

NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Saturday, June 21, 2025

Oklahoma City Thunder

Alex Caruso

Practice Day



Q. Can you finish this sentence for me? Game 7 is...

ALEX CARUSO: Tomorrow night.

Q. What does Game 7 mean to you?

ALEX CARUSO: When I think of Game 7, at least in the Finals, I think of San Antonio and Miami, and I think of Lakers-Celtics.

Q. How blessed is it to play here in such an important game and how can you use that to your advantage in a must-win situation for both?

ALEX CARUSO: It's a reward for playing through the regular season that we did, having the depth and the team that we do to win that many games and to be able to have home court.

Yeah, I'm excited to play here. No place I'd rather play for a do-or-die game than here.

Q. We talked about pressure on players in Game 7. Any pressure on Mark tomorrow night to coach his best and make the right adjustments, right rotations, those things?

ALEX CARUSO: That's a small percentage of the game. I think it's largely decided by the players. Obviously, a good game plan and adjustments are necessary. But I'd say a large majority of that is just the players playing the game.

Q. What are you learning about the Pacers having played them six games in this series?

ALEX CARUSO: Everything we looked at when we came in. They are a really good team. They ran through the East how they did, not by luck. They played their brand of basketball and they have talented players and play together and they have a really strong belief in themselves. That's why this series is 3-3 and why they are in the NBA Finals and why they're playing tomorrow night.

Q. What stood out to you about the defense that kept you guys out of the paint and getting downhill as much as usually do?

ALEX CARUSO: They switched up of how they played us the first couple games. More in line with how Denver played us and how Minnesota played us coming in. I think we just didn't do a good enough job adjusting to that and trusting the way that we played previously live in the course of the game.

I think to that point, we've seen every attack defensively this year, whether it be for Shai, Dub, the whole team. People play aggressive, people play soft, play zone, play trap, sit back and plug. We're prepared for whatever it is, it's about going out there and recognizing the right one and taking advantage of it.

Q. Does this feel any different going into it tomorrow, Game 7?

ALEX CARUSO: You try to make it as binary as possible. You're either going to win or lose. That is literally what's going to happen. The season is going to be over and you're going to be champion, or you're going to lose and start from square one. You might as well go out and put your best forward and compete your ass off and play hard for your teammates and try and win.

Q. What advice are you getting from Mark in this moment?

ALEX CARUSO: He's telling us to really be ourselves. I think when we've done that through the year and we've played the way we play, strong defensively, moving the ball with pace offensively, we are a really good team and that's why we won 68 games, why we won 15 to this point in the postseason. In order to win one more, we need to be ourselves at a really high level.

Q. Is there more pressure on you guys this year because it's Game 7 at home?

ALEX CARUSO: I don't think so. I don't think location matters for pressure's sake. I think the pressure of the

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moment is that everything you've put into this year to grow through the regular season, training camp, postseason, the pressure might be just like not wanting to waste that.

But at the end of the day, like I said, you're either going to win or lose. Like that's the reality of the situation. So go out there and you play your best and you play as hard as you can and you let the chips fall where they may.

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