

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Thursday, June 4, 2026

San Antonio Spurs

Stephon Castle

Practice Day



Q. In terms of the halfcourt pace and the shots you created, the threes, how was it going back and looking at the film?

STEPHON CASTLE: Yeah, I think for us, playing in transition, trying to play fast, is probably the easiest way we create shots.

In the halfcourt, I think when we got to our plays, we kind of seen a similar look for the most part. Kind of created the same shot over and over.

But I think just not getting bored with making the right read over and over again is something that we have to look to do for next game.

Yeah, it comes down to making shots, too, so...

Q. What's the biggest difference for you between guarding Shai and now Jalen Brunson? What is the main topic you think changed from the NBA Cup for the first time?

STEPHON CASTLE: Biggest difference? I'd say they're very similar in ways. Obviously, Jalen is left-handed, Shai is right-handed. But I think Shai is more of a threat to get all the way downhill, all the way to the basket. I think Jalen likes to use angles a lot more, uses probably a little bit more pump fakes than Shai.

Mostly it's angles, trying to get to his spots, not really trying to draw fouls as much, but trying to get to his midrange and gets to spots to where he likes. Just trying to keep him from doing that.

Q. Your coach and Wemby were talking about, it feels like the offense got away from what you guys have done most of the year, you were relying on your individual talent. What did you see about the offense? What role did the Knicks have in that or the stage?

STEPHON CASTLE: I mean, it could have been that. I

think for the most part just we didn't make the extra pass as much as we usually do. We kind of settled a lot more than we usually do.

I think Coach preaches a lot -- try and find better each possession, try and find the best shot. I think we got satisfied with probably a decent look, knowing that we can make those kind of shots. I think we got satisfied with that a lot more than we usually do throughout the year. I think it cost us.

Even playing like that, not playing the way we wanted to, we still have a chance to win, so...

Q. After the game last night, Vic talked about how he wasn't overly worried because there were a lot of things you could clean up. After watching film today, do you feel that same sentiment, that not a whole lot of things to be overly worried about? He talked today about just coming out and being normal on your end, starting the game and maybe not pressing as much. Do you have any thoughts on what might have caused you to press a little bit, not be yourselves?

STEPHON CASTLE: Well, I mean, if I had to think of one thing, most of our first time being in the Finals. Obviously, a big moment for a lot of us. Obviously, we're overly excited to get out there and play. That could definitely be a part of it.

I mean, yeah, we've been down in a series before. I think Coach Mitch said it best really all Playoffs, it's taken us more than a half to get settled into the game. Yeah, just trying to be ourselves.

I think Vic said it best. I don't think we have anything to be too worried about. Obviously, we feel like we're the better team. We didn't play well, still had a chance to win, so...

I mean, yeah, if we take one thing from that, just going back to being ourselves, focusing on the right things.

Q. You saw a lot of Josh Hart as your defensive matchup, trying to attack him. What kind of challenges did he present?



STEPHON CASTLE: I think he's very physical. He doesn't really want to switch too much. He'll tend to blow up screens a lot.

I mean, yeah, I think it's similar to the way I play defense: constant pressure, very physical. Does it calculated and smart, tries to do it without fouling.

Obviously, he's a good defender, no matter who he's guarding. I think we've seen great defenders all Playoffs. I don't think it will be any different. I think we have a game plan really for anybody.

Q. The Knicks fans, they were loud, kind of partying at the end there. Did that piss you off, have them come into your arena and treat it like it's their own?

STEPHON CASTLE: Yeah, I don't want any fans from any team to have a good night in our arena. I mean, obviously last night it happened to be the Knicks fans.

I mean, yeah, they were loud. I think our fans showed out, as well. Just don't think we executed on winning the game. Feel like they had the right to celebrate after last night.

Q. The matchup with you and Brunson, people have talked about it being the key matchup. In the fourth quarter he was able to hunt out matchups away from you. Was that a product of screening, maybe you not fighting through it, not illegal screening, but maybe giving up the easy switch? Anything you would have done differently to prevent him getting the matchups he desired?

STEPHON CASTLE: I mean, not really. I mean, obviously yes, I want to stay on the ball, guard my matchup. At the end of the day I have nothing but confidence with my teammates on that side of the floor.

I don't want to try and make up things on the spot. We've switched that ball screen with me on the ball all year. It's been successful for us. I mean, it's something that we've talked about obviously being a possibility.

I mean, yeah, just really sticking with what's worked for us and figuring out the things on the backside. I mean, I think my teammates and the guys, whoever he's calling up, they have the utmost ability to stand in front of him and make it tough for him.

I don't want to try to make it about me and him. I think it's more what our team defense needs.

Q. You said you're the better team. Wemby said he's not afraid at all. Is your youth in a way a strength

because you guys have no fear?

STEPHON CASTLE: I don't know if that's our youth talking. It might just be more of what our character is like. I don't think we'll ever change from being this way, having this kind of confidence in each other, no matter how young we are.

I mean, yeah, I think using that to our advantage, any kind of situation. I mean, like I said, I think we have nothing but confidence in this team, in this staff, in this organization. Yeah, we just going to take it game by game.

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