

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Friday, June 13, 2025

Indiana Pacers

Rick Carlisle

Game 4: Postgame



Oklahoma City Thunder 111, Indiana Pacers 104

Q. You guys were up 103 to 99, about three minutes and change there, and only have one point the rest of the way. What did you see from the rest of the offense that got stagnant?

RICK CARLISLE: We got stagnant. Their second shots were a big problem. When you're unable to rebound, it's hard to continue to play with pace and tempo. I haven't looked at the end of the game yet so I don't have the blow by blow for you. But give them credit. They kept attacking, kept attacking, and their defense was great down the stretch.

Q. You all had 20 assists in the first three quarters but only one in the fourth. What do you think caused that?

RICK CARLISLE: A lot of the same stuff I was just talking about. An inability to come up with rebounds, an inability to get key stops was a part of it, and then we just got too stagnant. The ball was not being advanced quickly enough. We weren't creating problems and we were up against the clock a lot. Things got very difficult.

But you've got to give Oklahoma credit. They made it very difficult.

Q. From the beginning of the series you talked about how it's an 18-day grind. How important is that mindset now that you know it's going at least six?

RICK CARLISLE: It's the ultimate effort, endeavor, whatever you want to call it. I mean, it's long. It's arduous. But it's the greatest opportunity going. It's the greatest opportunity going. It's really hard, and it's supposed to be hard. It's supposed to be hard. This is where we're going to have to dig in and circle the wagons and come back stronger on Monday. This is a big disappointment, but there's three games left.

Q. SGA was under wraps in the fourth quarter, 15 by

himself. Was he figuring something out? What did you see from your vantage point?

RICK CARLISLE: Well, he got to the free throw line some. I don't think he had gotten to the free throw line at all in the first half. Fouls were an issue. Look, he's a great player; that's the other issue. He's the MVP. We had a couple of good stands against him. One time he tried to split a double team and we came up with the ball, but I don't remember if we converted or not.

We had some terrific opportunities that we did cash in on in the third quarter, and some late third quarter that we did not that would have made it tougher on them going into the fourth quarter.

But hey, you're up seven at home. You have to dig in and find a way, and we were unable to do it tonight.

Q. How beautiful is it the last game, Bennedict stepping up, now Obi, somebody coming up with the points that you need?

RICK CARLISLE: We are put together really, probably, unlike any other team in the NBA in terms of our dependence on one another. You can look at the stats, and individual guys having big nights is a big part of success. But with us, the thing that works for us is balance. A lot of guys involved, a lot of guys passing it. A spirit that is evident, positive, regardless of whether things are going good or bad.

Obi did some terrific things tonight. Ben was great last game. Next game, we're going to have more guys stepping forward.

Q. The Thunder had three three-pointers. You had a 10-point lead and you lost the game. How much does that hurt? As a coach and champion, you've been in tough situations before. How do you motivate the guys to not let that loss sting for the next 48 hours?

RICK CARLISLE: We're going to look at the film tomorrow and then travel. They had 38 free throws, and that was a problem. They made 34 out of 38. We had 33 and made 25. They missed four. We missed eight. The difference of

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four is significant. There's a lot of little things going on.

But this series is going to come down to the basics, and our inability to effectively rebound when we needed to is the biggest thing. You know, 43 to 33 and a bunch of second-chance points made it difficult, and in the end, impossible.

We've got to bounce back. I don't need to motivate these guys. I think they have a sense of where they are. But this kind of a challenge is going to have extreme highs and extreme lows. This is a low right now, and we're going to have to bounce back from it.

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