

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Wednesday, June 18, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder

Jalen Williams

Practice Day

**Q. Offensively for the responsibilities that Shai and you have on a nightly basis, when it comes to shots taken, scoring opportunities, how much is that a result of what your system steers you guys toward and how much is that organically the type of players you are?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: You're saying how many shots I shoot a game? What do you mean?

**Q. He's your leading scorer. Is he always likely to be your leading scorer? Are you likely to be the number two scorer because of the way you play or the players you are?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: Honestly, it's a mixture of both of those. I think what helps is that we both want to win. So for me and him, it doesn't really matter who is the leading scorer or who is not. I think it also helps pecking order-wise, he's the MVP. If he wants to shoot a lot of shots, I'm going to tell him "good shot" every time. That's kind of how that works.

A lot of it, too, is a result of our offense and how other guys play around us, how it's structured. We don't really go into games and, All right, I'm going to shoot 20 times; Dub, you shoot 12.

It's kind of taking whatever the game gives us. I think that's what makes us a good team.

**Q. I can imagine after your historic performance messages and phone calls you received. What is a name that maybe you haven't heard from in a long time or stands out the most?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: Outside of my parents -- nobody, for real. Friends and family. Honestly I try not to answer my phone as much, even though that probably sounded like I'm a jerk. There's just a lot of highs and lows throughout the series. You don't get as many texts if you don't play well. I try to keep that in perspective, too.



A lot of it can be really overwhelming if you give a lot of energy to it. It makes me sound like a jerk, but I try to get back to them after business is done. A lot of it is trying to put my phone away and spend time with the people that are at the game and here with me.

**Q. We've talked about your adaptability as a group. There's some uncertainty coming at you in Game 6 in terms of Haliburton's status. You have had experience in these situations. Can you maybe explain the adaptability that you feel when the other team's circumstances change on you?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: A big thing for us just during the season has been -- and it's the NBA so it's kind of funny, you never know who actually is going to play or not throughout the season. We've done a really good job of focusing on us. The Pacers are a very good team. I've been saying before, you don't stumble into the Finals. You surely don't get into the Finals with just one person.

We're going to get their best punch regardless of who plays and who doesn't. They're going to be fighting like their backs are against the wall. That's the mindset we have going into it. Whoever lines up is who lines up.

There's going to be no shortage of energy. They're going to play their hearts out. That's kind of the mindset we have with it. Then whoever plays, plays.

**Q. At this time the plot of this series looks familiar to the Denver one. From that one, you won Game 5. What did you learn from that one in terms of long series, no secrets between the two teams, try to close this one tomorrow?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: You try to take the lessons from each series and go from there. So a lot of it for this series was, like, Game 1, for example, we lose Game 1. Pretty heartbreaking one. A game-winner in the Finals for them is super cool for them; for us, it sucks. Having a maturity of understanding the highs and lows of a series. The biggest thing for us it's first to four, not first to three.

The same way we felt Game 1, they probably felt last game. They're going to come in focused for this one.

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You try to take the lessons from Denver, what we did in Game 6. We didn't come out ready to play, frankly, and sustaining our energy through that series. We're going to try to do a little bit better with this one. Where the chips fall, they fall. A lot of it is trying to grow through each experience.

**Q. A couple days ago you talked about growing up playing the one. What kind of point guard were you? What was your game like before you started playing on the wing?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: I was, like, Andre Miller. That was somebody I watched a little bit. This is going to sound like a shot at him, but it's not. Kind of unathletic a little bit, below-the-rim kind of player. I was kind of slow-footed.

Just understood pace. Shot the ball really well. Shot a lot of threes. Kind of pass-first almost. That was my game.

**Q. You just became the player with the fewest minutes played to ever score a 40-point game in the NBA Finals since 1955. Alongside with Shai, you both had averaging 30 points in the last three games. LeBron James, Kyrie Irving, Elgin Baylor and Jerry West. How special is it to be alongside those guys so early in your career?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah, that's a blessing, for sure. God has put me in a good space. It's kind of bittersweet because it happens in the Finals. A lot of it is getting over it pretty quickly. I've stopped thinking about it.

But that night was really cool, something that I don't take for granted. Yeah, elite company, for sure. It's something also that I've put on the back burner. For me, that game no longer matters. We're trying to close out a series.

Looking back at it, when I'm done playing basketball, just to be in those conversations is really cool. It's special my family got to be a part of it, too.

**Q. A GM said this is the fastest Finals. Putting aside physicality, setting records of speed and distance, how does it feel in terms of covering the court at the speed you're running? Do you feel that? Is that assessment correct in your experience?**

JALEN WILLIAMS: Yeah, for sure. The games go by super fast. I expected the physicality part. Everyone is playing to win a championship. The physicality part is always going to be there.

I think the similarities in which each team plays with, and

watching it, you can feel how fast the game is. For both teams to be young, I think everybody is enjoying themselves. That's definitely part of the game. I'm happy that it's been that way, too. It's living up to being in the Finals. It's fun to play physical and fast and do that.

It does feel that way, the same way that everybody is watching and it looks. It does feel that way.

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