

NBA Finals: Knicks vs. Spurs

Friday, June 12, 2026

New York Knicks

Karl-Anthony Towns

Practice Day



best version tomorrow.

Q. KAT, you're from the New York area. You grew up a Knick fan. Do you think OG understands the magnitude of that shot? And what do you think -- especially if you guys go on and win one more game, where do you think that will end up going down in terms of New York sports moments?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: I mean, the right hand of God, right hand of God. And you can't spell "God" without "OG."

I think in New York moments, I mean, it's high up on the list of New York moments. I think of -- it's almost like I think of Derek Jeter hitting the home run to right field. I think of stuff like that. It just scrapes the wall and gets over. I think of a lot of moments. I think of Plaxico Burress catching the ball. I think of [David] Tyree, maybe Tyree catching the ball for Eli Manning. It's going to be up there with some of the greatest moments in New York sports history.

I tried to explain it to him, but you know OG barely gives you any reaction. So I don't know if he's understanding it or not. Like you said, it's a great moment. It's one of the best sports moments in New York history. But we've got to solidify it with one more win.

Q. You guys have talked so much about being desperate and playing with desperation. What makes you guys so good at manufacturing that or creating that within yourselves? Now that you're up 3-1, how much are you leaning on that, replicating that sense of desperation?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: We spoke about it multiple times. We've got to approach every game like it's 0-0. We've got to have that kind of desperation that it is to win Game 1 of a playoff series. We've got to go in there with the understanding of no comfortability, just really be desperate, execute at a high level. Game plan discipline has to be at a high level.

I've said this multiple times, the hardest game to win is the one that ends someone's season. So we've got to be our

Q. [Question from the Charlotte Hornets' Kon Knueppel.] One of the things I've really enjoyed about these playoffs is watching you as a playmaker, and I think that's a role that you've really embraced this postseason. It's really showed off your basketball IQ. Can you just kind of speak to how that feels creating shots for your teammates and just creating advantages in general on the offensive side of the ball?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Yeah, I think for me it's imperative to make the defense have to shift and make them have to continuously think. It's not only, as you know, the game is already physically tiring, but if you add the mental component as well and have them thinking the whole game, it makes them even more tired and allows for more opportunities for us to get better looks.

We may not all be great shooters like you, but I think what you can do when you do move the ball and allow the IQ to flow and the ball to flow is you allow great shots to happen, especially when you're touching the paint or having movement on the offense and allowing the defense to make a mistake, instead of us having to make a tough shot or a great shot.

I've always loved passing, and it's always one of my greatest joys is getting my teammates an assist and allowing them to see them succeed. It's truly, for me, better than hitting a great shot, because when you make a shot, only one person is happy, but when you get an assist, two people are happy. I think that's a recipe for success, when everyone is really feeling good about themselves.

Q. It looks like Knicks fans are making the big pilgrimage tomorrow to San Antonio for Game 5. For you, what was it like the first time you went into hostile territory and heard your fans kind of supporting you on the road? What is that like when you're in a place you're expecting to get boos and you feel your fan base supporting you under pressure like that?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Yeah, it was a wild experience to be on a road game and feel like it was a home game.



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Knicks fans are amazing. Our fans really bring it every single game, regardless of where it's at.

I didn't know I would still have that same experience in Abu Dhabi in the preseason, and they flew all the way out there too and made it known it was going to be a home game wherever we go in the world.

So our fans are special, man, and they bring so much energy, love and support for us that it gets us over that hump when we're not playing well or maybe we're just not connected as we should be on the court. They really bring us together. So our fans truly is our secret weapon.

Q. You've known Leon Rose for a long time, right? Obviously agent. You've been a Knick for two years while he's been the team president. What stood out to you about his approach as team president?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: I mean, when you're an agent, I think anyone who knows the sports agency business, it's all about relationships. What Leon is one of the best in the world at is having genuine, loving relationships with people. I think because of that, you see the way our team acts, the way our team conducts itself. We conduct ourselves like family, and he's always had that family mantra in everything he's done.

Doing that, I think that's real. The connectivity, the unity this team represents every single night regardless of what the deficit is, like last game, last year, Game 1 [against] Cleveland. As a family, you never want to let your brothers down, and you never want to disappoint them. So for us, it's always about just being the best for each other and understanding that regardless of what happens in the world or what people say, we're all we got and we all we need.

As a family, when you truly do believe in your family, you feel anything is possible.

Q. Karl, you've said repeated times over the course of this postseason, you've got to have that 0-0 mentality, play with desperation, even with the lead. After a night as emotional as Wednesday, the lows and then the soaring highs at the end, the abundance of joy you talked about feeling, is it difficult to get back to that zero-out mentality? How difficult has it been these last couple days?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: Well, experience teaches you to get back on track pretty quickly. Also, in that experience, we all have stories and know people who have communicated with us way before this series started about how it is when you're down in a series or we've been down in a series or how important it is to get back to being locked

in.

Obviously that game is a hardwood classic, something that the NBA has never seen before. But I've also seen things, being in that situation, where the joy is at an all-time high and it could be at an all-time low pretty quick. So we understand the magnitude of locking back in, getting back to work.

Of course that night we all enjoyed the shell shock of what happened, and obviously we were the ones that were part of it. But we all understood the next morning that we had to get back to work, and we had to lock back in and get ready to find a way to win another one. Also, in that moment of jubilation, that moment of absolute joy, we have to talk about the elephant in the room was we just didn't play well at all and we put ourselves in that deficit.

So while there is joy, there is also frustration that we even allowed ourselves to be in that kind of position, especially as much as the deficit was.

So there was a lot to work on. There was a lot to talk about. There was a lot to correct. But it's always, anyone in the room knows, if you heard basketball before, if you hear a coach say it or a player say it, it's always great to learn those lessons and win.

Q. Obviously the goal is not to get down by double digits every game, but why are you guys as comfortable as you are in those situations?

KARL-ANTHONY TOWNS: I talk about our unity, our connectivity. We just continue to believe in each other and believe in our team, our game plan. Whatever needs to be adjusted in the game, us as players will always talk it out, and we're willing to have those conversations that are difficult. We're willing to keep each other accountable.

Regardless of what happens, we know, like I said, we all we got and we all we need, and it's more than enough to have a chance to win every single night.

I know a lot of people talk about it. I know you've heard a ton of people come up on this mic and say the same thing, the same thing, but I hope our team shows the world that we truly mean it. Even though last year we didn't get the job done, that unity and that connectivity and that continuity has always shown itself.

I think that last game is just another example of us talking about how connected we are together and how much we truly do have love for each other as teammates, as a team, as brothers, as a family. Only brothers would keep each other going, especially in the game where it was last game.

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Because of that family, family stays close. When things got really bad, we got closer. We didn't start fading away from each other.

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