

# NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

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New York Knicks

Jalen Brunson

Media Day



**Q. Jalen, what does it mean to you and your family, you and your dad 27 years apart, first father-son to play in the NBA Finals for the same team? Do you remember any of those games? Did you go to any of those games?**

JALEN BRUNSON: Definitely don't remember.

It's pretty surreal. I'm not going to lie. It's something I haven't really thought about. I feel like once the season's over, once the career's over, there will be times to think about the stuff that we'll be able to go through together.

It's definitely a cool feeling.

**Q. From your matchups this year, what have you made of Castle as a defender and how he defends you?**

JALEN BRUNSON: He's great. I think his intensity and tenacity is special. He plays with a chip on his shoulder. He's had that since I've seen him at UConn. The way he's played over these first couple years of his career, he's going to be a great player, great defender.

He's tough. Something you have to game plan for and just be smart.

**Q. You've played on big stages, two national championships, USA Basketball. You never played with a Finals logo on the court. Do you expect it's going to feel different? How do you think it might feel different?**

JALEN BRUNSON: I mean, yeah, I feel like everything leading up to Game 1 is going to be definitely high end just because of everything that goes on around it.

I think most importantly when you can prepare the right way, when you do your routines, you treat it like a normal game, it allows you to be as normal as possible for you.

For me just trying to make sure I'm levelheaded, making sure I do the things I need to do pregame-wise. Not change anything just because it's the Finals.

**Q. You've talked a lot about the adaptability on the offensive end for your team, different styles you can go to. Defensively they bring a lot of that to the table. As you've dug into them, what have you seen from the diversity or versatility of their defense?**

JALEN BRUNSON: Yeah, they're very physical. The way they play, obviously, they're able to pressure on the perimeter. Obviously having Wemby down there on the weak side creates havoc. They're multi-dimensional. A lot of ways they can beat you on both sides of the ball.

Obviously paying attention to the details when playing is very important to us.

**Q. Right now you've obviously established yourself, built a career, your name and reputation. Has there ever been a point in your career or life where you felt like you had imposter syndrome, didn't belong, were uncomfortable?**

JALEN BRUNSON: The only time is probably my rookie year, coming into my rookie season, playing pickup with the team in Dallas, then obviously watching Luka do his thing so effortlessly.

Something I talked about, I don't know when, but a while ago publicly. That was probably the only time. It made me kind of question myself to see how hard I actually had to work to be in the position I wanted to be.

**Q. Victor was in here talking about you guys. He said you guys got here to the NBA Finals through relentless effort. What do you make of him as a player and person?**

JALEN BRUNSON: Yeah, watching him as a player, it's pretty unbelievable. Things he's able to do on both sides of the ball. People have never really seen before, for a person of his size. It's incredible to watch from a player's perspective.

As an opposing player, it's something you constantly have to be on watch for. You just never know the things that he's capable of doing.

That's why game planning and our game-planning discipline, our attention to details are so important when it comes to playing because he's pretty incredible.

**Q. How does it feel to be here in the NBA Finals as a member of the New York Knicks? How did you guys handle the extra time this past week? More family or maybe you get together to see a Western Conference Finals game maybe?**

JALEN BRUNSON: Well, yes, I'm very excited to be here. Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. You can't take for granted.

How we took the time off, how we spent the time off? A couple days off. When we were in the gym, we were focused. We were practicing pretty hard, understanding that not knowing who we were playing yet, we had to prepare for both teams. We didn't want to be behind the eight ball.

It was really important for us to have those days because we saw how we came out in Game 1 last time when we had the rest days. I feel it's really important those days we had, it was important for us, for sure.

**Q. What is it about the fabric of this team which leads you to believe that you will thrive in the NBA's biggest spotlight?**

JALEN BRUNSON: I think we're a focused group. I think we're a hard-working group. I feel like we've been doubted a lot. There's been a lot of noise on the outside that we could obviously talk about, complain about, do something about. We've always just went back into the gym, worked on our game individually. When it came to practice, now we're focused, when it came to games, we kept getting better and better.

I think our mentality is in the right place at the right time. We just got to stay focused and keep learning. Even today, we can't be satisfied because we're here, we have to keep learning.

**Q. I know you don't remember '99, the games, because of your age, but Allan Houston is around, Patrick Ewing, your dad. As you get into this position as being a leader, anything you take from the stories from the fabric of that team that you implement as far as being a leader?**

JALEN BRUNSON: I think when it comes to being a

leader, there are a lot of different leaders in this world. The way I've gone about being a leader is taking bits and pieces of different things that I've learned from leaders and try to make them my own.

You hear stories about people's experience in different situations. But the biggest experiences you get is actually going through things. As a leader, just making sure we're all on the same page, we're all learning together, we're all accountable for each other.

We're going to go through this together, ups and downs, like we have been. That's what's most important.

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