they get them, not important.

**Q. Just 34 points in the paint in both of these games**

RICK CARLISLE: They were the best in the league during the year at keeping people out of there. They are great at it. We have to find ways to get in the ball in there, and you know, it's just there are so many things that have to go right on a set of two possessions to get the ball into the heart of their defense. You know, you've got to get a stop, a rebound. You've got to be able to get the ball up the floor without a turnover and then you have to be able to get it to the lane and to the rim.

It's a tough task. So you know, we'll look at it. There were some stretches where we did some good things attacking the paint but there weren't enough.

**Q. People talk about responding to the runs that they go on and trying to basically respond to those. What can you say about their depth, obviously Wiggins comes in, has a big game, Caruso hit some big shots. How can you guys respond better to those things as far as you guys go offensively?**

RICK CARLISLE: First of all, Wiggins and Caruso played great. Those guys played great. I thought the atmosphere, I thought their crowd was exceptionally great.

And so as we go home, we're going to need our crowd to be just like this crowd was. I mean, these fans took it to another level tonight and that's how Gainbridge is going to have to be for us to have a chance to be successful.

Caruso and Wiggins as you mentioned, both those guys shot it well. They caused other problems. They ran it well. They made plays. They got a great feel to cut, and they hurt you in a lot of different ways.

But you know, Shai, you can mark down 34 points before they even get on the plane tomorrow, you know, for the next game. The guy's going to score. We've got to find ways to make it as tough as possible on him. Williams played really well tonight. All their guys played well.

And so we're going to have to do a lot of things better.

... when all is said, we're done.®



**Q. You talk a lot about disposition and physicality. How do you feel like your team handled that? Obviously, the Thunder seemed to ramp up their intensity much more.**

RICK CARLISLE: Not well.

**Q. With 3:40 left on the clock, you took the main guys out. Can you take us through the decision-making, when you decide, okay, it's over now, we are not trying till the very end, and how do you come up with these decisions?**

RICK CARLISLE: It's just, you know, NBA coaching. Sometimes you have to make tough decisions. That was an easy one.

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