

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Friday, June 5, 2026

New York Knicks

Coach Mike Brown

Game 2: Pregame



Q. Mike, obviously you say you can learn from a win as well as a loss. When you're down 14, I'm sure there's things you can work on. How much do you balance at this point making adjustments from one game to the next with sticking what got you here?

MIKE BROWN: You always got to find ways to get better. There's no set formula. In that first half we didn't do a great job in transition. In the first half we didn't do a good job of contesting Champagnie's shots. We sent him to the free throw line a ton as a team. They got to the paint a few times. There are things you can always find to adjust on both sides of the ball. We didn't play as fast as we wanted to.

Each game is different. Each half is different when it comes to adjustments. There's no set formula.

Q. I know you recently joked that you wouldn't ask Pop for advice because he'd sabotage you. How instrumental was your time here under Pop, becoming who you became today?

MIKE BROWN: It was huge. Pop, I talk about MSG being iconic, New York City being iconic, Pop is iconic, especially here in San Antonio. When you talk about the game of basketball, he's iconic to everybody that enjoys the game of basketball.

The neat part about him is, it's not just about the X's and O's that you learn, you know you can never be him, but you learn people skills, you learn how to connect, not just the 15 or 18 players, you learn how to connect an entire city, maybe even an entire state.

On top of that, he's second to none how he treats people off the floor in their personal lives. I grew a lot personally. Everybody goes through good times and bad times off the floor in their personal life. When I was here, I went through good times and bad times. He helped me tremendously with those.

He's a special human being. I'm more than appreciative to him for everything that he taught me, and more importantly the opportunity he gave me here.

Q. How would you describe the difference in De'Aaron Fox's role a few years ago when he was under you in Sacramento to what it is right now in San Antonio?

MIKE BROWN: Biggest thing, like he was our guy, you know? Here, he's got Wemby. Wemby is a unique force. When you have a guy that big, it takes some of the pressure off you being boxy. That would probably be the biggest thing, is we didn't have Wemby in Sacramento to relieve some of that pressure. We had good players, but just not one of Wemby's status.

Q. Even going back to late in the Philly series, throughout the Cleveland series, and now, as the winning streak has gotten more and more attention, your guys seem to steadfastly say we just got to get better today. What is it about this group when they don't lose a game for six weeks and they're not at all concerned about that and seem to stay within the process that allowed them to get here?

MIKE BROWN: They're a veteran group that has been through a lot. One of the things that we preach is being present. In order to be present, you can't think about the past, you can't think about the future. For all of us as humans, that's hard as heck to do.

I constantly, boom, flick myself in the head, tell myself, be present, be present, be present. I obviously mention it to the group, too.

With those guys being who they are, they've really embraced it, and they're really trying to live it every single moment during this run.

Q. Obviously here you know Tim and Manu and David, they're around in the facility. Is that the same with Pat [Ewing] and Allan [Houston] and John [Starks]? Do they have that kind of similar presence? Do your players seek those guys' wisdom?

MIKE BROWN: I'm sure they do, in terms of seeking their



wisdom.

Pat is around a lot. Travels with us. He's in our locker room and all that stuff.

Allan, too. He's at practices and all that.

John not as much. He is around, but not as much.

I don't ask our guys or even ask them much about what they're talking about. I'm sure that they're trying to feed them as much knowledge as possible. Having that veteran presence around, especially guys that have been to the Finals, is huge.

During the Atlanta series, Pat addressed our team. I don't know everything that Manu and David and Tim do here, but just from the outside looking in, I would say it is similar.

Q. I wanted to ask you a little bit more about the winning streak. There's only been three like this in NBA Playoff history. You were an assistant coach/interim head coach for the best one, the 2017 Warriors won 15 in a row in the Playoffs. Is there anything about this streak that reminds you of that one? From a bigger picture perspective, what is the difference going through a big winning streak in the regular season when it's a little bit calmer of a time versus having to do with a winning streak when you're trying to win a championship?

MIKE BROWN: The first one that's similar is you got to have good players. I'm not that smart. You got to have good players that carry you.

I know when I was in Golden State, great players that embraced me when I had to take over for Steve. But I'm always thankful to Andre Iguodala because I'll never forget that first game I took over in Portland, we're down, I'm like, oh, crap, we're going to lose. I'm going to get blamed. This is during the game. There was a timeout. I started saying something to try to get the guys fired up. Andre jumped in and he just seconded it. He backed me. He was like, hear what he said, bam! Bam! Bam!

I was like, Yeah! Thanks, Andre. Yes, yes!

Having a guy like that, I got a ton of guys from Jalen to Josh to KAT, guys like that, is extremely helpful because as a coach your voice only carries so far, especially as an assistant coach/interim coach.

That's probably the biggest thing that's similar.

Then during the Playoffs, obviously it gets magnified more,

gets talked about more. You have to guard against complacency with your guys. You can't keep manufacturing the appropriate fear in your guys that you need to have to be able to go out there to compete. So you hope the guys can generate that themselves by staying present and understanding how hard each possession's going to be.

I feel our group has done that.

Q. Landry Shamet was a late almost camp add. He signed before camp began. Could you have anticipated him with his role being such an integral part? Josh has had the minutes cut. He's had to sit in some of those instances. What is his relationship with you been like as you've had to go through this process of making sure the guys are fresh down the stretch?

MIKE BROWN: Yes, I thought Landry could be impactful. He signed late because his agent convinced him to do that. Hopefully it won't happen going forward.

When I first got the job, I called Landry. I said, Hey, I want you here. I'm sorry about the way the circumstances are contractually. I have nothing to do that. I believe you can help us on both ends of the floor.

So for me, I was excited about him when he did finally sign, when he did decide to come. I had to make sure I kept an open mind because we only had so many roster spots.

I talked about him to Leon specifically during my interview process. Trying to get him signed and locked up on this team as soon as possible is something that was really important to me.

With Josh, Josh has been great. He's a competitor. You need guys that are competitive like Josh, and you need to give them a lot of rope or freedom. I want Josh to be himself.

He's been fantastic. But I told Josh, there are times I tell Josh certain things, and he doesn't like it. I say, hey, you curse me out, disrespect me all you want, I'm not going to take it personal. After you say your piece for what I just did, it's over. We're moving on. Both of us have to act like adults after that. To his benefit, he has.

Everything I've done he's accepted. I know he's not always been happy, nobody would ever be happy, especially how competitive it is, but he's taken it, he supported his group, he supported me. I love him to death for it because that helps us as a group stay connected.

Q. Your coaches association is honoring Paul

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Westhead tonight with the Chuck Daly Award. Do you have any experience on Coach Westhead?

MIKE BROWN: Fantastic coach. When I took the Lakers job, I actually went and had lunch with him and asked him more importantly about the finer points of transition offense. I was able to spend some time with him during that period, my coaching career as a young coach.

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