

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Tuesday, June 9, 2026

New York Knicks

Karl-Anthony Towns

Practice Day



The Spurs have done a great job starting in the game, dictating the pace and dictating how the game is going. We have to try to be the first ones to throw the first punch.

Q. Through the series so far, you haven't scored a point yet in the fourth quarter and then taken just six shots. Is there something that's been different about the fourth, whether it's later in the game and there's less energy or how they're playing you, than the rest of the series, in which you've been so good so far?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: I think it's a combination. We have a game plan, and we want to execute it. So just trying to execute our game plan, especially when we get in the fourth, is vital, and just doing what I can to execute it at the highest level.

Q. It feels like whenever you guys fall into ruts this season, it stems from lack of ball movement, lack of player movement. One, why do you think that is? And, two, how do you guys get back into the flow of the ball movement and player movement that's gotten you guys on the winning track?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Yeah, we've got to pick up the ball movement, for sure. We have to. Two, we have, what, 13 games in a row, 50 days of film to show what it looks like when we're at our best. So we've got good film. We'll get back to our fundamentals, what makes us great, what made us great, and get back to work tomorrow.

Q. You guys have talked so much this year about slow starts to games. Three games in the Finals that you fell to early deficits. Is there something you fixed in the regular season? Is there something you learned from then that you can apply to now to sort of correct that problem?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Yeah, we'll have to figure it out. We'll have to figure it out because, like you said, in every game we've played here in the Finals, we've put ourselves in a position where we have to start fighting immediately. Every time we find a way to get back into the game, but we can't trust that result is going to happen every single time.

Q. Karl, those cross-matches are nothing new to you. You've seen a lot of wing defenders, smaller defenders. But they're throwing a lot at you. You get Castle for some, Vassell for some, Fox. Does the variety of that do anything differently in terms of how you approach your game?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Just whenever the defense presents itself to me, I just want to solve that puzzle. Like you said, my whole career I've seen a bunch of cross-matching, and utilizing that experience now is most important more than ever.

Q. How does it feel to be representing the Dominican community here the Finals? You've been getting a lot of support from the DR. Also, I wanted to ask you if you know a little bit about David Jones Garcia. He's also Dominican on the Spurs' roster.

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Yeah, I do. I actually got to say hi to him after the last game. It means a lot to have my mother's country behind me and to have them really not only supporting me, but supporting him as well in this journey. This is a monumental moment for Dominican Republic.

Shout out to Al [Horford] being -- in my knowledge of right now, being the first one to bring the trophy back to DR. So to have another moment where DR is represented in the NBA Finals is a true honor. To be able to have my flag proudly represented, it means everything.

Q. You said last night you guys didn't do what you had been doing the last 13 games, that you tried to do something different and it didn't work. What exactly do you think you guys tried to do different than you had been doing in that streak?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: We've played defense at a high level. I thought that we didn't -- we made things that were the details of the game, the details that made us special, we were too relaxed in them, and we didn't



execute them at the level that you guys are used to seeing.

So doing that and also just the fundamentals of what our team is and how we play, we didn't do that for 48 minutes. It's something that has got us this 13-game winning streak. Playing around with the game against a great team, you're asking for a disaster, and that's what we got.

Q. Jalen was just in there, and he was saying that, when you got traded here, he didn't really know what to expect. He didn't know you that well. And now he says you're one of his great friends. I was just curious what were sort of the beginnings of that friendship, and how would you describe your relationship now?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Did he say that with Josh around or no?

Q. He did not.

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Ooh, Josh is going to be jealous.

I think our friendship is built off of respect. We've had so much respect for each other as opponents, and now to be teammates, spending true time with each other as teammates. I've always said, we spend more time with each other than our families, our kids.

So to see who we truly are on a day-to-day basis and how we truly treat people and the things that the media says, is it true, is it not, and you're getting to see firsthand what the truth really is.

I'm glad I've been able to not only earn his respect even more as a basketball player, but as a man. For him to appreciate the advice I give him on the daily, in daily life and things I see, it means a lot.

Q. There's been some viral videos online with Spurs and Knicks fans getting into altercations in the streets. What is your message to NBA fans on being passionate about the NBA game but also keeping respect for one another?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: The game is built off of respect and passion. We want everyone to respect each other. We want everyone to enjoy basketball at its purest state. It's the NBA Finals. There's no better place to watch basketball. Leave the physicality to everyone on the court.

Q. Each of the three games have been decided practically by one possession. How do you evaluate them?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: At the end of the day, you've got to find a way to win that one possession. You've got to win that game. Yesterday we didn't do enough to make it more difficult for them to not win that possession.

They're a great team. Like I said before, they've earned the right to be here. They've got a ton of respect from us, and we have to make it more difficult on them.

Q. Talking about matchups, yesterday was the first time Wemby wasn't your primary defender. I'm curious, do you think that changed the way the Spurs established their defense yesterday?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: I don't know. I don't know. I watched the film, and you kind of see the game in a different lens when you're playing so much. I just saw us not executing the little details that's made us special. I saw their team be great and we didn't meet them where they -- the game they brought to MSG yesterday, we didn't meet their level.

There's a lot of things that we needed to do better for ourselves to give ourselves a chance to win and we just didn't do.

Q. Following his question, you were very effective when Wemby's playing you because you have the speed to go by him and you don't have resistance in the basket. Now he's playing off you. So how are you going to change to adjust your game from the outside to make him switch again and take advantage of his playing you and not playing off you?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: That's for us as a team to find out and see what we want to do. Execute our game plan and get back to what's made us special -- that ball movement and getting the ball zipping around the court, and allowing it to judge who shoots the ball.

So I think we have to get back to the details and our fundamentals that's made us special in the 13-game winning streak.

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