

NBA

Pacers beat Knicks 125-108 in Game 6 to reach NBA Finals

By MICHAEL MAROT
AP Sports Writer

INDIANAPOLIS — Pascal Siakam and Tyrese Haliburton made sure the Indiana Pacers gave their fans a celebration they waited 25 years to see again. Siakam had 31 points and Haliburton scored 11 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter, carrying the Pacers to a 125-108 victory over the New York Knicks on Saturday night for a 4-2 series win and their first trip to the NBA Finals since 2000.

It's just the second time in franchise history that they'll play for the championship. The series begins Thursday at Oklahoma City. "Pascal and Tyrese put us on their backs and made sure we would not lose," coach Rick Carlisle told the gold-clad crowd that was on its feet for the waning minutes and the postgame party. "But our work has just begun." Siakam won the Larry Bird Trophy as the Eastern Conference finals MVP. Bird is the only other coach to take the Pacers to the Finals. Haliburton finished with 13 assists and Obi Toppin added 18 points and six rebounds against his former team.



AJ MAST/AP

New York Knicks center Mitchell Robinson (right) defends against Indiana Pacers forward Pascal Siakam during the second half of Game 6 of the Eastern Conference finals of the NBA playoffs Saturday in Indianapolis.

OG Anunoby led the Knicks with 24 points. Karl-Anthony Towns had 22 points and 14 rebounds, while Jalen Brunson added 19 points as the Pacers' relentless ball pressure forced New York into 17 turnovers. "There were stretches where we played very good defense and stretches where we didn't," Knicks coach Tom Thibodeau said. "I think once you dig into it and you look at it, was it our defense? Or was it our turnovers? I think it was probably a combination of both." Whatever the explanation, the Knicks are headed home

again courtesy of the Pacers. New York still hasn't played in the finals since 1999. It was a magical night at Gainbridge Fieldhouse — from the festive pre-game atmosphere through the roaring ovation for the starters as they departed with 47.2 seconds to go to Reggie Miller's presentation of the Eastern Conference's Bob Cousy Trophy to Pacers owner Herb Simon on TNT's final NBA broadcast. Miller was one of the telecast's color analysts. And yet, it was a tough, physical game that didn't always follow the Pacers' preferred style.

Whether it was Towns limping after drawing a foul or Haliburton holding his jaw when he took a shot that knocked him to the ground, the tone was set early — and never really changed with so much at stake. Indiana finally broke open a close game by opening the second half on a 9-0 run, then extended their lead to 78-63 courtesy of three straight 3-pointers — two from Thomas Bryant and one from Andrew Nembhard. The run ignited the crowd, which included everyone from Colts quarterback Anthony Richardson to WNBA star Caitlin Clark to Timothee Chalamet to Kylie Jenner. But when the Knicks answered with eight straight to cut the deficit to 78-71, the Pacers responded with another 9-0 run to take their biggest lead of the game and the Knicks were forced to play catch-up the rest of the night.

"This is no time to be popping champagne," said Carlisle, who won the 2011 title as coach of the Dallas Mavericks. "When you get to this point of the season, it's two teams and it's one goal. So it becomes an all or nothing thing and we understand the magnitude of it."

SWIMMING

American star King announces farewell season

By JANIE McCAULEY
AP Sports Writer

American three-time Olympic swimming star and world record holder Lilly King has announced the upcoming Toyota National Championships in Indianapolis will be her final meet on U.S. soil as she prepares to call it a career at the conclusion of the 2025 season. The meet will run Tuesday through Saturday. A longtime breaststroke stalwart, King announced her plans Saturday on Instagram and said swimming her final race in the U.S. in her

home state and a pool she's known since her youth "has always been important to me." "Well, folks, my time has come. This will be my final season competing," she wrote. "I'm fortunate heading into retirement being able to say I have accomplished everything I have ever wanted in this sport. I feel fulfilled." The 28-year-old King holds the world record in the 100-meter breaststroke with a time of 1:04.13, set at the 2017 world championships. She won an Olympic gold medal in the 100 breast at the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Games and also captured Olympic

titles on relays in Rio and at her final Olympics last year in Paris. The U.S. women's 4x100 medley relay set a world record in 3:49.63. Regan Smith, Gretchen Walsh and Torri Huske were her teammates in the Americans' victory over defending Olympic champion Australia. "Just an awesome way to cap off the meet," King said afterward. At the delayed 2020 Tokyo Olympics, King earned silver medals in the 200 breaststroke and 4x100 medley relay and a bronze in the 100 breast. She narrowly missed the medal stand in the 100 breast in Paris.

Briefs

AP

Mystik Dan snaps losing streak with victory at Churchill Downs

LOUISVILLE — Mystik Dan snapped a five-race losing streak with a 1 1/4-length victory in the \$270,000 Blame Stakes on Saturday at Churchill Downs, where he won the 2024 Kentucky Derby. Mystik Dan won the 150th Derby by a nose in the closest three-horse photo finish since 1947. After that, his skid included a second in the Preakness, an eighth in the Belmont at Saratoga and a ninth in the Pegasus World Cup Invitational. "In hindsight, I wish I could take away a couple of those races after the Triple Crown," trainer Ken McPeck said. "We got him back to his old self." Reminiscent of that race, Mystik Dan relaxed off the pace along the inside rail, cut the corner at the top of the stretch and powered home Saturday under Brian Hernandez Jr. "When Mystik Dan is right, he's such a fun horse to ride because he makes my job so easy," Hernandez said. Mystik Dan 1 1/8 miles in a stakes record time of 1:48.45. He paid \$8.12 to win as the 3-1 third choice. Antiquarian was second and 2-1 favorite Post Time was third. The victory, worth \$166,710, increased Mystik Dan's career earnings to \$4,417,570.

Nashville SC battles to 2-2 draw with visiting New York City FC

NASHVILLE — Hannes Wolf scored two second-half goals to help New York City FC play Nashville SC to a 2-2 draw on Saturday. NYCFC (8-6-3) has only two defeats in its last six road games to collect six points. Nashville (8-5-4) is unbeaten in eight consecutive games dating to a 3-0 loss at Seattle on April 19. Wolf pulled NYCFC within 2-1 in the 54th minute after finishing off a nice passing sequence. The tying goal came in the 87th when Keaton Parks headed a loose ball into the corner of the 6-yard box and Wolf got a touch on it to get past Matt Freese, who had come out of his area. Sam Surridge also scored twice for Nashville in the first half. It was his third straight game with a goal. Surridge opened the scoring in the 27th by trailing the play and slotting home a back-heel pass from Hany Mukhtar. Surridge made it 2-0 in the 41st by finishing Alex Muyl's nice individual effort.

Veteran pitcher Miley opts out of minor-league contract with Reds

CHICAGO — Wade Miley has opted out of his minor league contract with the Cincinnati Reds, making the veteran left-hander a free agent. Miley, 38, is coming back from Tommy John surgery. He went 1-2 with an 8.84 ERA in seven starts at Triple-A Louisville this season. Cincinnati had until Sunday to make a decision on Miley, who is looking for a starting opportunity. The Reds could have brought him up and put him in their bullpen. Reds manager Terry Francona praised president of baseball operations Nick Krall for giving Miley a chance to look around.

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