

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Friday, June 13, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

Game 4: Postgame



Oklahoma City Thunder 111, Indiana Pacers 104

**Q. In the third quarter there was a play where you got the ball at the elbow, one-dribble jumper from the free throw line over Nembhard. When they're trying to wear you down as much as they are, are those looks something maybe you have to explore more to get you more in your spots over the smaller defender?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: For sure. There's a variety of ways to attack any defense, any coverage. I think the trick is keeping them off balance and sprinkling a good amount of everything in there, trying not to be predictable, especially when you play them six, seven times in a row, trying to keep them off balance as best as possible.

I think we had a good mixture, a good flow tonight.

**Q. It seemed like every touch was tough for you for the first three and a half quarters. You guys are trailing, season is on the line, what opened up? What allowed you to finish the way that you did?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: I just tried to be aggressive. Like you said, I knew what it would have looked like if we lost tonight. I didn't want to go out not swinging. I didn't want to go out not doing everything I could do in my power, in my control to try to win the game.

The guys deserve that as much from me. The coaching staff deserves that much from me. I just tried to be aggressive, but also let the game come to me, not try to force anything too crazy. I guess it paid off.

**Q. I was asking Coach about your demeanor. You knew what this game meant. He says you would never know based on how you look. You could be having dinner on a Wednesday.**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: [Smiling].

**Q. What is it inside you that your expression or demeanor doesn't change in these moments?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, I think I just try to get lost in competing, lost in trying to figure out what I can do to help this basketball team win on any given possession.

Yeah, that's what I try to get wrapped up in. That what I try to completely focus on. Now, it's a little bit tough at times given the situation and what's at stake. That's what I try to wrap my head around, for the most part.

**Q. You hadn't won a fourth quarter until tonight. What have you sort of learned over the course of the series to be able to withstand? As you spilled off the court, there was a sense of relief. Did you feel that? What was behind that?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, winning any quarter for us looks like us getting stops. That's first and foremost. We do that, we give ourselves a chance to score easier baskets, play faster. When we don't, it's harder just naturally. It's hard to take the ball out. Their defense gets set, try to score over a set defense. If you're playing this late in the season, you have a pretty good set defense. It's going to be hard if you don't get stops.

It came a little bit late tonight, but we stuck together enough to get a W.

What was the second question?

**Q. (No microphone.)**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Not so much belief. Personally I'd much rather win than lose. I still feel like we have so much work to do. Halfway there obviously, but still so far from the finish line. So, focused on the next opportunities, try to take advantage of that.

**Q. You don't get a lot of catch-and-shoot threes compared to a lot of other NBA players. You had a massive one there. What's gone into your work on even some of the smallest aspects of the game, that are showing up here in crunch time?**

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SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, I think I work on a lot of things. I try to be the most well-rounded basketball player that I can be. I just try to, like, be aggressive, try not to be predictable out there. I try to take what the defense gives me.

My work all season, all summer, allows me to be aggressive in those moments and be confident. That's what that was.

**Q. When it's 3:52 left, do you sense the game is in the balance, you can make your stamp on this game? Do you sense the moment?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Absolutely. That's what it's all about. Winning, especially this time of the season, it comes down to the moments, it's going to come down to late game. Every team is good. There's rarely going to be a blowout. It comes down to the moments and who is willing to make winning plays on both ends of the floor.

I relish those moments, love the moments, good or bad. When I was a kid shooting at my driveway, I'd count down the clock for those moments. Now I get to live it. It's a blessing, it's fun, and I relish it.

**Q. You and Dub went to the two-man game late in the game. Seems like you made the right decisions every time. Talk about the benefits of getting those mismatches with Dub specifically.**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: We've worked on that over the course of the last couple years. Both of us can do multiple things with the basketball: shoot, pass, handle. We try to just play off our instincts and play off each other, be aggressive, make the right basketball play.

If we do so, we usually end up with a pretty good shot because of the players we are. But yeah, we worked on that over the course of time. It showed up big tonight, for sure.

**Q. Despite the win, Mark was talking about the Pacers in some ways have found some solutions. What do you think they are doing well as the series gets better and what you guys need to solve?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: They're winning the small battles. They're winning the physicality. They're winning the aggressiveness battles. They're winning the 50/50 plays.

Now we strung together enough tonight in a short amount of time to come out with a W. If we want to do what we

ultimately set our minds out to do, we got to take care of those things and throw the first punch.

Yeah, for the most part of tonight, they were winning those battles, and that's why they had control of the game.

**Q. Jalen Williams when he was talking about Alex Caruso said he can become what your team needs in any sort of situation. For the time that he has been teammates with you, how would you describe Alex's adaptability for playing whatever role your team may need? Would you describe it as kind of a super ability?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, absolutely. He's a winner, to put it all into one word. He does whatever it takes on any given night, whether it's making shots, whether it's deflections, a steal, a block, whether it's a rebound. He does whatever it takes every night.

I've said this before, but he has a championship ring for a reason. It's no coincidence. He knows what it takes. He put the work in. He's proving it every night.

But he's a big-time performer. Big-time teammate. Big-time winner. If you want to win basketball games, you have a guy like that on your team. We're lucky to have him.

**Q. Mark, when he was up here, credited Lu Dort setting an unbelievable tone defensively in the fourth quarter. When you're trying to claw back, what did Lu do to get you guys settled down but put that frenzy into them on the defensive end?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, he was himself. He was pressuring. He was making life difficult for them to get into offense. He was physical on ball. He was disruptive. He was who he's been all season. I think that's the biggest thing. The more the fact that we can be who we've been all season, our identity, the better off we'll be.

He was really good in that situation. He was a catalyst for our comeback, for sure.

**Q. You had a great closing three, four minutes. Early in the game, J-Dub seemed to take a lot of the load. How much does it help and make it easier on you when you got a guy like that that can produce, carry the offense for a while?**

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, he was special tonight. He's been really good the last couple nights. It's impressive to see his growth and his ability at such a young age on this stage.



But yeah, that's what makes us a good team. It's more than just me. Way more than just me. He can carry the load. He can be the second fiddle. He can just play defense. He can guard your five. There's so many things he can do on a basketball court. I think that's why he's having the year he's having.

Yeah, he was amazing tonight. Makes life easier not only for myself but for the rest of the group, for sure.

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