

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Sunday, June 8, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

Game 2: Postgame



Oklahoma City Thunder 123, Indiana Pacers 107

Q. Shai, I just wondered in these two games what you've learned about what it takes to operate with a 10 to 20 point lead against Indiana and what you felt maybe was different about the middle quarters tonight.

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: You have to stay focused on the task at hand, whatever that may be for your team and how you want to attack them or go about the game plan. You have to lock in and stayed focused. Tonight we had some moments of slippage. You're not going to be perfect out there ever. It goes without saying, to make it this far into the season, it's going to take supreme level of focus to reach the ultimate goal.

They display that to the highest form. They play a full 48 minutes. You can't just throw the first punch. You got to try to throw all the punches all night. Yeah, that's what we did. We threw enough punches tonight to get a W.

Q. What did you think of the minutes that Aaron Wiggins gave you guys off the bench and just his shot-making?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, big-time. It's impressive to me. He's been exactly who he's been all year throughout the Playoffs. Like, sometimes it's 20 minutes, sometimes two minutes, sometimes he gets 10. It's all over the place. No matter what, he finds a way to impact winning for us.

You need it in the biggest moments. No one-man show can win an NBA championship. For him to rise to the occasion and just be who he's been in the biggest moment of his basketball career is pretty gutsy. Says a lot about the competitor and the man he is. Hats off to Wigs.

Q. First quarter pretty tight. Big run in the second quarter. What did you see during that run to allow you to establish that separation? Did that feel like you playing to your identity?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, we got stops. We ran. We capitalized on our opportunities. We just strung it together. I think we strung it together more often than we did in Game 1 tonight, especially on the defensive end of the floor.

Q. I want to ask you about the offense overall. 25 assists. It seemed like you had some of those ball movement plays that we've seen. Why were you able to get to more of that tonight?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Every night you, me personally, try to attack the defense. You try to just make the right play. You try to make them pay for what they throw at you coverage-wise, scheme-wise.

I think tonight, myself for sure, did a better job of attacking it. But as a whole we did a better job of attacking it. We were a little bit sticky last game. You have games like that. It sucks to be on this stage and have games like that, but it is what it is. It's where we are, right? It's where our feet are. All you can do is try to be the better for the next one. I've said that over the past couple days. I think we did a good job of that on both ends of the floor.

Q. Game 1 was loud, but today it was loudest. As a Brazilian, I think it's the closest that you can have to a South American soccer crowd. How much of a factor does that play on your win?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, it helps a lot. It feels like throughout the whole Playoffs the crowd has found a way to get louder every game. I don't know how they do it. Yeah, it's special to be able to play in front of them.

It honestly makes the road games a little bit easier because it feels like it's almost not as loud as it's been at home. Yeah, they're special. The best fans in the world.

Q. Back to the offense, it seemed like you really made an effort to get into your sets earlier in the clock. How much of a sticking point was that for you? If so, how helpful was that?



SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Hmm... I'm not too sure. That wasn't something that we tried to emphasize going into the game. But I think we just had a better flow to us tonight offensively. More in rhythm. I think that is definitely a product of it. You give yourself more time through a possession, you can work it more.

Not something we specifically tried to do, but stuff like that definitely helps with little things.

Q. I heard you mention having an extreme level of focus tonight. As you head to Indiana, is there momentum that you can carry over or is it a reset?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Every game is a reset, especially at this stage in the season. A series looks so different. We've had a series where we lost a game and won the next one by 40. We had a series where we won two in a row by 20 and lost the next one by 40. Every game is a reset.

Basketball reminds you of that. It's very humbling. It shows you that if you don't stay in the moment, if you don't come ready to play, no matter who you are, no matter what you just did, you can get beat and beat pretty bad. We've learned those lessons, so we should be ready to go.

Q. What does it say that in a game that's pretty much a very crucial win to get that you had six different assists to six different three-point shooters, you were so willing to rely on your teammates?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: The way I see it, I have no choice. No one-man show achieves what I'm trying to achieve with this game. All the stats and the numbers, they're fun. I don't play in space as much as I do without having them out there. I don't get open as much as I do without having the screeners out there. Whether it's a slide-out or a set, those guys are the reason why we're as good of a team as we are. I just add to it.

The way I see it, I had no choice. They are ready for the moment, as I knew they would be, and they performed.

Q. Your 72 points in the first two games is an all-time high for a player in his first two Finals games. Allen Iverson had 71. How do you feel you're meeting this moment on the Finals stage?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: I'm being myself. I don't think I tried to reinvent the wheel or step up to the plate with a different mindset. Just try to attack the game the right way. I think I've done a pretty good job of that so far.

Now, I would trade the points for two Ws, for sure. But this

is where our feet are. This is where we are. You can't go back in the past, you can only make the future better. That's what I'm focused on.

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