

How the Raptors pulled off their greatest comeback ever in Game 5

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When Bismack Biyombo hit two free throws with .34 seconds left in the third quarter to bring the Raptors within 13, no one could have anticipated it would be the start of the most important run in franchise history.

Toronto's previous [largest comeback in a playoff game](#) was eight points in the first round against Detroit in 2002. They entered the fourth quarter of Game 5 on Tuesday night trailing the Pacers 90-77. It would take an unprecedented rally for the Raptors to win the game and avoid going down 3-2 in the series. The angst in the arena reflected that daunting reality.

Frank Vogel started the fourth with Paul George, George Hill, and Monta Ellis on the Pacers bench. He did the same to open the second quarter and the Raptors had responded with an 11-1 run.

Sensing an opportunity to pounce, Dwane Casey went against his regular structure and put out an unorthodox lineup consisting of Kyle Lowry, Cory Joseph, Norman Powell, DeMar DeRozan and Biyombo. It was the first time those five players took the floor together in an NBA game. Desperate times, indeed.

Slowly but surely, the Raptors began cutting into Indiana's lead. Lowry drained a pull-up jumper on Toronto's first shot of the quarter. Biyombo made two more free throws and crammed in a dunk on the next possession to make it 90-83. Life was breathed back into the building.

George and Hill returned on the next stoppage with 8:36 remaining and the Pacers still leading 90-83. George had scored 37 points over the first three quarters and it appeared there wasn't much the Raptors could do to keep him from reaching 50. He finished the game with 39.

Powell was the primary defender on George in the fourth, aggressively guarding the Pacers All-Star with the

knowledge he could do so fearlessly because he had the help and support of his teammates. George went 1-for-3 and committed two turnovers in the quarter as Toronto's stifling pressure forced the ball out of his hands.

"It was team defence," said Casey. "I thought our defensive help was there. One guy is not going to stop Paul George, he's such a great scorer ... It wasn't a one-man show."

The Raptors' relentlessness on both ends was getting to the Pacers. Rodney Stuckey drew a foul, but missed both free throws. Then George came down the floor and turned the ball over. Indiana was coming apart.

C.J. Miles finally scored the Pacers' first basket of the fourth at 7:41 after a Powell runner had gotten the Raptors to within five. Unperturbed by Miles disrupting their scoring streak, Joseph cut to the hoop for a layup. Back to five.

The Pacers' struggles soon became even comedic. Stuckey inexplicably fumbled a ball out of bounds and in his effort to save the ball fell at the feet of Drake, the Raptors' global ambassador.

"His shoes went out, he stepped out of bounds, and ran over Drake on the side. I was more worried about Drake than I was Stuckey," Casey said.

Terrence Ross, who replaced DeRozan, nailed a three-pointer on the ensuing possession. A 13-point deficit was down to two.

Raptors fans didn't have to wait much longer to let all their emotions out. Powell stripped Ellis on the defensive end and took off the other way on a fast break. When Powell's feet hit the paint he elevated, hanging in the air for what seemed like forever before he emphatically slammed the ball into the hoop, delivering the signature play of the run and tying the game 92-92 with 6:31 to play.

"He was gonna get cussed out if he missed," DeRozan said. "That's why I don't do fancy dunks."

The Raptors weren't satisfied with a tie, though. DeRozan – a subpar three-point shooter for his career –swished one in from the left side for three of his 34 points and after yet another missed shot by Indiana, assisted a Joseph three. The Air Canada Centre crowd went wild. Against all odds, the Raptors led 98-92. The Pacers took a timeout, but the damage was done. Toronto had reeled off a 23-2 run to regain control of the game, and by holding on for a 102-99 win, head to Indiana for Game 6 with a 3-2 series lead.

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