

# NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Sunday, June 7, 2026  
New York Knicks

## Mikal Bridges

Practice Day

**Q. I would like to go back to 2016, 2018 in Villanova, if you have some memories coming in these Finals from what happened those years, and also if you have any influence with what happened in Phoenix in 2021?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, in college I guess winning championships, yeah, that's pretty much it, just being together, being a team, playing hard and trying to do the right thing.

Finals, yeah, same situation, being up 2-0. Yeah, just got to keep fighting. I think we do a great job as a team of always knowing that it's 0-0 after every win, staying locked in on the next game.

**Q. What do you remember about that Finals when you were up 2-0 and the Bucks? Have you reminded your teammates that 2-0 doesn't mean anything?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: I just remember losing four straight. That's what I remember out of that.

Yeah, they all know, too, and they all understand as well, knowing the series is far from over. Got to keep playing desperate and be the more desperate team.

But we do a great job and we understand that after every game, no matter what, it's always 0-0 at the end of the day.

**Q. Did that Finals stick with you for a while?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: It's always going to stick with you.

**Q. Earlier in the Playoffs we talked about the list of star guards building up that you were guarding. Now you have some young kids in the mix. What challenges have they presented and what challenges have you felt you've had to adjust to defensively throughout this series?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, no, all their guards, all their players, really good team. But their ability to use their



speed, quickness. I think just physical, they can finish really well. Very challenging, just guard them as a team, help each other out.

Obviously you got five guys out there on the tandem. Just playing good team defense. They got a lot of great players over there.

**Q. You were drafted the same year as Jalen, 2018. What were you thinking when you saw him kind of slip all the way to the second round? What did teams not appreciate about him at that time?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, I think just sometimes when it leads up to the draft, I think, like, measurements and stuff, all them things, just too important for teams. Sometimes just watching basketball. I don't know how much more he has to do, winning Player of the Year, National Player of the Year, leading his team to a championship.

I don't know. I'm not a GM or anything. I think [those things] wouldn't make him wait all the way to the second round.

**Q. They've had a lot more transition opportunities than you guys have had in this series, but they haven't scored very efficiently. Can you tell me you all's defensive philosophy getting back and not giving anything easy?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: They're a really good transition team. You got to get back, show bodies. I still think we got to do a way better job. I know what you're saying. For us, I still think we got to do way better. I don't think we are up to what we're supposed to be doing as a team defensively in transition.

Obviously we did some good things, but I think there's a whole lot of room to get better.

**Q. If Wemby doesn't throw the ball off his teammate's back, the end of the game could be different. When you think about the game in totality, what other areas do you have to improve on?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yes, just got to be better the whole



fourth, come turnovers, shot selection, a lot of transition defense in that fourth quarter itself. Keep going. Can't get too comfortable. We had a good lead, but we know how the league works. Being this far, playing against a really good team, no lead's ever safe.

But, yeah, I think a poor fourth by us, obviously with all that happening, the resiliency to stay together and stay mentally locked in and still find a way to win. You can't do that to the team that is that good, give chances like that. We got to be way better.

**Q. Obviously you've played a lot of big games in your career so far. Where would you rank Game 3 of the NBA Finals tomorrow in Madison Square Garden? What has been different about this group? How have you guys kept going 13 times now?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: You said ranked Game 3?

**Q. Yes.**

MIKAL BRIDGES: I don't know. We haven't played yet, so I'm not sure how to rank that one.

What else? What did you say? What was part two and three? I think the end was something about the winning streak.

Personally I think we really don't care too much about the winning streak or anything like that because all that's in the past. To us, it's 0-0, just try to take it one game at a time. The most important game is the next game because it's our next game.

Not really focused on that. Just try to take it day by day and attack that game.

**Q. You had a little slump offensively early in the Playoffs, but then you got back in your bag. How important was it for Coach Brown, his staff and your teammates to stay down with you?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, very important. Just helped me stay in the right mindset. But yeah, they helped me out a lot. Staying together as a group, knowing the biggest goal is to win.

Personally, I think I'll be the best version of myself to have a chance.

**Q. What did it take each and every day to go out there and play all 82 games for about six years straight?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: Yeah, just want to be out there. You

know what I'm saying? Want to grow every day, be better. It's kind of how I was raised, kind of how when I was in high school, college, my coaches always preached playing every game. If you're banged up a little bit, they make you play. So just having that mindset. I don't know.

I think subconsciously, knowing how the league goes, the more I think about it, never, ever kind of leave a window open for somebody to take your spot. I think that's kind of been subconsciously staying on my mind ever since I first got in the league. I always play no matter what.

I just think that's another aspect that kind of got to me, was always just you never know. You never know how you might go out for a week or two, the next guy steps up, maybe the team plays better. Maybe now coaching and the franchise, the organization might look at you a little bit different.

I think that's subconsciously always in the back of my head. Just try to stay out there and compete at all times.

**Q. The sport looks different so far this year. Do you label yourself as a team that makes the other team adapt to your game plan? Is that your biggest strength?**

MIKAL BRIDGES: No, I think we just go out there and play and follow what we got to do. I think we worry more about ourselves and what we got to do to be better. Yeah, pretty much that.

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