

# NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Tuesday, June 9, 2026

**San Antonio Spurs**

**Julian Champagnie**

Practice Day



**Q. After Game 7 in OKC, you were asked about returning back to New York. Now in the Finals, now that you've experienced that, could you share what it was like for you to play last night?**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: Yeah, it was pretty cool. Obviously we had a game to win, and that was the most important thing, especially being down 0-2. The initial reaction of just running out there, seeing all the celebrities, the fans, how loud it was, the music, it was definitely a surreal feeling that I'll carry for life. But it was pretty cool.

**Q. Victor's reception last night was -- he got booed. He got F-bombed. As a native New Yorker, I wanted to ask you that's just a sign of respect, right, from these guys?**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: Yeah, that's just regular. I don't feel there's anything really to that. Obviously Vic is a great player and that's what people are just going to do to him, so no hard feelings.

**Q. As someone who grew up in New York, you know how Knicks fans are and how big this run has been for the city and for so many fans around the city. Last night there were watch parties. There were videos of even violence, rowdiness, some tore Spurs jerseys. There was a video of someone following and heckling Mitch and his family when you guys got here. Have you at any point felt any threat or any hostility toward you guys while you've been here? Hostility and people just being -- I don't want to curse, but you know what I mean. Have you felt that at all when you've been in the city, and what do you think of those types of behaviors toward Spurs fans last night?**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: I don't really feel any threat. I'm from here, so I feel like a lot of that kind of stuff is just what it is. You get used to it. So I don't know about a threat.

I feel we're here to play a basketball game. That's the main thing. I feel like for the fans it should never be that

serious where you have to jump people, beat people up, follow people home, stuff like that. It's just a basketball game at the end of the day. Whether we win, they win, it doesn't really matter. Everybody should be able to come and enjoy the game, no matter who they're voting for. That's just how it goes.

**Q. First of all, did you have a chance to go back to Giardini? I know you said you like that place.**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: Yeah. I'm actually going after this, honestly and truly.

**Q. You talked about staying together and sticking to yourselves regardless of the noise or what anyone is talking about. Do you find that to be any more difficult when it comes to hostile environments in the playoffs? What does it look like to be together in it?**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: I don't find it to be harder. Obviously the noise and the media and the fans, it gets to be more the further you go into the playoffs. But I think it's pretty easy to stay locked in with your teammates when you guys have such a good bond.

Obviously we've done a lot this season. We've won -- we've lost some games, we've won some games. So I think we know what it's like to be in certain environments now. So I don't really think it's too, too hard.

**Q. Last night was a physical game, really physical game here and a hostile environment, a lot of noise. You're one of the great shooters of this team. How do you block the noise from buildings like this one? Talk to me about last night and the physical game.**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: Yeah, as far as blocking the noise, I feel like you've got to remember I'm from here. The noise is the noise. That's just how it goes. I also feel like we've played in a bunch of arenas up to this point that have been loud, even our own. So blocking it out, I don't feel like it's too hard. We have something to focus on.

Then the physicality, you asked? Yeah, the Knicks play super, super physical. That's a part of their identity. We obviously have to do a good job of matching that and doing

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more of that. But I'm assuming it's not going to get no easier. It will be more physical tomorrow.

**Q. Last night the Knicks had their second-lowest assist total of the season. It seemed like there were a bunch of possessions where they were trying to put you guys in the blender and you kept closing out, kept sticking with the guy, kept helping. What do you feel like allowed you guys to succeed on those types of possessions and eventually take their second, third, fourth looks away?**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: I think that we have been in that position a lot over the series where it gets into late clock -- I think Coach touched on this. We get them in late clock and we don't quite finish the possession, whether they make a shot, we don't rotate, something happens and it doesn't go our way.

I feel like last night, obviously being down 0-2, we couldn't really have too much of that because that's where they're going to capitalize, especially being an older team. So I feel like the thought process in our mind of being 0-2, these being the possessions we need to win the games, I feel like that thought overtook all.

**Q. I'm sorry if anybody asked you this already, did you see the videos of Knicks fans attacking Spurs fans?**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: Yes.

**Q. Did you have a message or an opinion on that type of behavior?**

JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE: It's just not necessary. No one should be coming to the game getting assaulted like that. It's not what we're promoting. It's not what we're playing for.

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