

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Tuesday, June 2, 2026

New York Knicks

Josh Hart

Media Day



Q. Josh, what kind of honor, what kind of responsibility is it to try to bring a title to this city for the first time in 53 years?

JOSH HART: Obviously a tremendous honor. I don't think we're really looking at it that way right now. I think we're just locked in and focused on the task at hand. Then we can look back when everything is all said and done and really embrace this process and this run.

It's an honor, but can't focus too much on the outside world and the run so far.

Q. Mikal has had his ups and downs over the last couple of years. What's impressed you about how he's persevered through them, and how important has he been to this team during this run?

JOSH HART: I don't think anything he's doing really impresses me because I've seen him since he was 17. I've seen him face adversity and have adverse situations head on and come out on top. He's a hell of a player, and he's a winning player. You need a guy like him to win games. I can't tell you how many games he won in terms of making big shots or big plays defensively, blocks, steals, those type of things.

That's how I know Mikal, and I don't think he cares too much about the outside world or what they're saying.

Q. Wemby being 7-4 and his skill set, how do you prepare for that type of player who can impact the game in so many different ways?

JOSH HART: I don't know if you can really prepare for that because there's not a situation that's similar in that situation.

For us, I think if we focus on ourselves and focus on the habits that we're building, we'll put ourselves in good situations to be successful. We can't focus too much on one player and focus on Wemby too much because

obviously they've got a lot of extremely talented guys that can go off any single game. We're focused on them as a whole. But he's an interesting guy to game plan for.

Q. Josh, last year you led the league in minutes and that was under a different coach. Earlier this season there were games where you sat in the fourth quarter. Your minutes were down. All under the bigger picture of developing the bench. As someone who's had to take the biggest backseat in that way, were you always able to see the bigger picture? Were there rocky moments getting to this point? How did you personally deal with that?

JOSH HART: No, I definitely didn't see the bigger picture in those moments. There was moments I went home and I'm like, damn, am I ass? Do I suck as a basketball player? There was a lot of those moments. Whenever your minutes go down or you get benched, you have that thought process.

But for me, it was, okay, how can I build off of it, how can I improve as a player to not put myself in that situation.

Now I'm cool with it sometimes. Game 1 [of the Eastern Conference Finals] I got benched. Landry was out there hooping, and I was happy about it. But that took a little bit of time and self-reflection to get to that point.

Q. You've been on big stages, obviously, all through your college and pro career. But when you get to this close to what is the biggest team goal, do you see anything different in whether it's yourself or the team, the approach, the focus to detail?

JOSH HART: No. I think the attention to detail and approach is really the same because I think we truly believe we've been building championship habits since October. When you truly believe that, nothing changes. Everything is the same.

You really double down on those habits. So nothing has changed for us. Obviously this is like a zoo going on right now with all the media and all this stuff. But I think we're just focused on the task at hand and ready to get started with Game 1.



Q. I know you've been in that fish bowl in New York for a minute now, so I'm sure very little surprises you anymore. I do wonder, though, if you are at a home game, is there any part of you that looks around and still goes, that's Fat Joe over there, or that's Timothée Chalamet over there, it's cool that they're rooting for us, or is that just part of the noise and fabric of being in the Garden?

JOSH HART: No, I think before the National Anthem of every game I kind of take a couple seconds and embrace the situation God put me in. I'm blessed to go out here and play a game. In the big picture, this is a game I've gotten to do since I was a little kid having fun with.

It's a blessing I think about every single game. And it's cool. It's fun to be a Knick.

Q. LeBron, Carmelo, Dwyane Wade talk about they were at the Draft Combine getting their measurements and they all ended up in the training room at some point and that's how they met. What is your origin story memory of the first time you hung out with Jalen and then Mikal and what are your early moments you remember of this friendship?

JOSH HART: I hated Jalen. I thought he was one of them annoying five-star recruits that come in entitled. Unfortunately he was the opposite, and we sparked a friendship. We're still friends to this day. Yeah, we still keep in touch. But that's what my thought process was. I hated him to start, hated him during his visit. Probably the beginning of his freshman year, hated him.

Mikal was the same way. I hated him, too. He came in, we obviously played a similar position, especially in college, and he was weaker, more frail than I was, so he would grab me and I hated it.

Obviously love those guys now, but yeah, I didn't really -- I think I lived with Jalen his sophomore year. I think it was his sophomore year. It just happened that I've become close just with that situation. He was still extremely annoying, but I got to be able to tolerate the annoyingness a little bit more because I had to deal with it every single day.

Kal, I kind of tormented Kal a little bit as an older guy. I think there was one time I threw him to the ground at one practice, I texted him after like, yo, you good? And we hashed it out then, and we've been cool since.

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