

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Thursday, June 4, 2026

New York Knicks

Mikal Bridges

Practice Day



Q. What did you see from Josh and how he impacted that game last night?

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, a lot. I talked to him after the game, and just reading his stat line, I think it was like 3, 15, 6, 4 steals, something like that. It's a crazy stat line. Shows how much you're impacting. I think even that sheet doesn't even show what he was doing. That's not him even really making shots.

I tell him how important that is. Obviously, his shots are going to come down and they're going to go in. Just how important he is to this team on both ends. Yeah, he's great.

Q. Can you describe the assignment of the weak side low man in your defense. I know you guys want to sort of protect the rim first and foremost. They were getting good looks from the weak corner in that first half. You seemed to do a better job of closing that off in the second half. What are you trying to do, but how you want to protect the corner?

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, I think it's just trying to be physical. They're a really good team in the paint. Trying to keep them guys out the paint.

Q. You have dealt with these extended breaks every series, come out ready, taking care of business in Game 1. Is there anything off the court you or the group have done to stay competitive in such an exciting time of the year?

MIKAL BRIDGES: I would say I think our Game 1s, after the break, haven't been that great, to be honest. Put ourselves in some deficits. We fought back.

If you're asking me, I don't think our Game 1s, even though we won, have been great at all. It's tough to assimilate the emotional aspect, how physical it's going to be when you're in practice every day, besides being in those games. It's tough.

Sometimes you got to figure it out. You got to go out there, and if it's rust, find that emotional and physical part, you got to find it. We did towards the end, like we did in Game 1 of Cleveland. You got to go through it.

Now kind of got a rhythm. We got to be better and I know we will be Game 2.

Q. With Jalen, it seems like every time he gets hurt a little bit, he shakes it off and keeps playing. Why is his pain tolerance so high?

MIKAL BRIDGES: Obviously structurally can't go in hurt; it's just that mental aspect, what you're going to do when you're banged up a little bit. You go to the side, I'm a little hurt, I don't know if I can do it? Or are you going to mentally put through. Sometimes you're banged up, it can be a mindset, too.

It shows a credit to how he plays the game, how he goes about life. He's got that mental toughness, and he's going to fight no matter what.

Q. KAT on defense, feels like since late March, has been playing at a different level.

MIKAL BRIDGES: I think it's just putting it together. I think that's really it. Obviously, you're a new offense, trying to figure it out offensively as a team. And personally for himself to try to be the best version of himself. Defensively, too, it's a lot. It's a lot we asked for him to do on both ends.

It just comes with time and ramping it up. He's shown me personally, and obviously the team, but he's shown me personally last year leading up to the Playoffs, that first round Detroit, I think a lot of their goals was trying to punk him. He didn't let down. He showed that he can do it on both ends at all times.

Just getting back to that obviously. Also having the stamina to do both and mental toughness when you're tired to still try to do the right things. He's been unbelievable.

Q. 12 straight wins. Have you ever thought about it

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**coming into the Playoffs? How do you stay grounded?
I'm sure there would be a lot of high moments in the
locker room.**

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, I'll start off with the win streak.

I think for us, the guys in the locker room, our coaching staff, everybody pretty much in our office, in our organization, I think we just got a lot of grit, a lot of mental toughness. The thing about us is we don't really look at it as a win streak. I think we just take it one game at a time.

For us, ever since the Playoffs started, just one game. It's like our most important game is our next game. I mean, yeah, however you say it. Our biggest game is our next game because it's our next game. That's how we look at it. It's always just 1-0 if you win. After that game goes, it's back to 0-0.

I don't know if we look at it eight straight, nine straight, seven straight, whatever it is. We look at it, win this game, after that it's 0-0, learn what you got to do better for the next game.

Q. Back to Game 1. Jose, 11 minutes, but it seemed like he settled you a bit. What did you see from him?

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, just coming in and being ready. JB went down. I think he came in earlier than expected minutes-wise. He came in and showed no rattleness, came ready to play, in the biggest moments coming in and being real resilient. He showed what type of guy he's going to be. He stayed resilient in the biggest moments, and we needed that.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

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