

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Sunday, June 7, 2026

New York Knicks

Jalen Brunson

Practice Day



Q. Jalen, you obviously have known Leon a long time. He doesn't talk a whole lot about the process of building this team.

JALEN BRUNSON: Who did you say?

Q. Leon Rose. From your perspective, the connectivity both on the court and personalities, what do you see from his philosophy of basketball going back that's brought to bear on bringing this group together?

JALEN BRUNSON: I think he has a great basketball mind. I also think he surrounds himself with good people. The way he's been able to do this, especially here with all the scrutiny people do to him and everything, I just think the way he goes about his business is as good as anyone.

For the time I've known him, basically my entire life, he's always been that way. He's always willing to help, always willing to have the best possible outcome possible. So that's just who he is.

Q. People want to know what it looks like in New York right now. Normally you guys wouldn't be here on a practice day. Are you looking around at all? Do you get a sense of it at all? Will you try and look or not until it's over?

JALEN BRUNSON: Not until it's over [smiling].

Q. Are you letting your family come look, friends?

JALEN BRUNSON: They can do what they want.

Q. We know how much Kobe Bryant's legacy means to you. Have you been able to rewatch his NBA Finals performances recently? Do you draw any mindfulness techniques from him?

JALEN BRUNSON: I haven't watched anything recently.

I think the way I carry myself, the way I do things, is a credit to how I was raised by my parents. But also part of their philosophy I think seeps into the Mamba mentality as well. So there's a connectivity there.

I do my best to stay present in the moment, to do the things I can to make sure my mind is right. Being mentally and physically ready every day. Trusting my work. That's what's gotten me here.

So there's connectivity about it, but no, I have not watched.

Q. The end of Game 2 was ridiculous. When you look at the film, what do you need to clean up to be prepared for Game 3?

JALEN BRUNSON: I think playing better with the lead that we had, the 14-point lead. The way they fought back and took the lead is just a credit to how good they are.

Us staying composed helped us win that game. We do need to be able to finish the game better. Unacceptable the way we just obviously just let that 14-point lead go the way we did.

Q. Going back to the end of the Pacers series last year, you're walking off the floor, how close did you think this group was to this moment? Obviously, there's a coaching change, but outside of that the roster is largely the same. What did that mean to you as a group to get a chance to do this?

JALEN BRUNSON: Yeah, obviously the way last year ended, we thought we had an opportunity. The better team won. I think what's most important is that every year is a new journey, every year is a new season, a new way to grow as a team.

I think the way we learn, the way we grow as a team every single day brought us to this moment, but it's not something to kind of be happy about. There's still a lot more work to be done. We understand that. We got to understand we still have to keep learning, still have to keep getting better even after wins. There's so many more things we can do better. Just keep having that mindset.

Q. When a guy like you falls into the second round of the draft, a lot of people missed something about you. When you think back on your draft process, what do you think it was that was underestimated, not seen in you?

JALEN BRUNSON: Everything [smiling].

Q. I know you might not be looking around just yet. What do you think it means for this fan base to have a Finals in this building?

JALEN BRUNSON: I think it's really cool -- 27 years since the last Finals here in this building. I know the fan base is really excited, as they should be.

But as a team, us inside the locker room, we have more work to do.

Q. There's a video after you guys clinched the Finals, everyone celebrating. You were sitting there looking extremely focused. You've been the whole way through this Finals. Doesn't seem like you allow yourself to enjoy any success, that you're always focused on the next thing. Where does that come from?

JALEN BRUNSON: Well, in that video I was actually icing. My feet were in a tub and I was icing my knees. I didn't even want to get up.

But in my mind there's nothing really to celebrate yet. There's still a lot of work to be done.

Q. You obviously had experience in this building in the Big East and with the Mavericks. For someone who has never experienced it, describe what it's like to be a home star player in this building.

JALEN BRUNSON: I've always said this, and I felt the amount of love I've gotten from this fan base and from this city since day one, I think it's grown over the years, but I'm so thankful, I'm so honored to be able to put 'New York' across my chest.

Wouldn't trade that feeling for anything in the world.

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