

# NBA Finals: Thunder vs. Pacers

Sunday, June 22, 2025

Indiana Pacers

T.J. McConnell

Game 7: Postgame

Oklahoma City Thunder 103, Indiana Pacers 91

**Q. When Tyrese went down, how did the team react and how do you feel you guys played from that point on?**

T.J. McCONNELL: It was a tough, tough feeling to see your franchise guy go down like that. But to have to move on and kind of compartmentalize it is tough.

I thought we were fine. I don't even remember the score going into halftime but we were up one. So you know, I thought we did a good job of kind of compartmentalizing it. Obviously, we missed him.

But you know, we all are devastated for him, and obviously support him.

**Q. Can you take us inside the locker room right now? What was this like after the game, knowing the season's over and you guys came so close after a special year?**

T.J. McCONNELL: Yeah. No moral victories, obviously. But deflated. But proud of everything we've accomplished.

You know, there's no award for second place, obviously. So everyone's upset. But hats off to OKC. They were the better team today.

**Q. We saw Ty greeting you guys as you came off the court and we heard him cheering from the locker room. Anything you can share about what maybe you guys said to him or just seeing him still being upbeat and trying to cheer you guys on every at halftime there.**

T.J. McCONNELL: That's just who Ty is. To go down like that and be selfless and just continuing to cheer for us, and even though he can't play, I think that just speaks volumes to who Tyrese Haliburton is, one of the greatest human beings I've come in contact with. Great teammate.



Obviously hurting for him but that's just who he is.

**Q. You mentioned compartmentalization. That's what professional athletes do. They compartmentalize all the time. I can't imagine that it was easy or you were even able to do that in this situation given the magnitude of the game and the injury.**

T.J. McCONNELL: Yeah, when it happened, I think a lot of us were shaken up, and like you said, that's kind of part of the job. But it's hard to do when you see your guy go down like that and have to move on right away and finish the game, especially when it's that early.

We came back at halftime, and we were all giving him a hug and telling him we support him and we'll continue to support him throughout his rehab process.

**Q. What you guys have been able to do this season has inspired an entire city, and I know the fan support has meant so much to you guys. What do you have to say for the fans after the season?**

T.J. McCONNELL: They are just absolutely incredible. Just want to apologize for coming up short. We wouldn't be in this position without them. They buoyed us to a lot of wins, and it's an honor and a pleasure to play in front of them.

**Q. I apologize if this was asked earlier but the cameras got the image of Tyrese outside the locker room greeting a bunch of guys, including you. What does that say? He could have gone to the airport or the hotel but he stayed, and what did you take away from that moment that you two shared?**

T.J. McCONNELL: Doesn't surprise me at all. That's who he is as a person, a teammate. He put his ego aside constantly. He could have been in the locker room feeling sorry for himself after something like that happened, but he wasn't. He was up greeting us.

A lot of us were hurting from the loss and he was up there consoling us. That's who Tyrese Haliburton is. He's just the greatest, man.



**Q. What is it like to try to change how you're going to attack a team like that on the fly? I know you've had to deal with injuries mid game a lot of times this season, but to try to do it in Game 7, what was that challenge like?**

T.J. McCONNELL: Up until they went on their run, we were moving the ball, taking care of it. I didn't take care of it so well, obviously. Their pressure can really get to you but I was just trying to be aggressive and had some uncharacteristic turnovers but that happens.

Just proud of the fight. We fought to the end. Credit to OKC. They are just really good.

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