

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Thursday, June 19, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder

Shai Gilgeous-Alexander

Game 6: Postgame



try to learn from, try to put it all together for one night and see where it takes you.

Q. Shai, did you individually feel the weight of the chance to clinch a championship tonight?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Definitely in the back of our minds, for sure. Now, we didn't play like it at all. That's why the night went the way it did. We got exactly what we deserved, what we earned. We have to own that.

Q. You played in one-and-out NCAA tournament games, Olympics. What is this like? Can that time help you at all? Being who you are, do you have to put a cape on to ensure the championship?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, all those experiences help me, for sure, like the one-and-done experiences, do-or-die games. There's lessons from every game, but those games in particular, for sure, are going to help.

No, I don't feel like I have to do anything other than just be the best version of myself. I think that goes for everyone else in the room. We just have to bring what we bring to the table, what we've brought to the table all year, bring our best come Sunday.

Q. The fourth quarter, on the bench, what is going through your mind? How does that time you're on the bench go mentally?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Thinking about what you could have did better or what I could have did better tonight. Also, watching the group on the floor was impressive. They were great. They haven't played all series, then they go out there and play as hard as they did, it was inspiring. They were really good tonight. Kind of taught me a lesson.

Then just trying to do everything I can, everything I can learn from to get ready for the next game.

Q. The broadcast caught you saying "Sunday is for all the marbles." How are you viewing this opportunity, the weight of it?

Indiana Pacers 108, Oklahoma City Thunder 91

Q. Shai, how do you balance kind of the short-term disappointment of failing to close out this game versus knowing that you have that Game 7 in your back pocket?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: The way I see it is, we sucked tonight. We can learn our lessons. We have one game for everything, for everything we've worked for, and so do they. The better team Sunday will win.

Q. You've been under pressure this whole series from them. Defensively tonight they were able to have more success than they've had. Did they do anything different? The turnovers were high. Any explanation?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, they just turned us over a bunch. They didn't pressure full court like they have been, which led to more turnovers. I didn't expect that. But whatever it is, they did it right. If we want to win on Sunday, we got to take care of the ball.

Q. They picked you up much higher than they had been. They were picking you up by 60 feet in the first five games, 39 feet today. Did you feel that difference?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: They were definitely lower on the pickups. I'm not sure. Some of them I think was carelessness, not being as focused, not being engaged. They played harder than us tonight as well. When a team plays harder, they turn the other team over. It's probably a combination of many things.

Q. This series has so many similarities to the Denver series. Can you learn anything from there that you can apply here?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: Yeah, I think the way we felt in that series was it's a 3-3 series, 0-0, one game to advance, and the better team will win. I think it's the exact same thing. Everything that's happened in the series you

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SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: One game for everything you ever dreamed of. If you win it, you get everything. If you lose it, you get nothing. It's that simple.

Q. Are you sensing any differences in the difficulty of closing out a Finals versus closing out any other playoff series?

SHAI GILGEOUS-ALEXANDER: No. I see it as the same thing. In round two, if we had lost, I would have just have been as disappointed. We would have went home and our season would have been over. If we lose, the season is over in the wrong way. Either way I would have been extremely disappointed, so I don't think it's any different.

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