

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

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Indiana Pacers

Tyrese Haliburton

Practice Day



Q. Couple years ago in the first In-Season Tournament run, NBA Cup run that you guys had, we asked you about how you guys got there, and if LeBron was the final monster of a video game or something like that. And you said that it felt like you guys weren't supposed to be there and you were beating teams every time. It feels similar now to these playoffs. How did that run help you guys get where you are now in these Finals?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Yeah, I think every moment throughout our journey as a group is a stepping stone. You learn from the good, learn from the bad to get to where we are today. The good games, bad games, high-scoring games, low-scoring games, they are all lessons at the end of the day to get to where we are today, and here we are. It's all part of the journey.

Q. You mentioned the other day in 2011 maybe not being the most massive Rick Carlisle fan, as that team, the 2011 Mavs, just going up against LeBron in the Finals. Can you walk me through as a guy who grew up loving LeBron's game, what do you remember of watching that series, the emotions, the frustration of seeing them pull that upset? And was it your first intro to what Carlisle can do with an underdog team?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: I remember that being my first intro to basketball. My earliest recollection of watching the game was like 2010 NBA. I feel like that was really the growth of me as a basketball fan and really starting to appreciate the game more.

But yeah, I don't know if I necessarily remember a ton of the X's and O's stuff. I remember I was confused as to why Dallas was winning. I didn't necessarily understand it.

I think it's funny to look back on and think about -- I think about that all the time in my journey here in the NBA, is how much I've watched and learned and how I'm now here in it. That's funny to think back on, and here I am with Coach Carlisle now. It's definitely pretty cool.

Q. This has been an emotional four games so far to this series with a lot of swings. With the way Game 4 ended and the disappointment of it, how do you flush that, if you flush it at all? How do you put that behind you mentally, emotionally?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Well, I mean, still a lot of games to be played. There's still a lot that can happen. I think once you get to the playoffs, I don't think it's so much about flushing things. You've really got to take every game, see where you did well and see where you can do better and learn from that.

I think in the regular season, it's different. You play 82 games. You play a team in Game 10 that you don't see again until Game 60. So, all right, flush it and move on to the next.

In the playoffs, it's different. You don't get the right to flush games. You have to learn from everything and watch film and see where you can get better. Game 4 didn't end the way we wanted it to, but the biggest thing is you can't let one spiral into two. You can't take the disappointment of that game and let it be a snowball effect.

You have to be ready to go for Game 5 here, again in a hostile environment. We are both two games away. Anything can happen here. So you have to move on as quickly as you can. See where you can get better. Watch the film, which we have done a lot of over the last two days. Practice today and get ready to go for tomorrow.

Q. Wondering for a young team, what's impressed you, maybe even surprised you, about the way your group has risen to the level of competition, fatigue, what's demanded of teams trying to win a title here in the Finals?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: There's no surprises, to be honest with you. I know our group very well. I'm proud of our resilience. We've had to find different ways to win for the last two, three months. So, proud of that.

We'll just continue to respond. It's not the time to necessarily reflect on how the year has been. We've still



got a lot of work front of us. But definitely excited about our group and looking forward to continuing to compete with these guys tomorrow.

Q. I know a lot of these sound similar, but it's a 2-2 series. How do you feel about where you are now? How do you feel about it?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: I feel great. It's the best part about playoff series, is when you get the chance to respond. I think that's the great thing about sports. You're going to have good games. You're going to have bad games. But there's nothing like the game to respond.

I look forward to doing that with this group, coming out and competing. We've got to be ready for a really big challenge that lies ahead with this team and in this environment.

So I'm really looking forward to doing that with my teammates and seeing how we respond.

Q. I know when you're playing in it, who is watching doesn't matter, but one of the big storylines coming in was these are two, quote, small-market teams, whatever. Ratings haven't been great. What would you tell people who for whatever reason chose not to watch this and what they are missing?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: I do not care, to be honest with you. This is high-level basketball, and I'm excited to be a part of it. So, I mean, I couldn't care less.

Q. Tyrese, just over the past few years, what have you seen out of Nesmith, younger player, still finding his way in the league to the starter he's become, and some very impressive performances throughout this postseason? Just overall, what you've seen from him throughout this time?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Yeah, we traded for Double A, I didn't know a ton about him. We were in the same draft class and were always mentioned as two of the top shooters in our class. I knew that. But I didn't know anything about him, to be honest.

The more I've gotten to know him, there's not another guy I would rather go to war with, to be honest with you. He gives 100 percent at all times, and he's worked his tail off to get to where he is.

I've said it many times, but every NBA team wants to have a guy like Aaron Nesmith. His effort is unbelievable. His energy, his attitude, all those things. I know he is going to show up every day and be the same guy. I think that's what I appreciate about him the most.

Q. Every player I ask to remember their best games, their most outstanding games, they are games in which they did something on offense. In your case, you almost had a triple-double. So they remember the stats even. What are your best defensive games that you can remember, and did we see one in these Finals?

TYRESE HALIBURTON: Yeah, that's a funny question. I'm not necessarily known as a great defender.

I don't know, I think any time or any game that I can just be in the right spots for us is important. I think that through this playoff series, especially Game 3, I thought we did a great job defensively of closing the game.

So for me, I think I don't really look at where I am individually as a defender. It's like team defensively. I feel like more times than not, if we are having a good team defensive game, I'm as solid as can be. That's how I try to look at it.

I hope our best defensive effort lies ahead. That's the goal. Yeah, I look forward to the challenge.

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