

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Monday, June 8, 2026

New York Knicks

Mike Brown

Game 3: Postgame



San Antonio Spurs 115, New York Knicks 111

MIKE BROWN: First of all, I want to make sure I get something clear. Coach Mitch Johnson and the Spurs, they won the game tonight. They came and took the game.

But I will say this: I never thought I would be in the NBA Finals and see a team get 24 free throw attempts in the second half to another team's eight. I don't think I complain much about officials or the fairness when it comes to the free throw attempts.

San Antonio is a great team. They are a great team, okay. It's going to lower our odds big time, big time, if we play Game 4 and in the second half, they get 24 free throw attempts to our eight. Maybe we were fouling. Maybe we were fouling. But they fouled, too.

KAT gets the ball off of a loose-ball rebound and he shoots it, and he gets whacked across the arm and they hit the ball and it goes out of bounds on the baseline. There's no foul.

There were opportunities for fouls to be called, to at least try to even the free throws out.

Now, we didn't play good. San Antonio played great. We could have played better. There was a lot of things that we didn't do that we did in Game 1 and Game 2. But to go 24 free throw attempts in the second half, that's 48 for the game if you think about the way they called that second half, compared to eight. All the shots we took, we got fouled four times, roughly, for eight free throw attempts.

Again, I don't complain much. I never thought I'd see that in an NBA Finals game, and I saw it tonight. That's tough to overcome when you're playing against a great team.

Having said that, again, San Antonio won the game. I'm giving their head coach and their players a lot of credit. Wemby played great. Stephon Castle played great. I

could go down the line. Fox hit a big shot late.

But as a team, if you take away the fouls and the free throws that should have, in my opinion, been a little bit more even, again maybe we fouled that many times but they fouled, too. And it's not shown at the end of the day on this box score.

Besides that, that's separate, besides that, I thought San Antonio, they hit first at the beginning of the game and they hit first at halftime. They hit first at the beginning of the game, and they hit first at halftime.

Their level of physicality was great tonight, for them. Our attention to detail, our attention to detail on both ends of the floor wasn't great. We allowed them to live in our paint. Castle got to the paint at will, almost every pick-and-roll he played. Not only that, we talked about taking away the vertical threat of Wemby. He had probably seven lob dunks because we didn't follow attention to detail and try to take that away.

If you give them vertical dunks like that and you allow them to get to the paint like Harper and Castle did, it's going to be a long night.

And then offensively, we were about as stagnant as I've seen us all year, which helped with the 13 turnovers. If you're in an NBA Finals game and you have 13 turnovers to their eight, and on those 13 turnovers, they generated 21 points, and on their eight turnovers, we generated seven, it's going to be tough.

The turnover situation, the free throw situation and our attention to detail about keeping them out of the paint and taking away the vertical threat, not good tonight.

Q. Obviously there was a lot of anticipation for this game. What did you think of the environment tonight, and did you have any concerns about kind of all the extra stuff that went into this game having any effect on your guys leading up to it?

MIKE BROWN: It is what it is. This is the NBA Finals. There's going to be a lot of distractions, and you've just got to, as best you can, block them out and go play the game.



What was first part of your question?

Q. What did you think of the atmosphere?

MIKE BROWN: The fans were great. The energy around the city, the energy around the building, it's off the charts. You love it.

Q. Obviously a lot was made of just the 13-game winning streak and the type of effort you guys were giving on both ends of the floor, but those that have been with you the whole year, resiliency has been the theme of this group. I know you wanted to be up 3-0, but how eager are you to see a pissed-off Knicks team?

MIKE BROWN: I tell the guys, it's a seven-game series for a reason. They are a great team. They are well-coached. They have an iconic player. It's not going to be easy. We have to keep trying to take one game, one possession at a time.

But there are some things that we can control that I didn't think that we controlled tonight. And then like I said, maybe we fouled 24 times, but I'm baffled that they only fouled eight in the second half.

Q. You mentioned the stagnancy offensively. What do you feel like led to that, and what do you feel like kind of didn't seem like quite as much involvement from Karl in general on the offense? What do you feel like led to that, as well?

MIKE BROWN: We were just playing a lot of drag into what we call summertime, which is just kind of ball movement and body movement. We just wanted to stand and watch one guy dribble a ton. And then when the ball got passed, there were no quick decisions by the guy receiving the basketball.

So we have actions we can get into that we didn't do a good job of getting into, first of all, but it's okay because you're not going to be able to run plays all the time, especially with how physical they are playing defensively. Sometimes you've just got to go by guys.

But you've got to be smart. You have to take care of the basketball. You have to space right. You have to move the ball. You have to move bodies. We've done that quite a bit, and we didn't do a good job of it tonight.

Q. The inconsistency in the officiating, did you talk to them about it, and if so, what was their explanation as to why some things were getting called and some

things weren't?

MIKE BROWN: Yeah, I talked to them. They outshot us 14-3 in the third quarter from the free throw line. I talked to them, and they said, well, this is a foul, this is a foul.

I said, okay, may be right, but here are examples where they fouled and it didn't get called. That's the question I had with them is, you're right. Maybe we did foul. But they fouled, too.

Like I said, if they do this in Game 4 where it's 24-8 in the second half, it's going to be tough for us to win.

Now, there again, I don't want -- and it's going to be that because I said it. The story is going to be there. But there are some controllables that we did not do a good job of doing. We allowed them to hit first at the beginning of the game. We allowed them to hit first in the beginning of the second half. We turned the ball over and we were stagnant offensively and we allowed them to get to the paint, and we did not pay attention to detail to what we are supposed to do defensively.

There are a lot of things we can do better and we are going to have to do better, but the same breath, like I said, hopefully they will see some more fouls called against them, so it's not 24-8. This is a four-point ballgame. Four-point ballgame. One-possession ballgame going down the stretch. It's tough to overcome.

Q. How much of tonight was them running some different actions or different versions to kind of get Vic deeper into the paint, and how much of it was, as you said, your guys maybe not tagging and finding some of the ways to impede him from getting deep position in the paint?

MIKE BROWN: Again, I give San Antonio, their staff and their players a lot of credit. They just stayed with it, stayed with it, tried to execute, tried to execute, tried to execute, and we did not do a good job with the details.

I think it's a combination of both because they had to execute their actions, and then we had to make sure that we tried to execute our defensive responsibilities, and we didn't do a really good job with it.

Q. The fourth quarter of Game 2, KAT didn't get a lot of touches. Then tonight, kind of similar. Is San Antonio doing anything differently in terms of how they are defending him?

MIKE BROWN: No, it's the same thing. It was the way we played and the things that we were doing offensively. We

were just coming down and just basically playing drag. We'd get the first screen, and then we literally just stood and watched.

There was no movement. There was no, like sometimes KAT has to flash to the elbow. Sometimes he's got to post up. It's just got to be, it can't be -- because they are junking the game up by just putting Vic in one of the two corners.

So if they junk the game up, I can call a play. But sometimes you're going to have to just move and cut and pass the ball quicker and drive the ball quicker, because it's almost a zone that they are in to a certain degree, and we didn't do a good job of attacking it. We didn't do a great job of attacking it in Game 2, but the free throw discrepancy wasn't as big. We took care of the ball a little bit better.

And then defensively in Game 2, we were a lot better with the details of what we needed to do.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports