





NEW YORK KNICKS

53-29 • Playoffs 12-2 • W11

VS





SAN ANTONIO SPURS

62-20 • Playoffs 12-6 • W2

NBA FINALS — GAME 1 • WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2026 • FROST BANK CENTER — SAN ANTONIO, TX

LAST 5 H2H

All-Time: NYK 49-64 SAS (113g) • Streak NYK W1

A NYK WIN WOULD... steal Game 1 on the road and open NBA Finals 1-0.
A SAS WIN WOULD... take Game 1 at home and open NBA Finals 1-0.

SAS home: 44-12
NYK home: 37-20

DATE	WINNER	SCORE	SITE
03/01/26	NYK	114-89	NYK
12/31/25	SAS	134-132	SAS
12/16/25	NYK	124-113	NYK
03/19/25	SAS	120-105	SAS
12/25/24	NYK	117-114	NYK

- ▶ **Went off:** 12/25/24 — Victor Wembanyama (SAS) 42 pts / 18r in SAS 114 @ NYK 117 (nail-biter (+3)).
- ▶ **Sample texture:** 2/5 decided by ≤7 and 2/5 by ≥15 in the last 5 meetings — both nail-biters and blowouts live here.
- ▶ **03/01/26 NYK 114-89:** Victor Wembanyama 25, Mikal Bridges 25 — blowout (+25).

ON THIS DAY

- ▶ **Jun 3, 1994 • Conference Finals G6:** Reggie Miller led all scorers with 27 pts, 1 reb, 4 ast — NYK 98 @ IND 91; NYK won series 4-3
- ▶ **Jun 3, 1998 • Finals G1:** Michael Jordan 33 pts; overtime — CHI 85 @ UTA 88; CHI won series 4-2
- ▶ **Jun 3, 1984 • Finals G3:** Magic Johnson triple-double (14/11/21) — BOS 104 @ LAL 137; BOS won series 4-3
- ▶ **Jun 3, 2012 • Conference Finals G4:** LeBron James 29 pts; overtime — MIA 91 @ BOS 93; MIA won series 4-3
- ▶ **Jun 3, 1992 • Finals G1:** Michael Jordan led all scorers with 39 pts, 3 reb, 11 ast — POR 89 @ CHI 122; CHI won series 4-2
- ▶ **Jun 3, 1977 • Finals G5:** Julius Erving led all scorers with 37 pts, 9 reb, 7 ast — POR 110 @ PHI 104; POR won series 4-2
- ▶ **Jun 3, 2018 • Finals G2:** Stephen Curry led all scorers with 33 pts, 7 reb, 8 ast — CLE 103 @ GSW 122; GSW won series 4-0
- ▶ **Jun 3, 2010 • Finals G1:** Kobe Bryant led all scorers with 30 pts, 7 reb, 6 ast — BOS 89 @ LAL 102; LAL won series 4-3
- ▶ **Jun 3, 1986 • Finals G4:** Ralph Sampson led all scorers with 25 pts, 7 reb, 9 ast — BOS 106 @ HOU 103; BOS won series 4-2
- ▶ **Jun 3, 1982 • Finals G4:** Andrew Toney led all scorers with 28 pts, 5 reb, 11 ast — PHI 101 @ LAL 111; LAL won series 4-2

SERIES LORE

- ▶ **Tonight's stage:** NBA Finals — Game 1 (NYK 0-0 SAS).
- ▶ **Prior Finals games on file:** 5 (first 1999-06-16).
- ▶ **H2H streak:** NYK W1 entering tonight.
- ▶ **Site splits:** SAS home 44-12; NYK home 37-20.
- ▶ **First meeting:** 1976-10-23 — series now 49-64 (NYK-SAS).

HEAD COACHES

- NYK: Mike Brown
Career 507-333 • Playoffs 66-43
- SAS: Mitch Johnson
Career 94-65 • Playoffs 13-10

TONIGHT'S GAME

- ▶ **A 12-2 RUN INTO THE NBA FINALS:** The Knicks have won 11 straight since dropping Game 3 at ATL, sweeping PHI and CLE, outscoring opponents by 19.4 points a game — the longest win streak an Eastern Conference team has ever carried into the NBA Finals, topping the 2003 Nets (10).
- ▶ **A TWO-ZONE OFFENSE WITH NO MIDRANGE SAFETY NET:** New York's 118.7 ORtg is 3rd-best in the NBA (#3/30), built on a narrow diet: 41.1% of its points come in the paint, 36.7% from three, and only 7.8% from midrange.
- ▶ **A TOP-7 SHELL BUILT TO FORCE TURNOVERS, NOT WALL OFF THE RIM:** New York's 112.3 DRtg ranks 7th, but the profile is lopsided: it forces turnovers at 13.9% while still surrendering 43.4 paint points and a .541 opponent eFG.
- ▶ **A TOP-THREE SHELL THAT WINS ON THE HALF-COURT:** San Antonio's 110.4 DRtg ranks 3rd in the league, and it is built on making opponents grind: a 52.2% opponent eFG, 46.3 paint points allowed and only 12.8 fast-break points surrendered a night.
- ▶ **PROJECTED FIVES:** NYK Jalen Brunson, Karl Anthony Towns, OG Anunoby, Mikal Bridges, Josh Hart • SAS Victor Wembanyama, DeAaron Fox, Stephon Castle, Devin Vassell, Keldon Johnson.
- ▶ **TWO-WAY FRAME:** NYK ORtg 118.7 (3rd best NBA) / DRtg 112.3 (7th best NBA) at 97.7 pace meets SAS 118.7 (3rd best NBA) / 110.4 (3rd best NBA) at 100.7 — the tempo fight is built into both fingerprints.

MATCHUP NOTES

- ▶ **FORM WATCH:** Fresh Legs vs a Grind: What's Waiting Tonight: San Antonio needed all seven games, closing the series on May 30 and grinding 41-plus minutes out of Wembanyama in the clincher.
- ▶ **ROAD CLINCHER: SPURS CLOSE IT OUT IN OKC:** San Antonio ended the Western Conference Finals the hard way, walking into Oklahoma City for Game 7 and winning 111-103 to take the series 4-3.
- ▶ **THE THIRD SEED WITH A ROAD SPINE:** The path here ran through a 53-29 season and the East's 3rd seed, seven games behind the top line, closed on an L10 of 6-4. The split is the tell: 30-10 at home, 22-19 on the road.
- ▶ **NO SIDE TO HIDE BEHIND:** San Antonio's identity is a refusal to specialize: this is a club that ranks in the league's top three on both ends, so it can win a grind or a shootout without changing who it is. The Spurs do not out-talent you into mistakes or beg for pace.
- ▶ **EFFICIENCY IS THE PERSONALITY:** The profile is a plus-8.4 net rating, second in the NBA, and it is no scheduling accident: third in offensive rating, third in defensive rating, with the only seam a 12th-ranked pace. San Antonio wins on quality rather than tempo, a halfcourt team content to make you pay for the possession you do not finish.

GAME KEYS

- ▶ **LEAD AFTER THREE, WIN THE GAME:** New York is 46-2 when it leads after three quarters (.958) but just 5-27 when it trails entering the fourth, the widest split on the board.
- ▶ **COIN FLIPS AND CLOSING TIME:** Both clubs thrive in the tight ones: New York is 9-4 in games decided by three or fewer, San Antonio 8-5.
- ▶ **MIKE BROWN'S SIDELINE RÉSUMÉ:** Mike Brown is in his first season running the Knicks, 53-29 with the club, and arrives with a 507-333 (60.4%) career mark, a 66-43 playoff record, one title and two conference titles across a span from 2006 to 2026.
- ▶ **THE SIDELINE: MITCH JOHNSON'S FIRST FINALS:** Mitch Johnson has these Spurs at 62-20 in his stint and 94-65 (59.1%) across a young career, with a 13-10 playoff mark, one conference title and zero rings.
- ▶ **NEW YORK'S PROJECTED FIVE IS CONTINUITY, NOT A HAMMER:** Brunson, Towns, Anunoby, Bridges and Hart are the expected Game 1 starters, combining for about 152 minutes a night across the last ten.



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PREVIOUS SERIES RECAPS

CONFERENCE FINALS VS CLE

Knicks

NYK 4-0 CLE (4 games)

Won series – Conference Finals.

DOWN 22, THEN A 44-11 BLITZ

The series nearly opened sideways. New York trailed **93-71** with **7:52** left in Game **1**, staring at a road team stealing home court. Then Brunson dropped **15** in the fourth and OG Anunoby poured in **9** of the Knicks' **14** overtime points, and New York outscored Cleveland **44-11** across the finish to win **115-104** in OT. One quarter changed the entire round, and the Knicks never lost again.

A 37-POINT ROAD STATEMENT

The clincher was a rout. New York walked into Cleveland and hung **130** in a **130-93** closeout, a **37**-point margin and the series' largest. Karl-Anthony Towns needed just **25:58** for **19** points, **14** boards and a **+25**; the Knicks crushed the glass **60-33** and buried **19** threes. They led **38-26** after one quarter and never let the Cavaliers back inside single digits. A road elimination game that was over by the third.

BRUNSON'S 38-POINT OPENER

Brunson authored the round's loudest night in Game **1**: **38** points, **6** assists, **3** steals in **46**-plus minutes, the engine that pulled New York out of the **22**-point ditch. He averaged **25.5** points and **7.8** assists across the series, then handed out **14** dimes in Game **2** and dropped **30** in the Game **3** road win. A Game **4** ending in a blowout barely needed him. Every Knicks run this round started with the ball in his hands.

HART'S 26 AND THE PASSING PULSE

Game **2** was the Josh Hart game: **26** points on five threes, **7** assists, a **+18**, as New York committed just **6** turnovers as a team and Brunson dealt **14** assists in a **109-93** cruise. Mikal Bridges gave the round its quiet second engine, a **22**-point, **11-of-15** shooting night in the Game **3** road win to go with **4.2** rebounds a game. The supporting cast turned a star-driven attack into a genuinely passing one.

SHAMET FLIPS IT FROM THE BENCH

Landry Shamet was the swingman. His Game **1** cameo of **9** points on **3-of-3** shooting from deep and a **+25** helped steady the comeback, and he poured in **11** fourth-quarter points in Game **3** to snuff a Cavs push. In the clincher he added **16** on **4-of-4** from three in **19** minutes at a night-best **+28**. Miles McBride and Mitchell Robinson chipped in **11** points and **10** boards off the bench once the rout opened.

THE ROAD SWEEP AND THE DEFENSIVE FLOOR

New York won both games in Cleveland by a combined **50** points and held the Cavaliers to **93** twice in four games. In Game **2** the Knicks shot **44-of-85** and surrendered just **31** made field goals, controlling pace from the opening tip. What began as an overtime scare became a sweep because the defense traveled. For a club carrying a **112.3** defensive rating on the season, a road round of **100**-point control is the identity statement.

ELEVEN STRAIGHT, NINE DAYS OFF

The sweep pushed New York's postseason win streak to **11**, dating to a first-round Game **4** against Atlanta, and sent them into Wednesday's Finals opener off nine days of rest. The Knicks arrive **12-2** overall in these playoffs. San Antonio, by contrast, closed out Oklahoma City in a Game **7** on the road just four days ago. Fresh legs against a battle-tested team is the Game **1** subplot waiting at Frost Bank Center.

DATE	WL	SCORE	SITE
05/19	W	115-104	H
05/21	W	109-93	H
05/23	W	121-108	A
05/25	W	130-93	A

PLAYER	PPG	RPG	APG	G
Jalen Brunson	25.5	3.2	7.8	4
Mikal Bridges	18.5	4.2	2.8	4
OG Anunoby	16.2	5.8	3.2	4
Karl Anthony Towns	15.8	12.0	4.0	4

MARK	VALUE
Series	4-0 vs CLE · Won series
ORtg/DRtg/Pace	118.7 / 112.3 / 97.7
Projected five	Jalen Brunson, Karl Anthony Towns, OG Anunoby, Mikal Bridges, Josh Hart

CONFERENCE FINALS VS OKC

Spurs

SAS 4-3 OKC (7 games)

Won series – Conference Finals.

ROAD CLINCHER: SPURS CLOSE IT OUT IN OKC

San Antonio ended the Western Conference Finals the hard way, walking into Oklahoma City for Game **7** and winning **111-103** to take the series **4-3**. Victor Wembanyama led with **22** points, seven rebounds and two blocks; Julian Champagnie poured in **20** on six three-pointers; Stephon Castle added **16**, six and six; De'Aaron Fox chipped in **15** with three steals. The Spurs buried **17** threes at **42.5%** and closed the fourth quarter on a **31**-point, **61%**-shooting kick. OKC managed just **32** paint points all night, a fitting final statement from the bigger team.

DOWN 3-2, SAN ANTONIO WON TWO ELIMINATION GAMES

OKC grabbed control with a **127-114** Game **5** win at home, shooting **48.2%** from the floor while the Spurs managed **40.2%** and **12-of-41** from deep. Facing elimination twice, San Antonio answered without blinking: a **118-91** Game **6** blowout at Frost Bank Center, then the **111-103** clincher back in Oklahoma City. The swing flipped on defense and shot quality, not variance. Across the final two games the Spurs held the Thunder to **91** and **103** after surrendering **122**, **123** and **127** in their three losses, the clearest evidence of a mid-series adjustment.

WEMBANYAMA'S OPENING STATEMENT: 41 AND 24 IN DOUBLE OT

Game **1** set the tone for the entire series. Wembanyama detonated for **41** points and **24** rebounds on **14-of-25** shooting as San Antonio stole the road opener **122-115** in double overtime. Rookie Dylan Harper backed him with **24** points, **11** rebounds and six assists, and Castle handed out **11** dimes. The Spurs led **80-73** after three before OKC clawed into extra periods; San Antonio outscored the Thunder **14-7** in the second overtime to finish it. A **24**-board night from a **7**-footer announced the size edge that would define the matchup.

GAME 4 LOCKDOWN: OKC HELD TO 82

With the series even, San Antonio strangled Oklahoma City **103-82** at home in Game **4**, the most lopsided result of the seven games. OKC shot **33%** from the field and a frigid **6-of-33** (**18.2%**) from three, while Wembanyama posted **33** points, eight rebounds and five assists at plus-**29**. Devin Vassell (**+27**) and Castle (**+25**) matched the defensive tone. It was the game that proved the Spurs' half-court defense could win a slow, physical playoff game when the jumpers stopped falling, and it steadied a series that had tilted toward OKC's pace.

GAME 6 RUNAWAY: HARPER'S BENCH JOLT

Facing elimination at home, San Antonio broke it open **118-91** in Game **6**. Wembanyama scored **28** with **10** boards, but the lift came from the second unit: Dylan Harper netted **18** at plus-**19**, and Castle orchestrated **17** points with nine assists. The Spurs shot **46.6%** and **15-of-41** from deep while pinning OKC to **37.2%** from the field. The **27**-point margin, the largest of the series, reset the tone, quieted a surging Thunder team, and forced the decisive Game **7** back in Oklahoma City, where San Antonio would ultimately finish the job.

CHAMPAGNIE'S SIX THREES BREAK GAME 7 OPEN

The unsung swing came from Julian Champagnie, who drilled six three-pointers on **10** attempts for **20** points and a game-high plus-**16** in the clincher. He averaged **11.9** points and **6.1** rebounds across the series, but his **6-of-10** night from deep kept San Antonio attached whenever OKC threatened, and his spacing opened driving lanes for Castle and Fox. On a night Wembanyama was limited to **22** points on **7-of-15** shooting, that perimeter volume was the difference between a road win and a flight home.

FRESH LEGS VS A GRIND: WHAT'S WAITING TONIGHT

San Antonio needed all seven games, closing the series on May **30** and grinding **41**-plus minutes out of Wembanyama in the clincher. New York swept Cleveland and finished May **25**, handing the Knicks a meaningful rest edge into Wednesday's Game **1** at Frost Bank Center. The Spurs carry a **12-6** postseason record and a two-game win streak into the Finals, while New York arrives having won **11** straight. The contrast is the story: New York is the rested, surging side, San Antonio the battle-tested one. Whether Wembanyama's heavy load holds up is the first thing to watch.

DATE	WL	SCORE	SITE
05/18	W	122-115	A
05/20	L	113-122	A
05/22	L	108-123	H
05/24	W	103-82	H
05/26	L	114-127	A
05/28	W	118-91	H
05/30	W	111-103	A

PLAYER	PPG	RPG	APG	G
Victor Wembanyama	27.3	10.9	3.1	7
Stephon Castle	18.0	5.0	7.6	7
Devin Vassell	13.9	4.9	2.4	7
Dylan Harper	12.0	5.7	3.3	7

MARK	VALUE
Series	4-3 vs OKC · Won series
ORtg/DRtg/Pace	118.7 / 110.4 / 100.7
Projected five	Victor Wembanyama, De'Aaron Fox, Stephon Castle, Devin Vassell, Keldon Johnson



BROADCAST SUMMARYTHE POINT · THE NUMBER · WHAT IT MEANS TONIGHT

One Engine, Then a Ball-Moving Committee: Jalen Brunson is the offense: **91.3** touches and **14.8** drives per game at a **.296** usage rate, producing **10.7** points per game off drives and **11.0** on pull-ups. A Front-Loaded Offense: Blitz Early, Grind Late: The segments say New York is at its best immediately: a **120.6** first-quarter ORtg and **.572** eFG, the best of any quarter, sliding to **116.9** and **.545** by the fourth.

- 1

ONE ENGINE, THEN A BALL-MOVING COMMITTEE: Jalen Brunson is the offense: **91.3** touches and **14.8** drives per game at a **.296** usage rate, producing **10.7** points per game off drives and **11.0** on pull-ups.
- 2

A FRONT-LOADED OFFENSE: BLITZ EARLY, GRIND LATE: The segments say New York is at its best immediately: a **120.6** first-quarter ORtg and **.572** eFG, the best of any quarter, sliding to **116.9** and **.545** by the fourth.

KNICKS OFFENSE

NYK ORtg 118.7 (rk 3) · Pace 97.7 into SAS DRtg 110.4.

EFFICIENCY

MARK	VALUE
ORtg / Pace	118.7 · 97.7
eFG / TS	55.7% · 59.0%
ORB / FTA	32.8% · 23.8%
Scoring diet	Paint 41.1% · 3pt 36.7% · FT 14.5%

TONIGHT EDGES

EDGE	ATTACK VS DEF	GAP
Corner 3	41.6% vs 34.5%	7.1 pts
Restricted area	66.3% vs 63.5%	2.8 pts
Cut	1.45 vs 1.25 PPP	0.20 · elite (top of league)
PnR Roll	1.17 vs 1.03 PPP	0.13 · 76th percentile
Handoff	1.05 vs 0.93 PPP	0.12 · elite (top of league)

Creators: Jalen Brunson 26.0/6.8 (usg 29.6%) · Karl Anthony Towns 20.1/3.0 (usg 25.1%) · OG Anunoby 16.7/2.2 (usg 19.4%).

A TWO-ZONE OFFENSE WITH NO MIDRANGE SAFETY NET

New York's **118.7** ORtg is 3rd-best in the NBA (**#3/30**), built on a narrow diet: **41.1%** of its points come in the paint, **36.7%** from three, and only **7.8%** from midrange. At **55.7%** eFG and **59.0%** TS on a **97.7** pace (**#25/30**), the Knicks win the quality of their shots rather than the count. San Antonio's **110.4** DRtg has to live with a team that simply will not take the midrange bailout.

ONE ENGINE, THEN A BALL-MOVING COMMITTEE

Jalen Brunson is the offense: **91.3** touches and **14.8** drives per game at a **.296** usage rate, producing **10.7** points per game off drives and **11.0** on pull-ups. Behind him, Karl-Anthony Towns (**20.1** points, **52.3** touches, **5.9** drive points) and Mikal Bridges (a team-high **40.4** passes per game) keep the ball hot. The postseason tilt is telling: only **60.3%** of New York's playoff makes are assisted versus **64.3%** in the regular season, so the offense has leaned harder on individual creation when it matters.

THE CORNER THREE IS WHERE THIS DEFENSE LEAKS

The sharpest zone mismatch is the corner: New York shoots **41.6%** there against San Antonio's **34.5%** allowed, a **7.1**-point gap on **13.4%** of the Knicks' attempts. The restricted-area edge is thinner (**66.3%** vs **64.7%** allowed, **2.8** points), and above-the-break is a dead heat (**35.3%** vs **35.4%**). If the Spurs' defense breaks anywhere, it breaks in the corners.

CUTS AND HANDOFFS ARE WHERE THIS OFFENSE BITES

New York's cuts are lethal at **1.45** points per possession, elite (top of the league in Cut efficiency), against a San Antonio defense allowing **1.25**, a **0.20** PPP pressure point. The handoff game is nearly as sharp at **1.05** PPP, elite, versus **0.93** allowed. Off-ball motion is how the Knicks turn a set defense into an open layup.

WIN THE MIDDLE OF THE FLOOR, NOT THE BLOCK

The pick-and-roll roll man is the cleaner edge at **1.17** PPP against San Antonio's **1.03** allowed, even though the Spurs grade 97th percentile defending it. Post-ups are a trap: New York's **0.87** PPP there is league-worst, matched against a San Antonio post defense at the 97th percentile. New York has to win the paint through the roll and the cut, and stay off the block.

A FRONT-LOADED OFFENSE: BLITZ EARLY, GRIND LATE

The segments say New York is at its best immediately: a **120.6** first-quarter ORtg and **.572** eFG, the best of any quarter, sliding to **116.9** and **.545** by the fourth. The diet drifts too, with paint supplying **43.7%** of second-quarter points but only **39.4%** in the third, while free-throw attempts climb from **4.7** in Q1 to **5.8** in Q4. A slow San Antonio start invites the Knicks' best basketball; a tight fourth hands New York its whistle.

GLASS, BREAK, AND THE COUNTER IN TRANSITION

The secondary legs are live: a **32.8%** offensive rebound rate, **15.1** fast-break points per game, a **23.8%** free-throw attempt rate, and **15.3%** of all points off turnovers, with transition at **18.2%** of possessions and **1.168** PPP. San Antonio grades 93rd percentile in transition defense, the counter the Spurs will lean on. To keep New York off the run, San Antonio must finish possessions on the glass first.

A CLOSER'S HARDWARE AND A POSTSEASON GEAR

The centerpiece carries the accolades: Jalen Brunson is a 2026 All-NBA selection and the **2024-25** NBA Clutch Player of the Year, the profile of a man who wants the ball in the final five minutes. New York's offense has also found another level in the playoffs, posting a **119.9** ORtg and **.566** eFG across **19** games. Whatever San Antonio builds in Game **1** has to hold up at winning time.

SPURS OFFENSE

SAS ORtg 118.7 (rk 3) · Pace 100.7 into NYK DRtg 112.3.

EFFICIENCY

MARK	VALUE
ORtg / Pace	118.7 · 100.7
eFG / TS	55.9% · 59.5%
ORB / FTA	30.6% · 27.4%
Scoring diet	Paint 43.5% · 3pt 34.1% · FT 16.1%

TONIGHT EDGES

EDGE	ATTACK VS DEF	GAP
Midrange	43.6% vs 40.2%	3.4 pts
Restricted area	67.9% vs 64.7%	3.2 pts
PnR Roll	1.26 vs 1.10 PPP	0.16 · elite (top of league)
Putback	1.19 vs 1.04 PPP	0.16 · 83rd percentile
Off Screen	0.96 vs 1.05 PPP	-0.09 · 52nd percentile

Creators: Victor Wembanyama 25.0/3.1 (usg 31.6%) · DeAaron Fox 18.6/6.2 (usg 24.2%) · Stephon Castle 16.7/7.4 (usg 24.3%).

PAINT FIRST, MIDRANGE LAST

San Antonio grades 3rd in the NBA at **118.7** ORtg on a **100.7** pace, riding a **55.9%** eFG and **59.5%** TS. The diet is built inside-out: **43.5%** of points arrive in the paint and **34.1%** from three, while just **6.2%** come on midrange twos, the smallest share of any layer of their attack. New York's only real path is to wall the paint and dare the jumper.

TWO DOWNHILL ENGINES, ONE 7-FOOT HUB

Castle (**12.9** drives, **7.0** drive points, **7.4** APG on **.344** assist rate) and Fox (**12.1** drives, **7.3** drive points, **6.2** APG) are the twin rim-pressure creators, combining for **25** drives a night. Wembanyama sits above them as the hub: **25.0** points on a **120.5** individual ORtg while touching the ball **58.5** times a game. New York has to survive two ball handlers before it ever reaches the **7**-footer.

THE RIM IS WHERE THEY LIVE

SAS fires **31.1%** of its shots in the restricted area and converts **67.9%** there, **3.2** points above the **64.7%** New York allows, the sharpest zone mismatch on the board. They also quietly win midrange (**43.6%** against a **40.2%** allowance), but the above-the-break three is the one zone where the edge flips negative: **34.4%** shooting into a **35.4%** Knicks allowance. Attack the rim, not the arc.

THE ROLL IS THE WEAPON

On Pick-and-Roll Roll Man possessions San Antonio posts **1.263** PPP, elite and atop the league, against a New York defense that surrenders **1.10** (55th percentile) for a **0.163** gap, the biggest play-type collision of the matchup. With Wembanyama and Johnson screening into the short roll, it is the highest-leverage action the Spurs can spam. There is no answer at the level of the screen.

SECOND CHANCES, NOT A FALLBACK

SAS converts putbacks at **1.191** PPP (83rd percentile) while New York defends the offensive-glass follow at just **1.036** allowed (93rd percentile), a **0.155** gap that is genuine pressure. It flows from a **30.6%** offensive rebound rate. In a Finals half-court grind, every miss becomes a live possession at the rim.

CUT THEM AND YOU GET CUT, BUT THE BREAK IS UNTOUCHED

San Antonio cuts at **1.391** PPP (97th percentile), yet New York is one of the few defenses that survives it, holding cutters to **1.372** (14th percentile) for the rare neutralized action. Meanwhile the Knicks sit bottom-quartile defending transition (**1.168** allowed, 24th percentile) and SAS only runs **1.146** there (55th percentile). The edge is sitting on the table; the Spurs just are not pressing it.

FAST STARTS, SOFT FINISHES

SAS blitzes the opening quarter: **31.9** points on **50.2%** FG and **38.5%** from three for a **124.0** ORtg, its best period, then slides to **30.3**, **29.7** and **27.6** as the game wears on. The fourth-quarter version is a different team at **46.8%** FG and **32.9%** from deep (**114.0** ORtg). Late and close, the closing diet narrows to Wembanyama (**6.9** Q4 points on a **.346** usage) and the free-throw line.

WHISTLE, GLASS, TRANSITION: THE CHEAP POINTS

San Antonio's scoring legs are volume, not variance: a **27.4%** free-throw attempt rate, a **30.6%** offensive rebound rate, and **16.3** fast-break points a game (**13.6%** of its scoring). It also banks **14.2%** of points off turnovers, so live-ball mistakes feed directly into the paint. New York must defend without fouling and finish every rebound.



DEFENSIVE APPROACH

NBA FINALS – GAME 1

BROADCAST SUMMARY THE POINT · THE NUMBER · WHAT IT MEANS TONIGHT

Castle Shadows Brunson, the Bench Is the Soft Spot: In the regular-season meetings Stephon Castle logged 7.2 matchup minutes on Jalen Brunson and held him to 0 points on 0-of-4 shooting, while DeAaron Fox's 7.2 minutes. **Post-Up Is a Dead End;** the Glass Is the Trade-Off: The block is a no-fly zone: San Antonio grades 97th percentile defending post-ups and New York is league-worst there at 0.87 PPP, so feeding the post is not the answer.

- 1

CASTLE SHADOWS BRUNSON, THE BENCH IS THE SOFT SPOT: In the regular-season meetings Stephon Castle logged 7.2 matchup minutes on Jalen Brunson and held him to 0 points on 0-of-4 shooting, while DeAaron Fox's 7.2 minutes on Brunson gave up 15 on 6-of-11.
- 2

POST-UP IS A DEAD END; THE GLASS IS THE TRADE-OFF: The block is a no-fly zone: San Antonio grades 97th percentile defending post-ups and New York is league-worst there at 0.87 PPP, so feeding the post is not the answer.

KNICKS DEFENSE

NYK DRtg 112.3 (rk 7) · Opp paint 43.4 into SAS ORtg 118.7.

SHELL

MARK	VALUE
DRtg / Net	112.3 · 6.4
Opp eFG	54.1%
Opp paint / FB	43.4 · 14.0
TOV%	13.9%

TONIGHT EDGES

EDGE	OPP VS US	GAP
Midrange	Opp 43.6% vs allow 40.2%	3.4 pts
Restricted area	Opp 67.9% vs allow 64.7%	3.2 pts
PnR Roll	Opp 1.26 vs DEF 1.10	0.16 · 55th percentile
Putback	Opp 1.19 vs DEF 1.04	0.16 · 93rd percentile
Off Screen	Opp 0.96 vs DEF 1.05	-0.09 · 7th percentile

Disruptors: OG Anunoby 1.6 STL / 0.7 BLK · Mitchell Robinson 0.9 STL / 1.2 BLK · Mikal Bridges 1.3 STL / 0.8 BLK.

A TOP-7 SHELL BUILT TO FORCE TURNOVERS, NOT WALL OFF THE RIM

New York's **112.3** DRtg ranks 7th, but the profile is lopsided: it forces turnovers at **13.9%** while still surrendering **43.4** paint points and a **.541** opponent eFG. That trade – live hands, soft interior – is precisely what a 7-foot hub punishes. If the takeaway rate doesn't hold, the half-court shell alone won't survive San Antonio's **118.7** ORtg.

ANUNOBY AND BRIDGES ARE THE DISRUPTION ENGINES

OG Anunoby leads the wing crew at **1.6** steals and **0.7** blocks per game on a **110.2** defensive rating, and Mikal Bridges adds **1.3** steals and **0.8** blocks at **112.0**. Those are the switch-everything arms that let New York stay attached to San Antonio's downhill guards. If either sags, the runway to the rim opens.

THE MIDRANGE IS THE HOLE IN THE SHELL

New York holds opponents to **.402** on midrange shots, yet San Antonio converts **.436** there – a **3.4**-point edge, the sharpest zone gap on the board. The restricted area is nearly as loose: San Antonio shoots **67.9%** inside against the **.647** New York allows, a **3.2**-point leak on **31.1%** of its attempts. The shell has to win at the rim, because the midrange jumper is live.

THE ROLL MAN IS WHERE THE SHELL BREAKS

New York surrenders **1.10** PPP defending the pick-and-roll roll man (55th percentile) while San Antonio scores **1.263** there, elite and league-best – a **0.163** gap, the biggest play-type mismatch in the matchup. Putback defense is the second leak: New York allows **1.036** on offensive-rebound follows against San Antonio's **1.191**, a **0.155** gap. Tag the roll and crash the glass, or hand over free points.

WEMBANYAMA FORCES A TWO-MAN ROTATION

Across two regular-season meetings, Karl-Anthony Towns logged **6.6** matchup minutes on Victor Wembanyama and surrendered **14** points, while OG Anunoby spent **6.5** minutes on him for **10** points at **55.6%** shooting. Mikal Bridges drew DeAaron Fox for **6.8** minutes and gave up **13** on **66.7%**. The assignment churn on Wembanyama is the whole chess match – nobody single-covers him.

MITCHELL ROBINSON IS THE SECOND-UNIT BACKBONE

When Towns rests, the shell re-anchors around Mitchell Robinson, whose **1.2** blocks and **109.9** defensive rating are the best rim numbers on the roster. Miles McBride backs him at **110.4** while pressuring the ball. Those bench minutes are where New York can survive Wembanyama's staggered run – or lose the paint entirely.

THE Q3 WOBBLE IS THE DANGER WINDOW

New York's defense is softest in the third quarter (**116.4** DRtg) and leaks in the first (**116.5**), then snaps shut in the fourth (**104.6** with a **.493** opponent eFG). San Antonio front-loads its own offense with a **124.0** first-quarter ORtg, so the Knicks' early shell faces the Spurs' hardest punch. Survive the Q1/Q3 pockets and the late defense wins this.

WHISTLE AND BREAK: NEW YORK'S CHEAP-POINT LEAKS

New York allows a **.265** opponent free-throw rate that balloons to .3215 in the fourth quarter, and gives up **14.0** fast-break points a game. Its transition defense sits at **1.17** PPP – bottom-quarter of the league – against a San Antonio team that runs on **21.3%** of possessions. Fouls and leak-outs are how the Spurs score without beating the half-court shell.

SPURS DEFENSE

SAS DRtg 110.4 (rk 3) · Opp paint 46.3 into NYK ORtg 118.7.

SHELL

MARK	VALUE
DRtg / Net	110.4 · 8.4
Opp eFG	52.2%
Opp paint / FB	46.3 · 12.8
TOV%	13.3%

TONIGHT EDGES

EDGE	OPP VS US	GAP
Corner 3	Opp 41.6% vs allow 34.5%	7.1 pts
Restricted area	Opp 66.3% vs allow 63.5%	2.8 pts
Cut	Opp 1.45 vs DEF 1.25	0.20 · 83rd percentile
PnR Roll	Opp 1.17 vs DEF 1.03	0.13 · 97th percentile
Handoff	Opp 1.05 vs DEF 0.93	0.12 · 52nd percentile

Disruptors: Victor Wembanyama 1.0 STL / 3.1 BLK · DeAaron Fox 1.2 STL / 0.3 BLK · Luke Kornet 0.5 STL / 1.0 BLK.

A TOP-THREE SHELL THAT WINS ON THE HALF-COURT

San Antonio's **110.4** DRtg ranks 3rd in the league, and it is built on making opponents grind: a **52.2%** opponent eFG, **46.3** paint points allowed and only **12.8** fast-break points surrendered a night. This group does not gamble for chaos, it forces **13.3%** turnovers while walling the interior. Against a New York offense rated 3rd (**118.7** ORtg) that wants paint-first touches, the opening is strength-on-strength.

WEMBANYAMA IS THE WHOLE BACK LINE

Victor Wembanyama is the shell: **3.1** blocks and **1.0** steals per game to go with a **103.6** defensive rating, the best of any Spurs rotation regular. His **11.5** rebounds a night let the perimeter gamble, because the 7-footer is the eraser behind it. New York's elite cut game and roll attack both have to solve him at the rim first.

STEAL-AND-DENY ON THE PERIMETER

DeAaron Fox (**1.2** steals) and Stephon Castle (**1.1**) are the ball hawks, with Devin Vassell (**0.9**) and Julian Champagnie (**0.8**) adding wing length. That group pressures passing lanes without gifting free throws, the engine behind the **13.3%** turnover-forced rate. New York lives on **15.3%** of its points off turnovers, so clean hands here directly subtract from the Knicks' cheap-point supply.

THE CORNER IS THE CRACK IN THE SHELL

San Antonio limits opponents to **.345** on corner threes, but New York shoots **.416** there, a **7.1**-point gap and the widest zone mismatch in this matchup on **13.4%** of Knicks attempts. Everything else is neutral or better: above-break nearly dead even (**.353** attack vs **.354** allowed) and the restricted area a wash (**.663** vs **.635**). If the shell over-helps on Brunson's drives, the corner kick-out is the leak that pays.

BACK-DOOR CUTS AND HANDOFFS ARE THE BLIND SPOT

New York's cut game is elite at **1.45** points per possession, and San Antonio surrenders **1.25**, a **0.20** PPP pressure point that is the largest play-type gap on the board. Handoffs are the second soft spot: the Knicks convert **1.05** (elite) against a Spurs defense allowing **0.93**, a **0.12** gap. Both are off-ball actions that punish a shell which turns its head to the ball.

POST-UP IS A DEAD END; THE GLASS IS THE TRADE-OFF

The block is a no-fly zone: San Antonio grades 97th percentile defending post-ups and New York is league-worst there at **0.87** PPP, so feeding the post is not the answer. Transition is also a strength (Spurs 93rd percentile, **1.09** allowed vs the Knicks' **1.17**). The genuine vulnerability is the follow game and second chances, where the Spurs allow **1.16** PPP on putbacks against a New York club carrying a **32.8%** offensive rebound rate.

CASTLE SHADOWS BRUNSON, THE BENCH IS THE SOFT SPOT

In the regular-season meetings Stephon Castle logged **7.2** matchup minutes on Jalen Brunson and held him to 0 points on **0-of-4** shooting, while DeAaron Fox's **7.2** minutes on Brunson gave up 15 on 6-of-11. That is the blueprint: Castle as the primary shadow, Fox as the change-up. The risk is depth, the closest all-reserve five (Biyombo-Olynynk-McLaughlin-Waters-Bryant) posted a **130.9** DRtg, so every non-Wembanyama minute is where New York will hunt the switch.

THE THIRD QUARTER IS WHEN THE SHELL BENDS

By quarter, San Antonio is softest in Q3 at a **114.5** DRtg after a **107.8** second quarter, the only period above its season mark. Its opponent free-throw attempt rate climbs from **.185** in the first to **.264** in the fourth, a whistle trend that grows as legs tire. New York is a front-loaded offense (**120.6** first-quarter ORtg), so the Spurs' cleanest defensive window is the middle, and a foul-heavy second half is the danger zone.



BROADCAST SUMMARY THE POINT · THE NUMBER · WHAT IT MEANS TONIGHT

Attack the Midrange Hole, Survive the Roll: San Antonio's sharpest late-clock path runs through the mid-range hole in New York's shell: the Knicks allow **.402** there while the Spurs convert **.436**, a **3.4**-point gap that becom. **Fifty-Five in the Window:** In the clutch window (Q4, five minutes or fewer, within five) New York shoots **55.0%** from the floor on **320** attempts and **43.3%** from three (**42-of-97**), piling up **322** points.

1 ATTACK THE MIDRANGE HOLE, SURVIVE THE ROLL: San Antonio's sharpest late-clock path runs through the mid-range hole in New York's shell: the Knicks allow **.402** there while the Spurs convert **.436**, a **3.4**-point gap that becomes the bailout when a set breaks down.

2 FIFTY-FIVE IN THE WINDOW: In the clutch window (Q4, five minutes or fewer, within five) New York shoots **55.0%** from the floor on **320** attempts and **43.3%** from three (**42-of-97**), piling up **322** points.

KNICKS CLUTCH

Q4 ≤5:00 within 5 · REG+PST before tip · vs SAS.

CLOSE-GAME LEDGER

MARK	VALUE
≤3pt games	9-4
Ahead / behind Q3	46-2 · 5-27
Ahead / behind half	38-6 · 15-23
10+ games	32-19

CLUTCH WINDOW

MARK	VALUE
FG	176/320(55.0%)
3PT	42/97
PTS / TOV	322 · 24
Fouls / Drawn	56 · 71

CLUTCH SCORERS

PLAYER	PTS	FG	FG%
Jalen Brunson	116	62/113	54.9%
OG Anunoby	57	35/53	66.0%
Karl Anthony Towns	35	22/41	53.7%
Mikal Bridges	34	14/26	53.8%

LEAD AFTER THREE, WIN THE GAME

New York is **46-2** when it leads after three quarters (**.958**) but just **5-27** when it trails entering the fourth, the widest split on the board. San Antonio is steadier down the stretch: **50-8** ahead after three, yet a far better **11-12** when behind. The Knicks are **9-4** in games decided by three or fewer; the Spurs sit **8-5**.

FRONT-RUN PROOF, COMEBACK VOID

The halftime version reads the same: New York is **38-6** when ahead at the break and **15-23** when behind. That **15-23** is the cushion San Antonio wants to flip early, because the Knicks' late-clock equity collapses the moment they are chasing instead of protecting. San Antonio's **13-10** when trailing at half is the relative resilience edge.

FIFTY-FIVE IN THE WINDOW

In the clutch window (Q4, five minutes or fewer, within five) New York shoots **55.0%** from the floor on **320** attempts and **43.3%** from three (**42-of-97**), piling up **322** points. San Antonio answers at **52.7%** but on a heavier **334** attempts, so both sides score efficiently while New York stays the more selective shooter. The Knicks trade volume for shot quality when the clock tightens.

A PLUS-15 WHISTLE AND SHRINK-WRAPPED BALL

New York commits **56** fouls across the clutch window but draws **71**, a plus-**15** margin that converts late possessions into free points. They pair it with ball security, giving it away only **24** times. San Antonio's **58** committed fouls and **24** turnovers are the counter-lever, live only if the Spurs can pressure Brunson into early help.

BRUNSON OWNS THE BALL, ANUNOBY OWNS THE EFFICIENCY

Jalen Brunson's **116** clutch points on **62-of-113 (54.9%)** are nearly double any teammate, the profile of a 2026 All-NBA guard and **2024-25** Clutch Player of the Year. OG Anunoby is the quiet closer at **57** points on **35-of-53 (66.0%)**, the highest-volume, highest-percentage late option on the roster. Karl-Anthony Towns (**35** points) and Miles McBride (**33**) fill the next rung.

FIVE FINISHERS, ONE CHAIN OF COMMAND

Behind Brunson, four Knicks have taken genuine late-clock turns: Anunoby (**53** attempts), Towns (**41**), Bridges (**26**) and McBride (**26**). Mikal Bridges at **53.8%** and Towns at **53.7%** give New York mid-range and post outlets whenever the Spurs load up on Brunson's downhill. That distribution keeps the closing offense from devolving into a one-man rerun.

ATTACK THE MIDRANGE HOLE, SURVIVE THE ROLL

San Antonio's sharpest late-clock path runs through the mid-range hole in New York's shell: the Knicks allow **.402** there while the Spurs convert **.436**, a **3.4**-point gap that becomes the bailout when a set breaks down. New York's counter is the roll man, at **1.17** PPP against San Antonio's **1.03** allowed. Whoever forces the other off its preferred late-clock shot wins the final five.

SPURS CLUTCH

Q4 ≤5:00 within 5 · REG+PST before tip · vs NYK.

CLOSE-GAME LEDGER

MARK	VALUE
≤3pt games	8-5
Ahead / behind Q3	50-8 · 11-12
Ahead / behind half	48-10 · 13-10
10+ games	43-8

CLUTCH WINDOW

MARK	VALUE
FG	199/378(52.6%)
3PT	22/93
PTS / TOV	326 · 30
Fouls / Drawn	68 · 90

CLUTCH SCORERS

PLAYER	PTS	FG	FG%
Victor Wembanyama	79	46/90	51.1%
DeAaron Fox	69	42/82	51.2%
Stephon Castle	35	21/41	51.2%
Keldon Johnson	28	18/27	66.7%

COIN FLIPS AND CLOSING TIME

Both clubs thrive in the tight ones: New York is **9-4** in games decided by three or fewer, San Antonio **8-5**. Extend it to the third-quarter break and the mirror flips. The Knicks are a staggering **46-2** when leading after three but just **5-27** when trailing; the Spurs are **50-8** ahead and a competitive **11-12** behind. New York must hold a late lead to win.

THE SHARPER CLUTCH SHOOTER

Shooting in the clutch window favors New York: **56.0%** from the field, the sharper late-clock number. San Antonio sits at **52.6%** overall but just **22-of-93** from three (**23.7%**), leaning on **326** clutch points built mostly inside. If this game tightens into a half-court grinder, the Knicks own the better shot quality.

BALL SECURITY AND THE WHISTLE

Late-clock discipline tilts to the Knicks. San Antonio has turned it over **30** times in the window while committing **68** fouls and drawing **90**; New York coughs it up only **20** times and commits **50**. The Spurs still manufacture trips to the line, but the Knicks' cleaner handle and lighter foul load is the steadier close-game profile.

SAN ANTONIO CLOSES BY COMMITTEE

San Antonio closes by committee. Wembanyama leads the clutch window with **79** points on **46-of-90**, Fox adds **69** and Castle **35**, with Keldon Johnson (**28**) and Vassell (**27**) behind. All five sit at or above **50%** shooting in the window. It is a hard-to-scheme spread that makes the Spurs less dependent on one isolator.

THIS WINDOW BELONGS TO BRUNSON

New York is the opposite: this window belongs to Brunson. He accounts for **38%** of the Knicks' clutch scoring, with Anunoby a clear second option at **19%**, ahead of Bridges, Towns and McBride. Late and close, the offense funnels to Brunson's pull-up and downhill attack, one alpha closer against San Antonio's committee.

PRESSURE VS POISE: THE LATE TELL

The late-clock tell is pressure versus poise. San Antonio's closers live downhill and at the rim, but New York's shell forces turnovers at **13.9%**, the live-ball hazard built to punish exactly that attack. At the other end it is Brunson's pick-and-roll pull-up against San Antonio's switch-heavy wings, a group already carrying **68** clutch fouls.

THE COMEBACK RARITY

The rarity sits in the comeback column. San Antonio is **11-12** when trailing after three quarters; New York is **5-27** in the identical spot. The Knicks effectively must lead entering the fourth. If San Antonio is within reach at the final break, the late-clock math bends back to the Spurs.



BROADCAST SUMMARY THE POINT · THE NUMBER · WHAT IT MEANS TONIGHT

Coaching Challenges: New York is **42-12 (78%)** on Coach's Challenges this season and **119-86 (58%)** under Brown this club era, including **1-0** against San Antonio. **Rotation Check-In:** The Projected Five: San Antonio's projected starting five — Victor Wembanyama, DeAaron Fox, Stephon Castle, Devin Vassell, Keldon Johnson — carries the offense from the jump.

1 COACHING CHALLENGES: New York is **42-12 (78%)** on Coach's Challenges this season and **119-86 (58%)** under Brown this club era, including **1-0** against San Antonio.

2 ROTATION CHECK-IN: THE PROJECTED FIVE: San Antonio's projected starting five — Victor Wembanyama, DeAaron Fox, Stephon Castle, Devin Vassell, Keldon Johnson — carries the offense from the jump.

KNICKS COACHING

SIDELINE

MARK	VALUE
Head coach	Mike Brown
Stint W-L	53-29
Career W-L	507-333 (60.4%)
Playoff / Titles	66-43 · 1

TIMEOUT CLOCK

MARK	VALUE
Total T0s	483
Q1 / Q2 / Q3 / Q4	105 / 101 / 111 / 166
≥10 / 5-10 / <5	24 / 222 / 237

ATO FIRST SHOT

PLAYER	FG	FG%
Jalen Brunson	44/97	45.4%
Mikal Bridges	15/40	37.5%
Karl Anthony Towns	18/38	47.4%
OG Anunoby	16/35	45.7%

COACHING CHALLENGES

MARK	VALUE
This season	42-12 (78%)
Career (HC)	119-86 (58%)
vs SAS	1-0 (100%)
Last 5 games	0-1 (0%)
By type	Foul 23-8 (74%), OOB 19-3 (86%), GT/BI 0-1 (0%)
By period	Q4 18-6, Q3 12-3, Q2 8-2, Q1 4-1

MIKE BROWN'S SIDELINE RÉSUMÉ

Mike Brown is in his first season running the Knicks, **53-29** with the club, and arrives with a **507-333 (60.4%)** career mark, a **66-43** playoff record, one title and two conference titles across a span from 2006 to 2026. That is a coach who has been to the deep end before, and the résumé is the setup for everything New York does at a stoppage.

THE TIMEOUT CLOCK TILTS LATE

New York has spent **483** timeouts this season, and the distribution leans hard toward the finish: **105** in Q1, **101** in Q2, **111** in Q3, then **166** in the fourth. By clock, only **24** come with **10:00** or more remaining, **222** sit in the **5-10** window and **237** land under five minutes. Brown saves his stoppages for the moments that matter most.

ATO FIRST LOOK: IT'S BRUNSON

After a Knicks timeout, the first shot belongs to Jalen Brunson: **44-of-97 (45.4%)** on after-timeout first attempts, by far the highest volume on the roster. Karl-Anthony Towns (**18-of-38, 47.4%**) and OG Anunoby (**16-of-35, 45.7%**) are the change-up options, with Mikal Bridges at **15-of-40**. Every drawn-up play starts with **No. 1**.

COACHING CHALLENGES

New York is **42-12 (78%)** on Coach's Challenges this season and **119-86 (58%)** under Brown this club era, including **1-0** against San Antonio. Type mix: Foul **23-8 (74%)**, OOB **19-3 (86%)**, GT/BI **0-1**. Q4 skews heaviest at **18-6 (n=24)**, ahead of Q3 **12-3**, Q2 **8-2** and Q1 **4-1**, while the last five team games went **0-1**. Look out: Brown will spend a fourth-quarter challenge on a possession call — he is **92%** on home-team-ball and **89%** on away-team-ball initial rulings.

ROTATION CHECK-IN AND THE EARLY WHISTLE

The projected five is set — Brunson, Towns, Anunoby, Bridges and Josh Hart — but watch the early whistle. Bridges owns a team-high **23** first-quarter fouls (with **8:00** or more left on the clock), Towns **15** and Anunoby **14**, so Brown may have to shuttle a wing inside the first few minutes. When Towns rests, the second unit re-anchors on Mitchell Robinson.

HOW THE STOPPAGE HABITS HIT SAN ANTONIO

The timeout habits are aimed straight at the Spurs. Brunson's after-timeout volume runs into a San Antonio defense that must load toward the roll man — earlier pages logged that as the series' biggest play-type gap — so Brown's drawn-up calls are his cleanest counter to it. San Antonio's own first look out of a timeout goes to DeAaron Fox (**21-of-47**).

LATE-GAME FOUL TIMING

Brown's fourth-quarter rotation is a foul-management exercise. Towns carries **261** season fouls, the most on the roster, with Brunson (**172**), Hart (**168**), Anunoby (**166**) and Bridges (**164**) bunched behind, and Towns also leads the team with **6** technicals. In a tight final five, one early frontcourt foul can force Brown into a smaller, switch-heavy lineup.

SPURS COACHING

SIDELINE

MARK	VALUE
Head coach	Mitch Johnson
Stint W-L	62-20
Career W-L	94-65 (59.1%)
Playoff / Titles	13-10 · 0

TIMEOUT CLOCK

MARK	VALUE
Total T0s	553
Q1 / Q2 / Q3 / Q4	105 / 121 / 114 / 213
≥10 / 5-10 / <5	28 / 274 / 251

ATO FIRST SHOT

PLAYER	FG	FG%
Devin Vassell	23/60	38.3%
DeAaron Fox	23/55	41.8%
Keldon Johnson	16/47	34.0%
Stephon Castle	14/46	30.4%

COACHING CHALLENGES

MARK	VALUE
This season	27-21 (56%)
Career (HC)	55-32 (63%)
vs NYK	1-0 (100%)
Last 5 games	2-2 (50%)
By type	Foul 17-15 (53%), OOB 9-3 (75%), GT/BI 1-3 (25%)
By period	Q2 8-6, Q3 10-3, Q4 4-9, Q1 4-3

THE SIDELINE: MITCH JOHNSON'S FIRST FINALS

Mitch Johnson has these Spurs at **62-20** in his stint and **94-65 (59.1%)** across a young career, with a **13-10** playoff mark, one conference title and zero rings. He is coaching his first Finals. San Antonio's entire sideline identity is a coach still chasing his first banner, and every late-game decision in this series writes a fresh line on that résumé.

JOHNSON'S TIMEOUT CLOCK: A FOURTH-QUARTER HAMMER

San Antonio has burned **553** timeouts (regular season plus playoffs before tip), and the split says it all: **105** in Q1, **121** in Q2, **114** in Q3, then a massive **213** in Q4 — more than double any other quarter. **251** of those stops came inside the final five minutes, versus just **28** with **10:00** or more left. Johnson hoards his ammunition for the close.

ATO FIRST LOOK: VASSELL AND FOX SPLIT THE BILL

After a Spurs timeout, the first shot belongs to Devin Vassell (**23-of-60, 38.3%**) or DeAaron Fox (**23-of-55, 41.8%**) — near-identical volume, very different efficiency. Keldon Johnson is the clear third look at **16-of-47 (34.0%)**. San Antonio spreads the ATO shot across two wings rather than funneling it to one hub; keying on Fox means Vassell fires first.

COACHING CHALLENGES: JOHNSON'S Q2 HUNT

The Spurs are **27-21 (56%)** on challenges this season and **55-32 (63%)** across Johnson's club era. The tell is the period: **14** challenges land in Q2 (**8-6**), **13** in Q3 (**10-3**), and a shaky **4-9** in Q4. By type, out-of-bounds is the money play at **9-3 (75%)** while goaltending/BI lags at **1-3 (25%)**. Against New York this season they are a perfect **1-0**. Look out: he leans early, and OOB is the trigger worth trusting.

ROTATION CHECK-IN: THE PROJECTED FIVE

San Antonio's projected starting five — Victor Wembanyama, DeAaron Fox, Stephon Castle, Devin Vassell, Keldon Johnson — carries the offense from the jump. Early substitution patterns are not printed, so the check-in tell rides the foul data instead: Wembanyama and Fox each logged **15** early Q1 fouls (at or before **8:00**) this season, and Castle tops the team with **226** total fouls. If a starter sits early, it is almost certainly foul-forced.

MATCHUP TELL: TIMEOUTS AGAINST BROWN'S SHELL

New York's Mike Brown runs a top-**7** defense built to force turnovers (**13.9%**) rather than wall off the rim, and Johnson's Q4 timeout hammer (**213** stops) is engineered to interrupt exactly that live-ball pressure. The Spurs' ATO looks target wings, but the Knicks drag you into half-court grind late. Watch whether Johnson's fourth-quarter stops land before or after New York's turnover runs.

FOUL TIMING AND THE TECHNICAL EDGE

Karl-Anthony Towns is the Knicks' foul magnet — **261** season fouls, **3.4** per game — and the most likely man to hand Johnson a challenge opportunity. San Antonio's own edge sits with Wembanyama's **7** technicals and Luke Kornet's **6**; the Spurs' bigs live on the line. With **251** timeouts inside five minutes and a **4-9** Q4 challenge record, Johnson's closing toolbox is aggressive but thin.

THE OTHER BENCH'S ATO: BRUNSON FIRST

For contrast, Brown's Knicks look first to Jalen Brunson after a timeout — **39-of-85** ATO first shots, the heaviest single-player ATO load in this matchup. New York also spends **139** timeouts in Q4 versus **92** in Q1, so both benches hoard stops for the close. When Johnson challenges, he is often challenging a call that flowed through Brunson.



TEAM IDENTITIES & OFFICIALS

NBA FINALS – GAME 1

BROADCAST SUMMARY THE POINT · THE NUMBER · WHAT IT MEANS TONIGHT

A First-Year Coach and the Family Business: Mike Brown arrived last July as the franchise's 24th head coach since the 1973 title, carrying 507 regular-season wins, 66 more in the playoffs, and two Coach of the Year award. **A Team That Wins on Its Own Clock:** New York wins by shrinking the floor and controlling the ball: a Brunson-run half-court, two long wings who defend, and a paint-and-glass economy that never asks for a track meet.

- 1

A FIRST-YEAR COACH AND THE FAMILY BUSINESS: Mike Brown arrived last July as the franchise's 24th head coach since the 1973 title, carrying **507** regular-season wins, **66** more in the playoffs, and two Coach of the Year awards [1].
- 2

A TEAM THAT WINS ON ITS OWN CLOCK: New York wins by shrinking the floor and controlling the ball: a Brunson-run half-court, two long wings who defend, and a paint-and-glass economy that never asks for a track meet.

KNICKS IDENTITY

STANDINGS

MARK	VALUE
W-L / Seed	53-29 · #3 East
Streak / L10	L 1 · 6-4
H / A	30-10 · 22-19
HC	Mike Brown

EFFICIENCY FINGERPRINT

MARK	VALUE
Net	6.4 · rk 5
ORtg / DRtg	118.7 (rk 3) · 112.3 (rk 7)
Pace	97.7 · rk 25
eFG / TS	55.7% · 59.0%

A TEAM THAT WINS ON ITS OWN CLOCK

New York wins by shrinking the floor and controlling the ball: a Brunson-run half-court, two long wings who defend, and a paint-and-glass economy that never asks for a track meet. At **97.7** pace — 25th in the league, 6th slowest — the Knicks would rather make you guard for twenty seconds than trade baskets. Patience is the personality, and it is not a fallback.

TWO-WAY, WITH NO SIDE TO HIDE

The resume is a margin team: Net **6.4**, 5th in the NBA, built on the 3rd-ranked offense (**118.7** ORtg) and the 7th-ranked defense (**112.3** DRtg). There is no weak end to attack – New York beats you on both sides and rarely hands back a cheap possession. The slow clock is the only thing keeping their scoring totals quiet.

THE THIRD SEED WITH A ROAD SPINE

The path here ran through a **53-29** season and the East's 3rd seed, seven games behind the top line, closed on an L10 of **6-4**. The split is the tell: **30-10** at home, **22-19** on the road. New York has already proven it can win away from the Garden, and Game **1** in Frost Bank Center asks exactly that of them.

A FIRST-YEAR COACH AND THE FAMILY BUSINESS

Mike Brown arrived last July as the franchise's 24th head coach since the 1973 title, carrying **507** regular-season wins, **66** more in the playoffs, and two Coach of the Year awards [1]. His fingerprints are a connected, physical group that lifts one another through runs. The home story runs deeper: Jalen Brunson plays for a staff that includes his father Rick, a former Knicks guard [2], alongside two Villanova champions in Hart and Bridges.

WHO THEY ARE WHEN THE BALL GOES UP

Expect the deliberate version Wednesday night. Brunson probes downhill, the offense grinds for a quality shot instead of a quick one, and the shell makes San Antonio earn every half-court possession rather than sprinting into a shootout. The Knicks do not need a fast game in San Antonio. They need their game, on their clock.

SPURS IDENTITY

STANDINGS

MARK	VALUE
W-L / Seed	62-20 · #2 West
Streak / L10	L 1 · 8-2
H / A	32-8 · 29-12
HC	Mitch Johnson

EFFICIENCY FINGERPRINT

MARK	VALUE
Net	8.4 · rk 2
ORtg / DRtg	118.7 (rk 3) · 110.4 (rk 3)
Pace	100.7 · rk 12
eFG / TS	55.9% · 59.5%

NO SIDE TO HIDE BEHIND

San Antonio's identity is a refusal to specialize: this is a club that ranks in the league's top three on both ends, so it can win a grind or a shootout without changing who it is. The Spurs do not out-talent you into mistakes or beg for pace. They simply win more possessions than you on both halves of the floor.

EFFICIENCY IS THE PERSONALITY

The profile is a plus-**8.4** net rating, second in the NBA, and it is no scheduling accident: third in offensive rating, third in defensive rating, with the only seam a 12th-ranked pace. San Antonio wins on quality rather than tempo, a halfcourt team content to make you pay for the possession you do not finish.

SIXTY-TWO WINS AND A ROAD SPINE

The Spurs rode a **62-20** regular season to the West's **No. 2** seed, and the spine that carried them here was a **29-12** road record, the same away resolve they leaned on in Oklahoma City. Game **1** now lands at Frost Bank Center, where San Antonio went **32-8**, converting a road-built season into home-court advantage.

A STEADY HAND, A DRAFT-BUILT CORE

Mitch Johnson carries a **94-65** career mark and a **13-10** playoff ledger, the calm operator over a roster assembled almost entirely through the lottery: Wembanyama (**No. 1**), Castle (**No. 4**), Fox (**No. 5**), Vassell (**No. 11**) and Keldon Johnson (**No. 29**). This is a homegrown identity, and Johnson has kept it aimed one direction.

THE CONSTANT AT FROST BANK

When the ball goes up, San Antonio is the team that wins the possession rather than the quarter: top-three on both ends and comfortably ahead in the margins. Game **1** at home is where that identity should travel easiest, because the Spurs do not need a hot night to be the better team, only their usual two-way floor.

OFFICIALS CREW

CREW BOARD

OFFICIAL	EXP	DEBUT	TEAM W-L (REG)	CHAL (SZN)
Sean Wright	22	2005	NYK 2-4, SAS 3-1	54-36 (60%)
Scott Foster	26	1999	NYK 2-1, SAS 3-1	61-38 (62%)
James Capers	29	1996	NYK 2-2, SAS 4-1	61-39 (61%)
JB DeRosa	23	1999	NYK 0-2, SAS 4-2	72-31 (70%)

CHAL = crew-game sample (games this official worked), not caller attribution.

CREW-GAME CHALLENGES

OFFICIAL	CAREER	W/ CLUBS (SZN)	TYPE MIX
Sean Wright	217-202 (52%)	NYK 5-5 (50%) · SAS 4-1 (80%)	Foul 32-31 (51%), OOB 20-3 (87%)
Scott Foster	201-200 (50%)	NYK 5-1 (83%) · SAS 3-4 (43%)	Foul 39-27 (59%), OOB 20-10 (67%)
James Capers	208-166 (56%)	NYK 4-1 (80%) · SAS 5-3 (62%)	Foul 36-30 (55%), OOB 25-7 (78%)
JB DeRosa	229-168 (58%)	NYK 4-1 (80%) · SAS 7-3 (70%)	Foul 41-27 (60%), OOB 30-4 (88%)

FOUR OFFICIALS, A CENTURY ON THE JOB

Crew: Sean Wright (**22** years, debut 2005), Scott Foster (**26**, debut 1999), James Capers (**29**, debut 1996) and JB DeRosa (**23**, debut 1999) — four officials with a combined century of NBA service. Whistle context as team tendency, not crew invention: San Antonio draws a **27.4%** free-throw attempt rate (**#12/30**) to New York's **23.8%** (**#24/30**, 7th-worst).

FOSTER: KNICKS 5-1, SPURS 3-4

Foster's crew-games ran **61-38 (62%)** on challenges this season and **201-200 (50%)** career, with the Knicks **5-1 (83%)** and Spurs **3-4 (43%)** in games he worked. When NYK challenged it went **3-1 (75%)**, matching SAS at **3-1**. Fouls lead his mix **39-27 (59%)**, OOB **20-10 (67%)**, Q4 heaviest at **20-12**.

CAPERS: LONGEST TENURE, OOB 78%

Capers, the longest-tenured here at **29** years (debut 1996), carries a season crew-game challenge mark of **61-39 (61%)** and **208-166 (56%)** career. The Spurs are **4-1** in his games against the Knicks' **2-2**, and NYK challenges went **2-1 (67%)** while SAS split **2-2 (50%)**. OOB is his sharpest trigger at **25-7 (78%)**, Q3 his period anchor at **21-10**.

DEROSA: 70% SEASON CHALLENGES

DeRosa (**23** years, debut 1999) owns the crew's hottest season challenge board at **72-31 (70%)**, career **229-168 (58%)**, and he has seen the Spurs most: SAS **7-3**, NYK **4-1**. His mix is foul-heavy at **41-27 (60%)** with the tightest OOB ledger at **30-4 (88%)**, and Q2/Q3 carry his periods at **22-7** and **20-7**. Look out: the Knicks are **0-2** with DeRosa this season.

WRIGHT: OOB 20-3, NYK 4-0 ON CHALLENGES

Wright (**22** years, debut 2005) posted **54-36 (60%)** on crew-game challenges this season, **217-202 (52%)** career, with SAS **4-1** and NYK **2-4** in games he worked. His OOB trigger is the crew's most lopsided at **20-3 (87%)**, fouls sit at **32-31 (51%)**, and Q4 leads his period mix at **18-11**. When the Knicks challenged in his games it went **4-0**.



LINEUPS & ROTATIONS

NBA FINALS – GAME 1

BROADCAST SUMMARY THE POINT · THE NUMBER · WHAT IT MEANS TONIGHT

Closing Tells Against New York Favor Staying Big: The late-rotation tell versus the Knicks is defense first: every closing option keeps Wembanyama and cycles a wing, and the Barnes-heavy fives carry the lowest DRTg. **Bench Window: McBride and Robinson Set the Terms:** The second unit runs through Miles McBride (16.6 MPG, 12.0 PPG) for shot creation and Mitchell Robinson (20.2 MPG, 8.8 RPG) for the glass, with Landry Shamet (22.2 MPG, 9.

- 1

CLOSING TELLS AGAINST NEW YORK FAVOR STAYING BIG: The late-rotation tell versus the Knicks is defense first: every closing option keeps Wembanyama and cycles a wing, and the Barnes-heavy fives carry the lowest DRTg.
- 2

BENCH WINDOW: MCBRIDE AND ROBINSON SET THE TERMS: The second unit runs through Miles McBride (**16.6** MPG, **12.0** PPG) for shot creation and Mitchell Robinson (**20.2** MPG, **8.8** RPG) for the glass, with Landry Shamet (**22.2** MPG, **9.3** PPG) as the floor spacer on **39.2%** from three.

KNICKS LINEUPS

PROJECTED FIVE

PLAYER	MPG	PPG	STARTS
Jalen Brunson	35.9	26.0	10
Karl Anthony Towns	29.1	20.1	10
OG Anunoby	33.9	16.7	11
Mikal Bridges	29.8	14.4	12
Josh Hart	31.5	12.0	10

BENCH WINDOW

PLAYER	MPG	PPG
Kevin McCullar	24.7	2.4
Landry Shamet	22.2	9.3
Mitchell Robinson	20.2	5.7
Jose Alvarado	16.8	7.4
Miles McBride	16.6	12.0

FIVE-MAN NETS

UNIT	GP	NET	ORTG	DRTG
Towns · Anunoby · Hart · Bridges · Brunson	43	2.3	115.0	112.8
Towns · Hart · Bridges · Brunson · McBride	16	16.3	132.9	116.6
Towns · Anunoby · Bridges · Brunson · McBride	13	-1.4	126.9	128.3
Towns · Anunoby · Bridges · Brunson · Shamet	20	-0.6	108.4	109.0
Towns · Anunoby · Bridges · Brunson · Robinson	9	8.9	118.1	109.2
Towns · Hart · Bridges · Brunson · Shamet	15	0.0	111.0	111.0

TWO-MAN CHEMISTRY

UNIT	GP	MIN	NET	ORTG	DRTG
Anunoby · Brunson	62	26	7.0	119.3	112.2
Bridges · Brunson	74	26	4.7	118.3	113.5
Hart · Brunson	60	25	7.4	120.1	112.7
Towns · Bridges	75	25	6.8	118.8	112.0
Towns · Anunoby	62	24	8.0	119.0	111.0

NEW YORK'S PROJECTED FIVE IS CONTINUITY, NOT A HAMMER

Brunson, Towns, Anunoby, Bridges and Hart are the expected Game 1 starters, combining for about **152** minutes a night across the last ten. It is trust over dominance: this exact five logged **12.6** minutes per game over **43** appearances at just a plus-**2.3** net. They check in because they are the known quantity, not the best version.

THE MINUTES LEADER BARELY OUTSCORED ANYONE

By workload the Towns-Anunoby-Hart-Bridges-Brunson five is the clear top unit at **12.6** MPG across **43** games, yet it returns only a **2.3** net on **115.0** ORtg and **112.8** DRTg. It defends just well enough and shoots a healthy **58.3%** eFG. The real separation lives in smaller, lower-minute combinations that flip the number hard.

MCBRIDE IS THE SMALL-BALL LEVER

Swap Anunoby out for Miles McBride and the same core spikes to a **16.3** net, **132.9** ORtg and **62.4%** eFG in **7.7** minutes over **16** games. Remove Hart instead and it sags to minus-**1.4**. McBride's **12.0** points in **16.6** bench minutes make him the obvious change-of-gear card when New York needs a burst of offense.

BENCH WINDOW: MCBRIDE AND ROBINSON SET THE TERMS

The second unit runs through Miles McBride (**16.6** MPG, **12.0** PPG) for shot creation and Mitchell Robinson (**20.2** MPG, **8.8** RPG) for the glass, with Landry Shamet (**22.2** MPG, **9.3** PPG) as the floor spacer on **39.2%** from three. Jose Alvarado adds **16.8** MPG of pick-up pressure. Kevin McCullar's **24.7** minutes are rotational filler, not a scoring role.

CLOSING TELL: ADD SIZE BACK FOR WEMBANYAMA

Against San Antonio the late five likely swaps Hart or a guard for Mitchell Robinson, pairing him with Towns to body Wembanyama. That Towns-Anunoby-Bridges-Brunson-Robinson unit posts an **8.9** net and **109.2** DRTg in **5.8** minutes. When New York needs a stop it gets bigger; when it needs a bucket it stays small with McBride.

CHEMISTRY: THE ANUNOBY-BRIDGES-TOWNS SPINE

The two-man nets show where the connective tissue sits. Anunoby-Bridges is plus-**8.2** across **67** games, Anunoby-Towns plus-**8.0**, Towns-Bridges plus-**6.8**, and Hart-Brunson plus-**7.4**. That cluster of wing-and-big pairings is why the starters hold serve even when the full five's net is modest. It is the defensive spine carrying the group.

THE SHAMET-ROBINSON CLOSER IS THE HIDDEN BULLET

The bench-heavy Anunoby-Bridges-Brunson-Robinson-Shamet five is the outlier: a **17.8** net and **94.1** DRTg in **4.8** minutes over **10** games. It replaces two starters with second-unit pieces and still guards at an elite clip. If New York wants to close a quarter without leaning on Towns' minutes, that group is the template.

SPURS LINEUPS

PROJECTED FIVE

PLAYER	MPG	PPG	STARTS
Victor Wembanyama	27.9	25.0	9
DeAaron Fox	28.6	18.6	11
Stephon Castle	31.0	16.7	9
Devin Vassell	29.1	13.9	11
Keldon Johnson	24.2	13.2	0

BENCH WINDOW

PLAYER	MPG	PPG
Julian Champagnie	26.4	11.1
Dylan Harper	24.4	11.8
Harrison Barnes	22.0	9.9
Luke Kornet	20.7	6.5
Carter Bryant	16.5	4.2

FIVE-MAN NETS

UNIT	GP	NET	ORTG	DRTG
Fox · Vassell · Champagni · Wembanyam · Castle	29	17.6	125.4	107.7
Barnes · Fox · Kornet · Vassell · Champagni	13	6.6	117.5	110.9
Barnes · Vassell · Champagni · Wembanyam · Castle	17	11.8	114.7	102.9
Barnes · Fox · Champagni · Wembanyam · Castle	19	20.6	133.8	113.1
Barnes · Fox · Kornet · Vassell · Castle	15	8.3	120.9	112.7
Barnes · Fox · Vassell · Wembanyam · Castle	16	21.9	117.3	95.4

TWO-MAN CHEMISTRY

UNIT	GP	MIN	NET	ORTG	DRTG
Vassell · Castle	54	23	13.2	122.2	108.9
Fox · Wembanyam	54	21	16.9	120.7	103.9
Wembanyam · Castle	60	20	17.0	120.9	103.9
Vassell · Wembanyam	51	20	20.9	123.3	102.4
Champagni · Wembanyam	64	19	20.4	122.1	101.7

THE FIVE THAT ACTUALLY CHECKS IN

The projected five is Fox, Vassell, Champagnie, Wembanyama and Castle, San Antonio's heaviest-used unit at **29** games, **9.8** minutes a night and a **23-6** record. That is the reason it checks in: a plus-**17.6** net on a **125.4** ORtg. Champagnie holds the fifth spot over Keldon Johnson, who logged zero recent starts despite **24.2** minutes.

THE MOST-USED FIVE IS NOT THE BEST ONE

Minutes and net split across two families. The Fox-Vassell-Champagnie-Wembanyama-Castle group owns the workload, but the Barnes-for-Champagnie swap (Barnes, Fox, Vassell, Wembanyama, Castle) posts the gaudy mark: plus-**21.9** over **16** games on a **95.4** DRTg, the stingiest defensive five in the rotation, at **5.7** minutes a night.

THE 134-ORTG EDITION

Flip Barnes in for Champagnie and the offense spikes. Barnes, Fox, Champagnie, Wembanyama and Castle score **133.8** per **100** across **19** games, a plus-**20.6** net at **13-6**, the most explosive five available. The catch is a **113.1** DRTg: trading points for points, a matchup look rather than the default.

HARPER OWNS THE SECOND UNIT

Dylan Harper runs the bench at **24.4** minutes and **11.8** points, the rookie creator who busted Game **6** open. Harrison Barnes (**22.0**) and Luke Kornet (**20.7** minutes, **6.5** points, **6.1** boards) split the frontcourt window, with Carter Bryant at **16.5**. Keldon Johnson's **24.2** bench minutes hand San Antonio a fifth **13**-point scorer outside the starters.

CLOSING TELLS AGAINST NEW YORK FAVOR STAYING BIG

The late-rotation tell versus the Knicks is defense first: every closing option keeps Wembanyama and cycles a wing, and the Barnes-heavy fives carry the lowest DRTg. New York's most-used five (Towns, Anunoby, Hart, Bridges, Brunson) is only plus-**2.3** across **43** games, so San Antonio can win the closing math by betting that preferred group breaks even.

WEMBANYAMA IS THE CHEMISTRY CONSTANT

The two-man board runs through one player. Vassell and Wembanyama sit at plus-**20.9** (**102.4** DRTg) across **51** games, Champagnie and Wembanyama at **20.4** over **64**, Fox and Wembanyama at **16.9** over **54**. Castle slots just behind (**17.0** over **60**), giving San Antonio four long-sample pairings all anchored to the same **7**-footer.

THE COUNTER: ROBINSON AND MCBRIDE UNITS

New York's high-net looks are bench-driven. A McBride-for-Hart five nets plus-**16.3** at **132.9** ORtg over **16** games, and the Robinson-Shamet closing group (Anunoby, Bridges, Brunson, Robinson, Shamet) is plus-**17.8** on a **94.1** DRTg across **10**. San Antonio's **95.4**-DRTg Barnes unit is built to survive exactly those bench-heavy stretches.



#11 JALEN BRUNSON

▶ G *(NYK)*

Age 29 · Villanova

Season: 26.0/3.3/6.8 · 46.7% FG · 36.9% 3P · 35.0 MPG · usg 29.6%

Last Game: 2026-05-25: 15/2/5 in 30.9 min (6/14 FG)

Window: L5: 24.8/3.4/7.4 · 37.4 MPG

THE STORYThe Captain Who Grew Up Knicks

▶ **Season engine:** 26.0 points, 6.8 assists and 3.3 rebounds across 74 games on 46.7% FG / 36.9% 3P / 84.1% FT with a +6.1 net rating and 12 double-doubles, the volume-plus-efficiency line of a No. 1.

▶ **Postseason gear:** He has climbed, not faded, in the playoffs: 26.9 points on 48.6% FG over 14 games entering the Finals, up on both volume and accuracy from the regular season, with a 39-point night against Atlanta.

▶ **Boom-or-bust scoring:** The Finals opener rides on which Brunson shows up, because 39-, 35- and 33-point explosions sit alongside quieter nights (15 in the Cleveland closeout, a game the Knicks won by 18 anyway) — his baseline is a.

▶ **Who he guards:** His playoff matchup minutes skewed to opposing wings (Kelly Oubre 23.8, Dyson Daniels 20.8), and CJ McCollum torched the switches for 38 points on 14-of-19 in just 14.1 matchup minutes — San Antonio's downhill guards.

▶ **Bloodlines:** His father Rick was on the Knicks' 1999 Finals team that lost to these very Spurs and is now a New York assistant; Jalen was born in New Brunswick, N.J., grew up a Knicks fan, and won.



#25 MIKAL BRIDGES

▶ G-F *(NYK)*

Age 29 · Villanova

Season: 14.4/3.8/3.7 · 49.0% FG · 37.1% 3P · 32.8 MPG · usg 17.0%

Last Game: 2026-05-25: 15/3/5 in 30.1 min (4/16 FG)

Window: L5: 17.2/4.2/3.4 · 36.0 MPG

THE STORYThe Iron Man Who Saves His Best for May

▶ **Playoff gear:** Across the 14 games before the Finals he is at 14.6 points on 58.6% FG in 31.7 MPG, a jump of nearly ten percentage points over his 49.0% regular-season shooting (14.4 on 82 games) — the classic spring.

▶ **Quiet connector, not a creator:** He runs at just 17.0% usage with a .587 true shooting mark, posting 3.7 assists to 1.0 turnovers a night — the pass-and-cut wing who greases Brunson's offense and lives off catch-and-shoot threes.

▶ **Wing stopper on call:** His heaviest regular-season matchup minutes went to the opponents' top perimeter scorers — Brandon Ingram (24.4 min), Desmond Bane (23.3), Norman Powell (20.7), Tyrese Maxey (19.0) — the switch-everything assignment New York hands him; in two regular-season looks at San Antonio he.

▶ **The NBA's iron man:** He has played 638 consecutive regular-season games, 8th-longest in league history, and has not missed a game since high school — never sitting one at Villanova either (116 straight). His own framing.

▶ **Philly to the Main Line:** A Philadelphia native who was asked to redshirt as a too-slight freshman at Villanova, he then never missed a game and left with two national titles — durability as identity, forged in the weight room. One San Antonio thread already exists in his head: as a Sun he once described being.



#3 JOSH HART

▶ G *(NYK)*

Age 31 · Villanova

Season: 12.0/7.4/4.8 · 50.8% FG · 41.3% 3P · 30.2 MPG · usg 16.3%

Last Game: 2026-05-25: 6/11/6 in 23.6 min (2/5 FG)

Window: L5: 14.8/8.0/4.6 · 30.3 MPG

THE STORYHart of the Glass: New York's Nova-Bred Motor

▶ **Season line:** 12.0 pts / 7.4 reb / 4.8 ast across 66 games in 30.2 MPG, shooting 50.8% from the floor and 41.3% from three on a 16.3% usage and .612 true shooting, with a +5.5 on-court net. The 7.4 boards.

▶ **Form surging:** the scoring has ticked up in the postseason — last five entering the Finals: 14.8 / 8.0 / 4.6. He hung 26 on Cleveland in the Game 3 road blitz (5-of-11 from deep) and grabbed 11 boards at +20 in the May 25 closeout. Over his 14 playoff games to this point: 11.4 / 8.6 / 4.6 --.

▶ **Three-point cooldown:** the regular-season 41.3% from deep has cooled to 30.3% across the playoff run (44.3% FG overall) — the one efficiency crack in an.

▶ **Wing-stopper duty:** Hart drew the toughest perimeter assignments of the East run, logging 36.0 matchup minutes on Jalen Johnson (37 pts, 15-of-31), 22.5 on Paul George and 17.2 on Donovan Mitchell. Against San Antonio's guard-led attack (Castle, Fox).

▶ **Silver Spring to the big stage:** a Montgomery County, Maryland native who came up through the county rec league and transferred from Wheaton HS to Sidwell Friends in D.C. (first-team All-Met, 2013) before winning the 2016 NCAA title at Villanova alongside current Knicks teammates Jalen Brunson and Mikal Bridges — the 'Nova Knicks.' His 9.



#8 OG ANUNOBY

▶ F-G *(NYK)*

Age 28 · Indiana

Season: 16.7/5.2/2.2 · 48.4% FG · 38.6% 3P · 33.2 MPG · usg 19.4%

Last Game: 2026-05-25: 17/7/4 in 27.1 min (6/13 FG)

Window: L5: 17.8/5.6/3.0 · 32.3 MPG

THE STORYThe Quiet Wing Who Saves His Best for the Spurs

▶ **Two-way baseline:** 16.7 pts / 5.2 reb / 2.2 ast across 67 games in 33.2 MPG, shooting 48.4% FG / 38.6% 3P / 82.8% FT on a modest 19.4% usage — a .620 true-shooting.

▶ **Form trending:** He closed the regular season hot, averaging 18.6 points and 7.0 rebounds over his final five games — a scoring and rebounding bump above his season.

▶ **Spurs-killer mode:** In the Dec. 16 NBA Cup final against these same San Antonio Spurs he erupted for 28 points, 9 rebounds and 5-of-10 from three — his highest output against SAS all season, a stark contrast to quiet 9- and 12-point.

▶ **Assignment log:** New York's wing-stopper spends his nights on the opponent's best scorer — 16.8 matchup minutes on Paul George (held to 4-of-11) and 14.5 on Kevin Durant — and in the pre-Finals San Antonio meetings his primary matchup.

▶ **London to the Lou:** Born Ogugua 'OG' Anunoby Jr. in Harlesden, London, on July 17, 1997 to Nigerian parents, he moved to Jefferson City, Missouri at age 4 when his professor father took a post at Lincoln University; his mother Grace, a national-level Nigerian track athlete, died of cancer when he was 1. He starred at Jefferson City High and Indiana, went 23rd in the 2017.



#32 KARL ANTHONY TOWNS

▶ C-F *(NYK)*

Age 30 · Kentucky

Season: 20.1/11.9/3.0 · 50.1% FG · 36.8% 3P · 31.0 MPG · usg 25.1%

Last Game: 2026-05-25: 19/14/3 in 26.0 min (8/11 FG)

Window: L5: 16.0/10.4/5.2 · 31.6 MPG

THE STORYFrom Piscataway Kid to Finals Anchor: Towns' Playoff Reinvention

▶ **Playoff gear:** The regular-season line (20.1 pts, 11.9 reb, 3.0 ast on .501/.368 in 75 games) undersells the postseason version - through three rounds he is at 16.9 pts, 10.6 reb and 5.9 ast on .572/.489/.891 across 14 games, with his three-point clip up 12.1 points, a 127.2 offensive.

▶ **Form trending:** The last five tilted toward playmaking - 16.0 pts, 10.4 reb, 5.2 ast in 31.6 MPG - the scoring load shifting to Brunson and the wings while Towns becomes the second-side hub, his assists nearly doubling his.

▶ **Stretch-5 matchup:** In two regular-season meetings with San Antonio he averaged 16.0 points and 10.5 rebounds, including an 8-of-8 night at the line on Dec. 31, and his 3.2 playoff three-point attempts per game are the lever that drags.

▶ **Homecoming:** The Piscataway, N.J. native and St. Joseph-Metuchen product grew up a Knicks fan across the Hudson, called playing for New York a 'childhood dream' before the 2015 draft [1], and arrived via the September 2024 blockbuster that sent.

▶ **Kentucky and the DR:** A one-and-done Wildcat off a 38-0 team that fell in the Final Four, he was the No. 1 overall pick in 2015 and stays tied to his mother's Dominican roots - playing for the DR national team as a teen and taking the 2024 Kareem.

NYK STARTERS

PAGE 1



SAS STARTERS

SAS PROJECTED FIVE

 #1 VICTOR WEMBANYAMA ▶ F-C (SAS) Age 22 · Metropolitans 92 Season: 25.0/11.5/3.1 · 51.2% FG · 34.9% 3P · 29.2 MPG · usg 31.6% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 22/7/2 in 41.9 min (7/15 FG) Window: L5: 25.8/7.0/2.6 · 35.6 MPG THE STORY The Alien Arrives: Wembanyama's First Finals ▶ Hardware haul: The 7-4 center enters these Finals as the reigning Defensive Player of the Year (2026), an All-NBA selection and the Western Conference Finals MVP, off a regular season of 25.0 points, 11.5 rebounds and 3.1 blocks in just 29.2 minutes a night. ▶ Postseason leap: Through 17 playoff games before this series he averaged 23.2 points, 10.8 boards, 2.7 assists and 3.5 blocks while his minutes climbed to 32.5 a night, headlined by a 41-point, 24-rebound marathon (48.7 minutes) against. ▶ Rim wall vs the paint: His 3.5 blocks a game in the postseason land right where New York feasts — 41.1% of the Knicks' points come in the paint — and he swatted 4 shots in the most recent regular-season. ▶ Scoring book on the Knicks: In three regular-season meetings with New York he averaged 24.7 points, going for 31 with 13 boards on Dec. 31 and 25 with 13 boards and 4 blocks on March 1 — a rising trend line into. ▶ From Le Chesnay to the Finals: Born in Le Chesnay, France (Jan. 4, 2004) to a track-and-field father and a basketball-coach mother, he never played college ball — a pros' path from Nanterre 92 as a teenager to Metropolitans.	 #5 STEPHON CASTLE ▶ G (SAS) Age 21 · Connecticut Season: 16.7/5.3/7.4 · 47.1% FG · 33.2% 3P · 30.0 MPG · usg 24.3% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 16/6/6 in 35.7 min (7/15 FG) Window: L5: 16.8/4.8/6.8 · 33.1 MPG THE STORY Castle's Leap: San Antonio's Sophomore Two-Way Engine ▶ Form trending: Castle has leveled up for the second season - 18.2 points, 5.0 boards, 6.1 assists and 33.1 minutes across 23 playoff games, up from 16.7/5.3/7.4 in 30.0 MPG in the regular season, with true shooting climbing to .587. He closed the West finals hot: 17 points and 9 assists in the Game 5 win. ▶ Defensive assignment: he is San Antonio's nightly perimeter hammer. Entering the Finals he had logged 64.5 matchup minutes on Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, holding the MVP to 26-of-63 (41.3%), plus 25.9 minutes on Anthony Edwards. Against New York in the regular season he spent 7.2 minutes on Jalen Brunson and gave him nothing. ▶ Signature night: on Feb 7 he authored a 40-point triple-double against Dallas - 40/12/12 on 15-of-19 from the floor. It anchors a season of all-around dominance: 18 double-doubles and 5 triple-doubles in the regular season, with. ▶ Georgia to Storrs to San Antonio: the Covington, Georgia native was a McDonald's All-American at Newton High, then a one-and-done at UConn where he won the 2024 national title (21 in the Final Four vs Alabama, 15 in the title game vs Purdue) and was Big East Freshman of the Year. The Spurs took him No. 4 overall in 2024, and he repaid them with 2024-25 Rookie of the Year - 92 of 100 first-place votes - the second. ▶ Raised right, playing fearless: Castle credits parents Stacey and Quannette for the even-keeled, low-ego makeup that made him a quick locker-room favorite. On the franchise's resurgence he told Slam, "These last few years haven't been up to what this city has known... I think we're bringing the franchise back to the forefront," and on his championship.
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 #24 DEVIN VASSELL ▶ G-F (SAS) Age 25 · Florida State Season: 13.9/4.0/2.5 · 43.7% FG · 38.4% 3P · 30.5 MPG · usg 17.6% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 11/6/3 in 33.4 min (4/14 FG) Window: L5: 12.4/4.8/2.8 · 32.8 MPG THE STORY San Antonio's Quiet Eraser: Hardest Assignment, Zero Fanfare ▶ Three-and-slide: 6.5 of Vassell's 11.3 regular-season shot attempts per game came from three (57.5% of his diet, at 38.4%), with only 1.1 at the rim, the floor-spacer profile that keeps the paint. ▶ Toughest assignment: He is San Antonio's primary perimeter stopper. Through the first three rounds he logged the most matchup minutes on Anthony Edwards (24.9, held to 8-of-18), Chet Holmgren (24.5) and Shai Gilgeous-Alexander (17.5, 7-of-22); the. ▶ Postseason trade-off: His usage dipped from 17.6% to 14.5%, but the output held, 13.0 points and 37.8% from three in 34.8 minutes, while his rebounds climbed from 4.0 to 5.3 and his defensive. ▶ Form entering Game 1: L5 of 12.4 points, 4.8 rebounds and 2.8 assists in 32.8 minutes, though the jumper has run hot and cold since a 20-point, 4-steal Game 2 at Oklahoma City on May 22. ▶ Roots: Raised in Suwanee, Georgia, a Peachtree Ridge High product who averaged 21.6 points as a senior, then Florida State (second-team All-ACC, part of the program's first ACC regular-season title) before San Antonio took him 11th overall in 2020. His father, Andrew Vassell, played college basketball at Stony.	 #4 DEAARON FOX ▶ G (SAS) Age 28 · Kentucky Season: 18.6/3.8/6.2 · 48.6% FG · 33.2% 3P · 31.0 MPG · usg 24.2% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 15/0/5 in 35.7 min (6/12 FG) Window: L5: 11.2/5.2/6.2 · 31.1 MPG THE STORY De'Aaron Fox: The Coldest Engine in the Finals, and the Most Due for a Thaw ▶ Playoff gear down: The regular-season line of 18.6 points, 6.2 assists and 3.8 rebounds on 48.6% FG and .578 TS has cooled to 16.4 points on 43.5% FG and .524 TS across 16 games entering the Finals; usage slid from 24.2% to 22.4%, so this is. ▶ Form trending cold: The last five games (all against OKC) are the trough: 11.2 points on 36.5% FG and 22.7% from three, bottoming out with a 1-of-9, five-point night in the 5/28 loss; he stayed a connector, though, averaging. ▶ Rim pressure holding: Even amid the slump his per-game free-throw attempt rate climbed from 27.8% to 31.4% and he still logged 8.3 paint points a night; the downhill pressure is his one constant, and it lands squarely on a Knicks defense that. ▶ Defensive assignment: Fox is San Antonio's point-of-attack guard and he raised his deflections from 2.8 to 3.4 a game in the postseason; the matchup ledger swings hard, with a blanking of Anthony Edwards (0-of-10 in 8.8 matchup minutes) offset by punishment from physical creators (Jrue Holiday 26 points on). ▶ Clutch laureate, first Finals: A New Orleans native who went one-and-done at Kentucky into the No. 5 pick of the 2017 draft, Fox owns the 2023 NBA Clutch Player of the Year award plus All-Star nods in 2023 and 2026; now, at 28 in his ninth season, he opens his first Finals after the February 2025.
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 #3 KELDON JOHNSON ▶ F-G (SAS) Age 26 · Kentucky Season: 13.2/5.4/1.4 · 51.9% FG · 36.3% 3P · 23.3 MPG · usg 20.1% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 11/3/1 in 16.2 min (4/8 FG) Window: L5: 9.2/3.0/0.6 · 16.7 MPG THE STORY The Big Body Off the Bench: San Antonio's Reigning Sixth Man Brings the Motor ▶ Sixth Man hardware: Won the 2025-26 NBA Sixth Man of the Year award, yet the postseason has thinned his role: 7.7 points and 3.3 rebounds across 23 playoff games, down from 13.2/5.4 in the regular season, and all of it off. ▶ Rim-first diet: 4.0 restricted-area attempts a game at 64.7% plus 2.2 more from the paint non-RA, with mid-range essentially erased (0.2 attempts). The threes are almost entirely assisted catch-and-shoot looks (3.1 a game at. ▶ Big-body assignment: He is San Antonio's physical forward absorber: 27.6 matchup minutes on Julius Randle this season, 18.4 on Naz Reid, 14.1 on Jaylin Williams, 13.8 on Kevin Durant. Against New York he drew OG Anunoby (9.6 min, 2-of-6) and Karl-Anthony Towns (9.1 min), and. ▶ Virginia roots: Born in Chesterfield, raised in South Hill, VA, and a five-star out of Oak Hill Academy; one-and-done at Kentucky (13.5 points, 5.9 boards as a freshman) before San Antonio drafted him 29th in 2019 with a pick. ▶ Olympic gold, old soul: Won Tokyo 2020 gold at 21 as an injury replacement, and Draymond Green credited his energy as the team's spark ('he brought more energy than anybody'). Nicknamed 'Big Body'; his.



BENCH

NYK BENCH



#44 LANDRY SHAMET ▶ BENCH (NYK)

Age 29 · Wichita State

Season: 9.3/1.8/1.4 · 43.7% FG · 39.2% 3P · 23.0 MPG · usg 15.1%
Last Game: 2026-05-25: 16/0/2 in 19.0 min (5/6 FG)
Window: L5: 10.2/1.2/1.0 · 18.0 MPG

- THE STORY** The Knicks' quietest winning lever: a 51% catch-and-shoot bench sniper whose minutes win even when his box score doesn't shout.
- ▶ **Winning minutes:** Across **19** playoff games the second-unit spacer carries a **+7.6** net rating and **+2.2** plus/minus on just **16.3** minutes a night — New York simply outscores opponents when his floor-spacing is on, which is.
 - ▶ **Catch-and-shoot heater:** The postseason profile is a pure spot-up flamethrower — **51.1%** on catch-and-shoot threes (**2.4** attempts) while his pull-up game cratered to **37.5%**; the regular-season baseline splits **41.5%** catch-and-shoot on **3.8** attempts versus **31.9%** off the dribble, so the.
 - ▶ **Philly-series spark:** His loudest non-Cleveland burst came in Round **2** against the 76ers — **15** points on **5-of-6** in **26** minutes (plus-**20**) in the Game **3** road win, then **12** points on **4-of-6** from deep (plus-**13**) in **11** minutes of Game **4**, the exact.
 - ▶ **Wichita State lineage:** Shamet is the Shockers' first first-round pick in **33** years (**No. 26** to Philadelphia in 2018) and is set to become the sixth former Wichita State player ever to appear in the NBA Finals — a program that produced Fred VanVleet and Ron Baker.
 - ▶ **Hometown resilience:** Born in Kansas City, Missouri and a Park Hill High product, he was raised by his single mother Melanie — a former Boise State volleyball player who worked long casino shifts to support him — and did not meet his father until age **24**, a.



#5 JOSE ALVARADO ▶ BENCH (NYK)

Age 28 · Georgia Tech

Season: 7.4/2.5/3.4 · 41.6% FG · 35.2% 3P · 19.9 MPG · usg 16.7%
Last Game: 2026-05-25: 4/0/2 in 10.1 min (2/3 FG)
Window: L5: 3.4/1.0/0.8 · 7.8 MPG

- THE STORY** The Knicks' bench spark isn't a scorer — it's a 6-foot Brooklyn pickpocket who can swing a Finals game in 90 seconds of full-court chaos.
- ▶ **Spark in a bottle:** Three games into his Knicks tenure, Feb **11** at Philadelphia, he detonated for **26** points, **8-of-13** from deep and **5** steals in just **18:37** — finishing plus-**35**. The record books mark it as the first **25**-point/**8**-three/**5**-steal line ever logged in under **30** minutes.
 - ▶ **Steal-rate engine:** Across **28** regular-season games with New York he averaged **1.0** steals in **16.9** minutes — a roughly **2.2**-per-**36** clip that turns dead possessions into extra ends. He is a point-of-attack pest who lets the Knicks extend pressure.
 - ▶ **Matchup value:** He is built for San Antonio's downhill backcourt — in his only regular-season look at the Spurs as a Knick (Mar **1**) he quietly posted **5** assists and a plus-**20** in **17** minutes while barely scoring, the two-way swing-guard line that.
 - ▶ **Homecoming:** Brooklyn-born and Williamsburg-raised, he starred at Christ the King in Queens — two championships and a retired jersey — before the February trade brought the.
 - ▶ **Undrafted to indispensable:** Four years at Georgia Tech, a 2021 ACC championship and ACC Defensive Player of the Year, then undrafted, **17** team workouts, and a two-way with New Orleans that became the 'Grand Theft.



#9 KEVIN MCCULLAR ▶ BENCH (NYK)

Age 25 · Kansas

Season: 2.4/1.3/1.0 · 42.6% FG · 33.3% 3P · 7.4 MPG · usg 16.6%
Last Game: 2026-04-12: 14/2/1 in 24.7 min (6/11 FG)
Window: L5: 3.2/0.8/0.2 · 6.5 MPG

- THE STORY** San Antonio is not a road trip for Kevin McCullar, it is home: a two-way long shot from Wagner High waiting for one Finals cameo on the floor he grew up dreaming about.
- ▶ **Two long runs, two double-figure sparks:** McCullar has cleared **20** minutes exactly twice all season, and both times he filled the sheet: **13** points, eight rebounds and two steals in **23:29** at Atlanta on Dec. **27** (**3-of-6** from deep), then **14** points on **6-of-11** in a season-high **24:43** against Charlotte on Apr. **12**. In a **7.4**-minute cameo role, he has.
 - ▶ **Defensive pedigree in a 6-6 frame:** At Kansas he was a three-time Naismith Defensive Player of the Year semifinalist and a Big **12** All-Defensive selection, finishing his college career with **217** steals (11th in Big **12** history). That length and switchability is the archetype for a playoff cameo against San Antonio's downhill.
 - ▶ **A connective passer, not a scorer:** His other extended runs show the passing side: six assists in **16:37** against Atlanta on Jan. **2** and three assists with two steals in **16:16** at Detroit on Jan. **5**. On a **16.6%** usage rate he is a ball-mover who keeps the second unit's.
 - ▶ **A San Antonio homecoming:** McCullar is a San Antonio native who starred at Wagner High School, leading the Thunderbirds to the 6A state title game as a sophomore. He now chases his first NBA Finals minutes in his own city, with his father, Kevin McCullar Sr., having.
 - ▶ **The 56th pick's long road:** Drafted 56th overall by the Knicks in 2024 (via a trade with Phoenix), he spent five college seasons between Texas Tech and Kansas, where he led the Big **12** in scoring at **18.3** ppg and posted back-to-back triple-doubles, the first such feat in the NCAA since **2007-08**. He arrived on a one-year.



#4 MITCHELL ROBINSON ▶ BENCH (NYK)

Age 28 · Western Kentucky

Season: 5.7/8.8/0.9 · 72.3% FG · 0.0% 3P · 19.6 MPG · usg 10.2%
Last Game: 2026-05-25: 8/10/0 in 17.8 min (4/6 FG)
Window: L5: 4.8/5.8/0.2 · 14.0 MPG

- THE STORY** New York's second unit runs through a 7-footer who lives above the rim, owns the offensive glass, and will play Game 1 with a broken finger and a free-throw stroke you can foul on purpose.
- ▶ **Offensive glass, league-best tier:** **4.2** offensive rebounds a night in **2025-26**, second in the NBA among qualified players, and the motor behind **8.8** boards in just **19.6** minutes; nearly everything he scores comes at the rim, with **87.6%** of his points in the paint.
 - ▶ **Hack-a-Mitch bait:** he shot **40.8%** from the free-throw line in the regular season and plunged to **29.3%** in the playoffs, so any Spurs cushion late turns him into a deliberate foul.
 - ▶ **Playoff minutes compressed, efficiency intact:** his postseason run has been shorter (**13.9** MPG vs **19.6** in the regular season) but he is still shooting **67.3%** with a plus-**10.4** playoff net rating, capped by **8** points and **10** rebounds in.
 - ▶ **Pensacola to the bayou:** born in Pensacola, Fla., he did not pick up a basketball until eighth grade, then shot up from **6-2** to **7-0** and became a McDonald's All-American at Chalmette High in Louisiana, averaging **25.7** points.
 - ▶ **The road less traveled, plus a broken pinky:** he never played a college game, leaving Western Kentucky before the season to train for the draft and falling to the Knicks at **No. 36** in 2018 (the pick from the Carmelo Anthony trade), where he made All-Rookie Second Team; he is now cleared to.



#2 MILES MCBRIDE ▶ BENCH (NYK)

Age 25 · West Virginia

Season: 12.0/2.4/2.6 · 42.3% FG · 41.3% 3P · 26.3 MPG · usg 17.4%
Last Game: 2026-05-25: 11/2/2 in 16.7 min (4/6 FG)
Window: L5: 9.2/2.4/1.2 · 18.3 MPG

- THE STORY** Miles 'Deuce' McBride is New York's second-unit flamethrower, a 41% bench shooter who has quietly been deadlier off the dribble than spotting up, and he got there only after a torn foot ligament ended his college-football dreams.
- ▶ **Bench spacer, better off the bounce:** **12.0** points a night across **26.3** minutes, powered by **2.7** made threes at **41.3%** on **6.6** attempts — yet his regular-season pull-up three (**44.8%**) actually outshot his catch-and-shoot three (**39.9%** on **4.5** tries), so he is a creation release valve.
 - ▶ **Point-of-attack chaser:** His minutes are earned on defense — **1.83** deflections a game, and his two biggest **2025-26** assignments, Payton Pritchard (**13.5** matchup minutes) and Collin Gillespie (**9.4**), combined for just **4-of-18** shooting. That on-ball pressure is the.
 - ▶ **Bursts when called:** He torched San Antonio for **21** points on **4-of-9** from three in his lone regular-season meeting, then logged **11** points on **3-of-5** from deep with a plus-**25** in the Cleveland closeout — the ignition switch for.
 - ▶ **Gridiron detour:** The Cincinnati native was drawing Division I quarterback interest at Archbishop Moeller High School until a torn foot ligament as a junior cost him nine months [**1**]; he shelved football, then led Moeller to a **29-0** state championship as a senior.
 - ▶ **Draft-night Deuce:** Nicknamed 'Deuce,' he went 36th overall to Oklahoma City in the 2021 draft and was traded to New York on draft night, staying there all five seasons [**2**][**4**]. The hoops genes run at home — father Walt played at Xavier.

 #30 JULIAN CHAMPAGNIE ▶ BENCH <i>(SAS)</i> Age 24 · St. John's Season: 11.1/5.8/1.5 · 43.7% FG · 38.1% 3P · 27.6 MPG · usg 14.6% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 20/6/1 in 37.5 min (6/11 FG) Window: L5: 12.8/5.8/1.6 · 31.4 MPG THE STORY New York's own undrafted kid — 36 on these Knicks already — is the release valve that punishes every extra body the Knicks send at Wembanyama. ▶ Knick-killer: On Dec. 31 he torched these very Knicks for a career-high 36, going 11-of-17 from three with not a single two-point attempt — a Spurs single-game record and the most. ▶ Catch-and-shoot engine: 5.6 of his 6.2 regular-season threes a night come off the catch (39.1%) on a 14.6% usage rate — a pure Wembanyama-gravity spacer who never. ▶ Postseason steady: Across 18 playoff games entering the Finals he averaged 11.3 points, 5.8 rebounds and 1.5 assists on 39.3% from three, then broke open the OKC grind with 20. ▶ Iron-man wing: He played all 82 games again, his 185-game consecutive-appearances streak is the league's second-longest active, and his playoff steals have climbed to 1.3 a. ▶ Staten Island underdog: Born on Staten Island and raised in Brooklyn alongside twin brother Justin (also an NBA player), he went undrafted out of St. John's in 2022, was waived by Philadelphia on Valentine's Day 2023, and.	 #40 HARRISON BARNES ▶ BENCH <i>(SAS)</i> Age 34 · North Carolina Season: 9.9/2.8/1.9 · 45.6% FG · 38.8% 3P · 25.8 MPG · usg 14.4% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 0/0/0 in 3.4 min (0/1 FG) Window: L5: 2.2/0.8/0.0 · 8.0 MPG THE STORY He owns a 2015 ring and 1,580 career threes, but San Antonio's playoff rotation has cut Harrison Barnes to a 9-minute corner cameo — and the jumper that justified the minutes has stopped falling. ▶ Minute squeeze: Barnes was a 25.8-minute, 9.9-point regular-season piece, but the postseason compressed him to 9.1 minutes and 2.3 points across 20 games (usage 14.4% to 11.9%); the last five before the Finals produced just 2.2. ▶ Playoff efficiency cliff: The same shot profile that graded out fine in the regular season unraveled under playoff coverage — spot-up PPP fell from 1.125 (69th percentile) to 0.633 (11th), FG% slid from 45.6% to 33.3%, and. ▶ Corner-office value: His one live offensive card is spacing — 4.1 of his 7.5 shots a game come off the catch (39.0%), and 2.5 of his 4.6 threes launch from the corners, where he. ▶ Birthday on clinch night: Born May 30, 1992, Barnes turned 34 on May 30, 2026 — the exact night San Antonio closed out Oklahoma City to. ▶ Been here before: A 2015 NBA champion with Golden State and a 2013 All-Rookie selection, the 7th pick in 2012 out of North Carolina has logged 1,071 career games and 1,580 career threes over 14.
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 #2 DYLAN HARPER ▶ BENCH <i>(SAS)</i> Age 20 · Rutgers Season: 11.8/3.4/3.9 · 50.5% FG · 34.3% 3P · 22.6 MPG · usg 21.1% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 12/7/3 in 27.1 min (5/8 FG) Window: L5: 9.6/5.4/2.8 · 22.4 MPG THE STORY Born into a champion's house and taken No. 2 overall, Dylan Harper is San Antonio's break-glass rookie: a 6-5 bench guard whose efficiency, foul-drawing and defensive playmaking all spike once the postseason starts. ▶ Playoff gear shift: Harper's bench scoring has climbed from 11.8 points on 50.5% FG in the regular season to 13.1 on 52.5% across the 18 playoff games entering the Finals, his true shooting rising from .574 to roughly .63. The. ▶ Rim pressure: He earned 58 free-throw trips across those 18 playoff games while converting 84.5% at the line, a sharp jump from 75.6% in the regular season. A big-bodied guard who keeps. ▶ Bench microwave: The second unit's instant offense shows in a 27-point, 10-rebound, plus-25 Game 3 at Portland (9-of-12 FG, 4-of-5 from three) and a 24-point night at Minnesota. Harper is the lever. ▶ Defensive spark: He authored a 24-point, 11-rebound, 6-assist, 7-steal line in the 47-minute WCF opener at Oklahoma City, and his 6-5, 215-pound frame lets San Antonio switch him across New York's. ▶ Family business: Harper is the son of five-time NBA champion Ron Harper, was coached by his mother Maria (of Filipino descent) at New Jersey's Don Bosco Prep, and went No. 2 overall out of Rutgers in 2025. A Franklin Lakes.	 #11 CARTER BRYANT ▶ BENCH <i>(SAS)</i> Age 20 · Arizona Season: 4.2/2.5/0.7 · 40.8% FG · 33.5% 3P · 11.5 MPG · usg 15.8% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 2/1/0 in 3.0 min (1/1 FG) Window: L5: 2.8/1.6/0.4 · 6.6 MPG THE STORY The box score reads 4.2 points a night, but Carter Bryant's rookie value lives in a playoff split the Spurs' bench can actually feel — his on-court net rating nearly tripled from the regular season to the postseason. ▶ Playoff three-ball kicked in: Bryant shot just 33.5% from deep across 71 regular-season games, then flipped to 41.4% from three over 22 playoff games, lifting his true shooting from 52.6% (REG) to 62.2% (PST) — the corner spacer San Antonio can leave. ▶ Second-unit net swing: His on-court net rating vaults from +0.8 in the regular season to +12.3 across the postseason (115.2 offensive / 102.9 defensive), a marker that the bench plays cleaner basketball with his length and motor in the. ▶ Rim-protecting wing / matchup value: Bryant blocks 0.3 shots in only 11.5 MPG, a rare swat-first wing profile (he rejected 37 shots as an Arizona freshman, 7th-most ever by a Wildcats rookie) — giving SAS a switchable 6-7/6-8 bench body to throw at. ▶ Deaf-community roots: The Riverside, California native comes from a family steeped in the deaf community — his mother Sabrina Torres is a sign language interpreter, grandfather Mike "Doc" Torres is a USA Deaf Basketball Hall of Famer, and grandmother Shelley Freed long served the California School for the. ▶ Three schools, one-and-done, pick 14: Bryant hopped from Fountain Valley (coached by his dad D'Cean, a former Long Beach State player) to Sage Hill to Corona Centennial, where he became a McDonald's All-American before a five-start freshman year at Arizona was enough for San Antonio to draft him 14th overall in 2025. Arizona coach.
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 #7 LUKE KORNET ▶ BENCH <i>(SAS)</i> Age 30 · Vanderbilt Season: 6.5/6.1/1.9 · 64.3% FG · 0.0% 3P · 21.0 MPG · usg 10.0% Last Game: 2026-05-30: 2/4/0 in 6.1 min (0/3 FG) Window: L5: 3.0/3.8/0.4 · 10.7 MPG THE STORY Seven feet of break-glass insurance: a Texas kid nobody recruited out of high school, a 2017 undraftee who nearly walked on at SMU, now chasing a ring against the very franchise that handed him his first NBA contract. ▶ Minutes shrink to a cameo: Kornet's regular season was a real rotation shift — 21.0 MPG, 6.5 pts, 6.1 reb on 64.3% FG and 68.9% TS at a 10.0% usage — but the playoffs have compressed him to 12.9 MPG and 3.7 points, and his last five games are a 8.3-minute. ▶ Second-chance engine: For a 10% usage center he is a volume presence on the offensive glass — 2.7 offensive rebounds a game, an 11.6% offensive-rebound rate and 28.4% of San Antonio's available boards while he is on the floor, exactly the kind of hidden. ▶ The screen nobody charts: His real offensive value never hits the box score — 3.49 screen assists and 7.82 screen-assist points per game, the dribble-handoff and roll screens that spring Castle and Fox downhill. He is a paint-only finisher (77.9% of his points inside, zero three-point attempts) who is foul-proof. ▶ No offer to NBA champion: Kornet finished high school at Argyle, Texas with not a single Division I scholarship offer and was set to walk on at SMU as an academic admit; his father Frank Kornet — a Vanderbilt All-SEC pick and 1989 Milwaukee Bucks draft choice — got him onto an AAU roster late that spring and the phone never stopped ringing. Luke left Vanderbilt as the program's all-time blocks leader (210) and the NCAA's career three-point. ▶ A Knicks homecoming: His NBA career actually began in New York, on a two-way deal for the 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons, before stops in Chicago, Cleveland, Milwaukee and a championship run in Boston. The Finals now put him on the other.



MATCHUP MISC INFORMATION

NBA FINALS – GAME 1

SAS peak offense is **Q1** (ORtg 124.0). NYK best defensive quarter is **Q4** (DRtg 104.6). NYK offense peaks in **Q1** (ORtg 120.6).

QUARTER SPLITS (NYK / SAS)

Q	PTS	ORTG	DRTG	PACE
Q1	29.6 / 31.9	120.6 / 124.0	116.5 / 109.6	98.5 / 102.4
Q2	29.2 / 30.3	118.5 / 119.1	112.5 / 107.8	98.5 / 102.5
Q3	29.0 / 29.7	119.4 / 118.2	116.4 / 114.5	96.9 / 101.1
Q4	28.2 / 27.6	116.9 / 114.0	104.6 / 110.5	97.0 / 96.8

MILESTONE WATCH

PLAYER	TM	GAP	MARK	NOW
Victor Wembanyama	SAS	3 from 2,000 career REG reb		1,997
Jalen Brunson	NYK	5 from 200 season REG 3PM		195
Julian Champagnie	SAS	5 from 200 season REG 3PM		195
DeAaron Fox	SAS	11 from 100 season REG stl		89
Harrison Barnes	SAS	11 from 150 season REG 3PM		139
Josh Hart	NYK	14 from 500 season REG reb		486
Jordan Clarkson	NYK	18 from 1,500 career REG 3PM		1,482
Julian Champagnie	SAS	27 from 500 season REG reb		473
Devin Vassell	SAS	68 from 1,000 season REG pts		932

STREAKS

TM	WHO	MARK	TYPE
NYK	Team	L1	active
SAS	Team	L1	active
NYK	Brunson	3 straight 20+ PTS	active
NYK	Brunson	8/10 5+ AST	form
NYK	Towns	7/10 20+ PTS	form
NYK	Towns	4 straight 10+ REB	active
NYK	Anunoby	6/10 3+ 3PM	form
SAS	Wembanyama	8/10 20+ PTS	form
SAS	Wembanyama	8/10 10+ REB	form
SAS	Fox	3 straight 5+ AST	active
SAS	Castle	15 straight 5+ AST	active

REST & LAST GAME

TM	REST	WL	PRIOR
NYK	8d rest	W	NYK 130 @ CLE 93
SAS	3d rest	W	SAS 111 @ OKC 103

RECORD WHEN...

SITUATION	NYK	SAS
Home	30-10 (#2/15 conf)	32-8 (#2/15 conf)
Road	22-19	29-12 (#2/15 conf)
Last 10	6-4	8-2 (#3/15 conf)
Last 10 home	8-2 (#3/15 conf)	8-2 (#4/15 conf)
Last 10 road	5-5	8-2 (#1/15 conf)
vs East	35-17 (#3/15 conf)	26-4 (#1/15 conf)
vs West	18-12	36-16 (#2/15 conf)
Conference	35-17 (#3/15 conf)	36-16 (#2/15 conf)
Division	14-3 (#1/15 conf)	13-3 (#1/15 conf)
vs .500+	23-23 (#4/15 conf)	35-14 (#1/15 conf)
Led FG%	42-3 (#1/15 conf)	50-4 (#1/15 conf)
Led rebounds	38-16	48-9 (#2/15 conf)
Fewer turnovers	38-7 (#1/15 conf)	23-9 (#4/15 conf)
Scored 100+	52-20 (#3/15 conf)	62-17 (#2/15 conf)
Opponent 100+	36-29 (#4/15 conf)	51-20 (#2/15 conf)
Ahead at half	38-6 (#3/15 conf)	48-10 (#3/15 conf)
Behind at half	15-23 (#3/15 conf)	13-10 (#1/15 conf)
Tied at half	0-0	1-0 (#1/13 conf)
Ahead after 3Q	46-2 (#1/15 conf)	50-8 (#3/15 conf)
Behind after 3Q	5-27	11-12 (#1/15 conf)
OT games	1-1	1-1
vs Atlantic	14-3 (#2/15 conf)	9-1 (#1/15 conf)
vs Central	10-7 (#5/15 conf)	8-2 (#1/15 conf)
vs Southeast	11-7	9-1 (#1/15 conf)
vs Northwest	7-3 (#2/15 conf)	10-8 (#5/15 conf)
vs Pacific	4-6	13-5 (#2/15 conf)
vs Southwest	7-3 (#2/15 conf)	13-3 (#1/15 conf)

STAT RANKING

TM	STAT	VALUE	NBA RK
SAS	Team DRB%	72.4%	#1/30
NYK	Team ORtg	118.7	#3/30
SAS	Team DRtg	110.4	#3/30
SAS	Team Net	8.4	#3/30
SAS	Team PIE	54.2%	#3/30
NYK	Team Opp paint	43.4	#3/30
SAS	Team ORtg	118.7	#4/30
NYK	Team DRB%	71.5%	#4/30
NYK	Team Net	6.4	#5/30
SAS	Team TOV%	13.3%	#5/30
SAS	Wembanyama Net	17.0	#2/537
SAS	Wembanyama PIE	20.9%	#3/537
NYK	Towns REB%	19.2%	#4/537

FRANCHISE SERIES

WINDOW	RESULT	NOTE
All-time (franchise)	NYK 49-64 SAS	113 GP
2026 season series	NYK 2-1 SAS	3 GP
2026-03-01	SAS 89 @ NYK 114	REG 2026
2025-12-31	NYK 132 @ SAS 134	REG 2026
2025-12-16	SAS 113 @ NYK 124	IST 2026
2025-03-19	NYK 105 @ SAS 120	REG 2025
2024-12-25	SAS 114 @ NYK 117	REG 2025
2024-03-29	NYK 126 @ SAS 130	REG 2024
2023-11-08	SAS 105 @ NYK 126	REG 2024
2023-01-04	SAS 114 @ NYK 117	REG 2023



BETTING LINES & MARKET

NBA FINALS – GAME 1

BROADCAST SUMMARY THE POINT - THE NUMBER - WHAT IT MEANS TONIGHT

- 1

CASTLE'S ASSIST LINE IS RUNNING COLD, FOX'S IS FLAT: Stephon Castle's **6.5** assists is priced **-128**, but he has gone under in each of his last five despite a **39-of-68** regular season (**57.4%**). Closing Frame: Spurs Lay **4.5**: Phase A Consensus close installs San Antonio as a **4.5**-point home favorite, **-4.5** at **-115** against New York's **+4.5** at **-105**.
- 2

CLOSING FRAME: SPURS LAY 4.5: Phase A Consensus close installs San Antonio as a **4.5**-point home favorite, **-4.5** at **-115** against New York's **+4.5** at **-105**.

GAME LINE (bettingdata.close - Consensus)

MARKET	HOME	AWAY
Spread	SAS -4.5 (-115)	NYK 4.5 (-105)
Moneyline	SAS -190	NYK +158
Total	O 217.5 (-110)	U 217.5 (-110)

MARKETS

NYK @ SAS

- CLOSING FRAME: SPURS LAY 4.5**

Phase A Consensus close installs San Antonio as a **4.5**-point home favorite, **-4.5** at **-115** against New York's **+4.5** at **-105**. The number frames a Finals opener where the market grades the Spurs a hair better than a neutral floor, folding the home edge and a modest net-rating cushion into the price rather than a true talent gap.
- THE LITTLE HALF-POINT OF JUICE**

San Antonio's **-115** on the **4.5** is the tell: the market is not offering a true coin flip across the number, it is charging a premium to lay the points. New York's **+4.5** sits at **-105**, so the dog-side cost is nearly free. That skew says books expect the Spurs to be asked to win by more than a bucket.
- TOTAL PRICED FLAT AT 217.5**

Phase A prints the total at **217.5** with Over and Under both **-110**, a genuine pick'em with no lean. There is no printed open, so no move to read, only the flat Consensus line. At **217.5** the market is asking for a game decided somewhere between a grind and a shootout.
- PACE SAYS THE TOTAL HAS ROOM**

Context from the team boards: New York plays at **97.7**, San Antonio at **100.7**, a combined environment near **99** possessions. That frame comfortably fits a **217.5** total without demanding outlier efficiency. Pace is context here, not a projection, and the printed number was set to absorb both tempos.
- SPURS -190 ON THE MONEYLINE**

Phase A prices San Antonio **-190** to win Game **1** outright, New York **+158**. That is roughly a **66%** implied Spurs win against a **39%** Knicks side, about a four-point hold. The moneyline is more decisive than the **4.5** spread suggests, leaning hard on the home floor and the Finals stage.
- NET RATINGS DON'T COVER THE SPREAD**

San Antonio carries a plus-**8.4** net rating to New York's plus-**6.4**, only a **2.0**-point gap on the season boards. Yet the market lays **4.5**. Home court plus the Finals setting, not a season-long talent chasm, is doing that extra work. The number is a venue-and-stage price more than a matchup price.
- WHERE THE NUMBER COMES FROM**

The printed **4.5** leans on structure, not just the venue. Earlier pages flagged San Antonio's league-best roll-man efficiency against New York's 55th-percentile defense there, a single matchup edge the market appears to be paying for. Add the home floor and the **4.5** holds.

PROP WATCH

- Player props**

BRUNSON'S 25.5 IS THE SOFTEST NUMBER ON THE BOARD

Consensus hangs Jalen Brunson's points at **25.5**, priced **-113** over, and the season math justifies the juice: he cleared it in **44** of **74** regular-season games (**59.5%**). The recent form is warmer still, **4** of his last **5** over the number. It is the highest-volume prop on the card and the closest thing to a coin flip tilted his way.
- WEMBANYAMA'S 26.5 DRAWS THE OVER PRICE, NOT THE OVER RATE**

San Antonio's center is priced to go over **26.5** points at **-124**, yet he cleared that number in just **26** of **64** regular-season games (**40.6%**). He has topped it only twice in his last five. The market is buying playoff gravity and matchup size, not a season-long scoring habit.
- TOWNS SPLITS CLEANLY: POINTS OVER, REBOUNDS FLAT**

Karl-Anthony Towns carries **16.5** points at **-102** and **11.5** rebounds at **-111**. The scoring prop is the frequent hit, landing in **52** of **75** games (**69.3%**), while the rebound over is nearer even money at **41** of **75** (**54.7%**). Both cooled across the last five, each cashing twice.
- ANUNOBY IS THE QUIET HEATER AT 15.5**

OG Anunoby's points line sits at **15.5**, priced **-118**, and he has turned it into a late-series habit: **4** of his last **5** over the number after a **38-of-67** regular season (**56.7%**). His threes prop (**2.5**, **+145**) is the harder side, cleared in only **27** of **67** games (**40.3%**).
- WEMBANYAMA'S BLOCKS LINE IS PRICED THE WRONG WAY ROUND**

Victor Wembanyama's **3.5** blocks is nearly even money at **+101**, yet he cleared it in just **27** of **64** regular-season games (**42.2%**). His rebound over is the steadier of the two big-man props, landing in **32** of **64** (**50%**) at **-130**. One player, two sharply different hit profiles.
- BRUNSON'S POINTS AND ASSISTS RARELY RIDE TOGETHER**

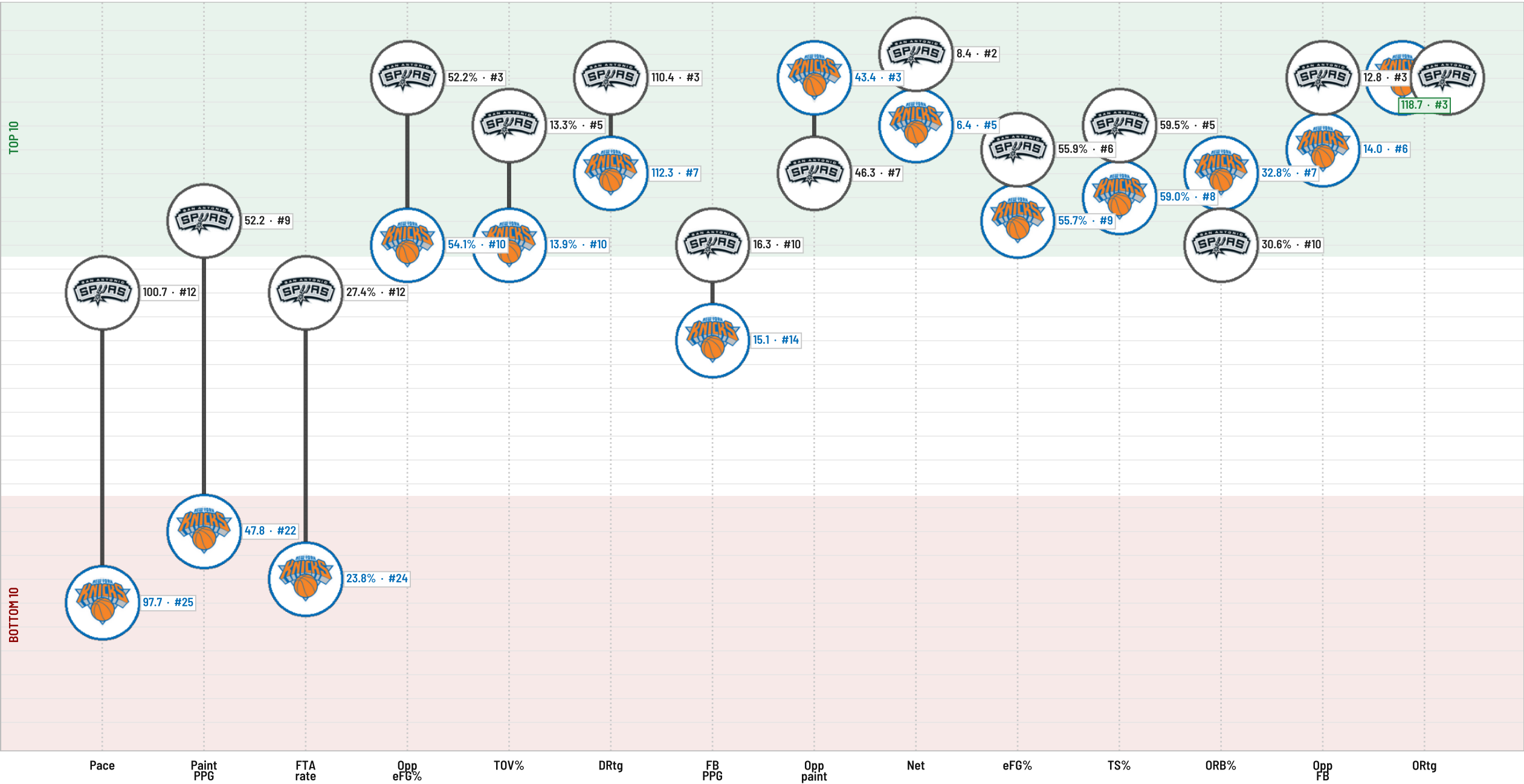
The pairing tell: Brunson cleared **25.5** points in **57** games this season and **6.5** assists in **48**, but he hit both in only **28** of **94**. His last five split the same way, **4** over on points and just **1** on assists. Stacking his scoring and playmaking overs is a correlated bet the data does not support.
- CASTLE'S ASSIST LINE IS RUNNING COLD, FOX'S IS FLAT**

Stephon Castle's **6.5** assists is priced **-128**, but he has gone under in each of his last five despite a **39-of-68** regular season (**57.4%**). De'Aaron Fox sits at **15.5** points and **5.5** assists, both **-105** to **-130**, each landing in **40** of **72** games (**55.6%**). That connective passing is also what feeds the second unit, where Mitchell Robinson anchors the bench.

KEY METRICS

NYK vs SAS · 2025-26 REG · League seed #1 is best (lower-better metrics still map best to #1)

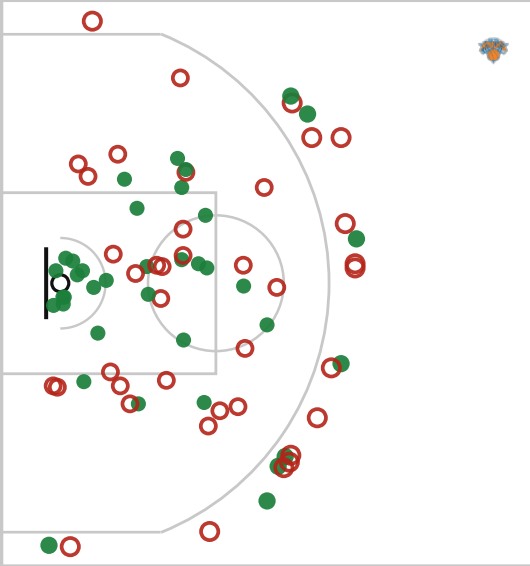
League seed · #1 best at top



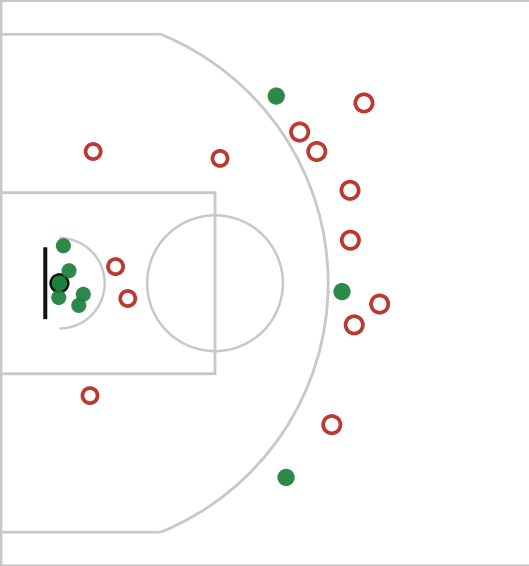
MATCHUP READ
San Antonio should own the halfcourt: **Net #2 / DRtg #3** and **Opp eFG% #3** point to a cleaner possession-by-possession edge. New York already plays **slow and paint-light (Pace #25, Paint PPG #22)**, so a Spurs slog favors SAS unless the Knicks' **Opp paint #3** wall blunts San Antonio's interior creation (**Paint #9, FTA #12**). Bottom line: Spurs win on efficiency and paint pressure; Knicks' path is defending the restricted area and controlling the glass (**ORB% #7**).

BOARD 1 · LAST FIVE / CLUTCH

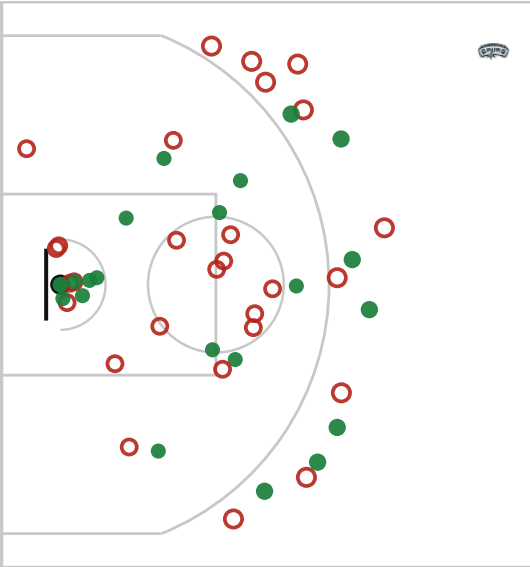
Top scorers · 2025-26 regular season · Q4 last five minutes, score within five



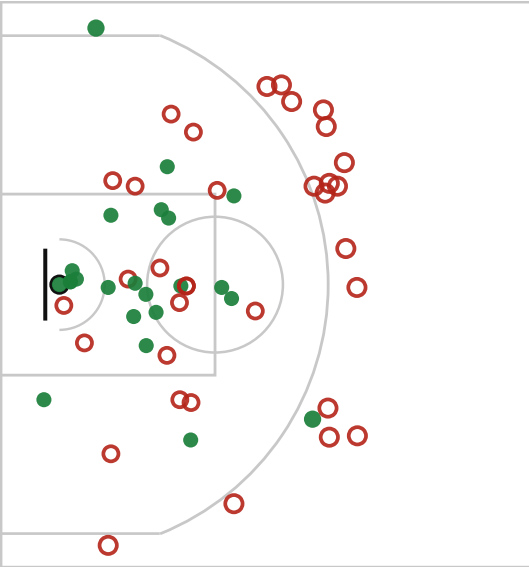
NYK · Brunson · 37/76 (48.7%)



NYK · Towns · 10/23 (43.5%)



SAS · Wembanyama · 23/51 (45.1%)



SAS · Fox · 23/57 (40.4%)

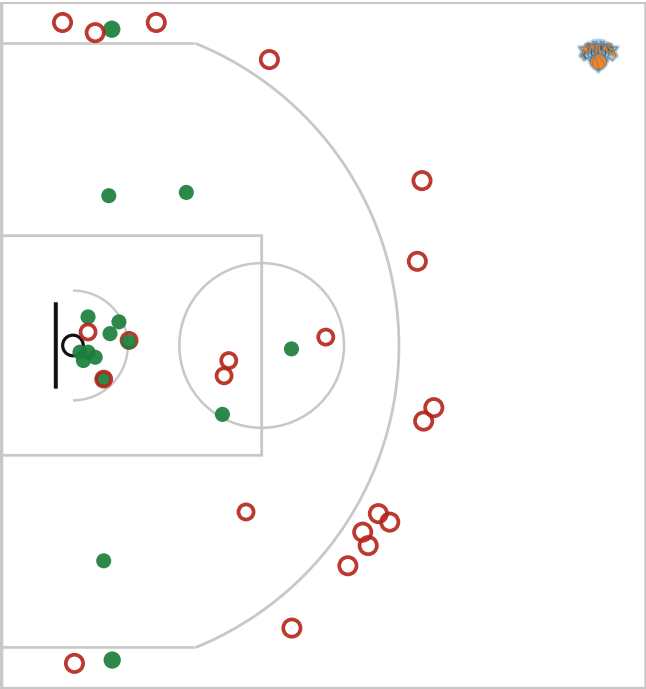
	Player	FG	FG%	3PT	Rim	Mid	3s	Shot types (attempts)
	Jalen Brunson NYK · 26.0 PPG	37/76	48.7%	8/22	10	44	22	19× 2PT jumper 12× Floater
	Karl Anthony Towns NYK · 20.1 PPG	10/23	43.5%	3/11	7	5	11	11× Catch-and-shoot 3 6× Layup
	Victor Wembanyama SAS · 25.0 PPG	23/51	45.1%	7/17	13	21	17	11× Catch-and-shoot 3 7× Layup
	DeAaron Fox SAS · 18.6 PPG	23/57	40.4%	2/19	6	32	19	12× Floater 11× Pull-up 2PT

MATCHUP READ

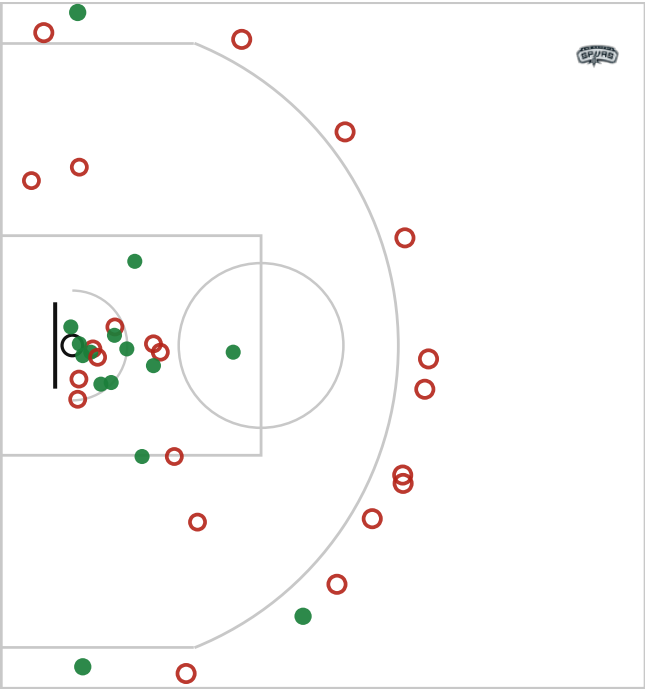
Brunson (NYK) converts clutch at 37/76 (48.7%) with 10 rim and 22 threes. Towns (NYK) converts clutch at 10/23 (43.5%) with 7 rim and 11 threes. Wembanyama (SAS) converts clutch at 23/51 (45.1%) with 13 rim and 17 threes. Fox (SAS) converts clutch at 23/57 (40.4%) with 6 rim and 19 threes.

BOARD 2 · AFTER TIMEOUT

First field-goal attempt after a team timeout · each club's last 10 games before tip



NYK · 16/38 (42.1%)



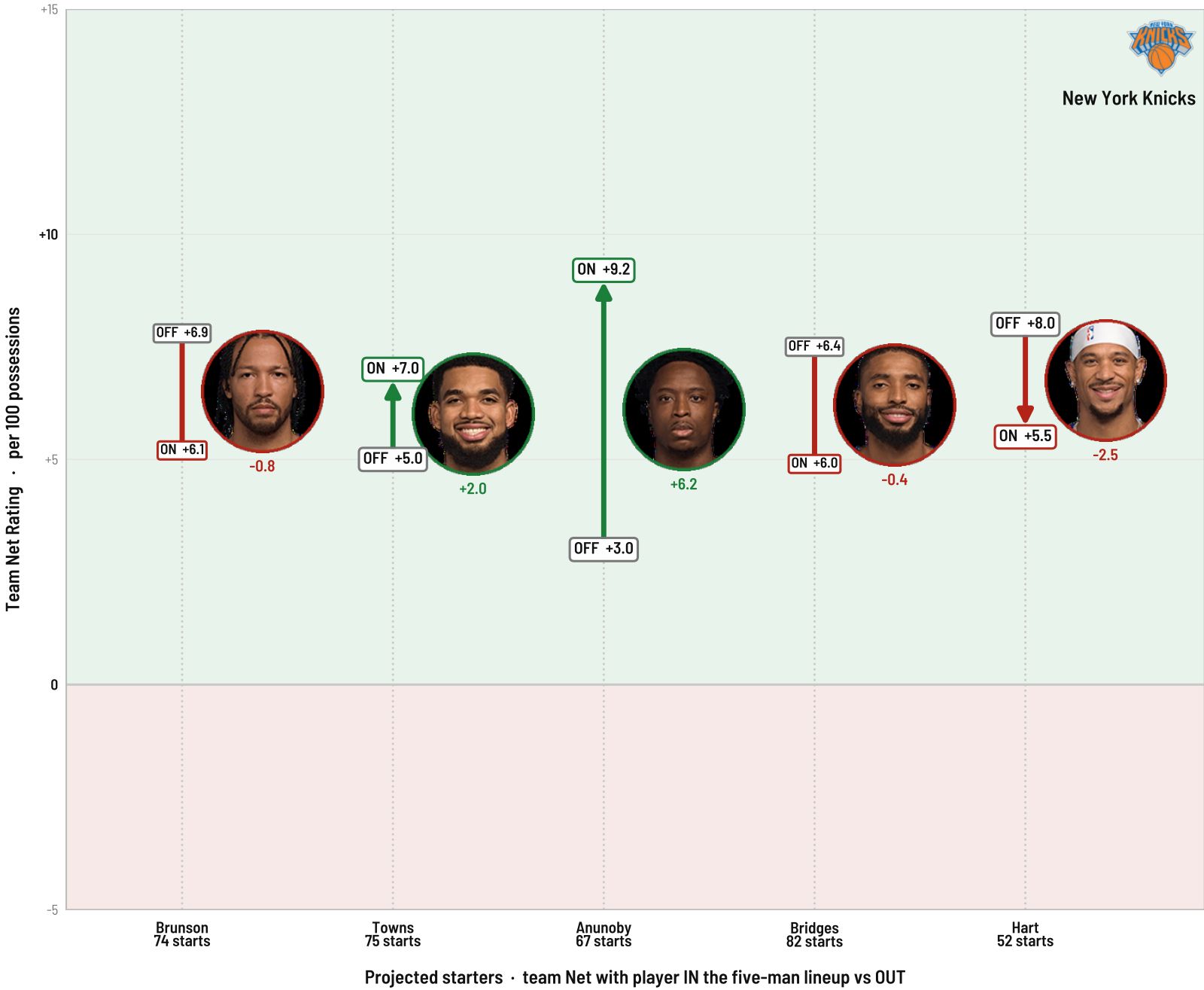
SAS · 15/37 (40.5%)

ATO mix	NYK	SAS
At rim	10	13
Short mid	7	9
Mid	4	1
Three	17	14
Top types	12× Catch-and-shoot 3	13× Catch-and-shoot 3
#2	9× Layup	8× Layup
#3	3× 2PT jumper	5× Floater

ATO first-shot leaders						
	Player	Team	FG	Att	FG%	Shot-type breakdown
Blue	 Jalen Brunson	NYK	7/13	13	53.8%	3× 2PT jumper · 2× Pull-up 2PT · 2× Fadeaway · 2× Floater
	 Mikal Bridges	NYK	0/4	4	0.0%	3× Catch-and-shoot 3 · 1× Layup
	 OG Anunoby	NYK	1/4	4	25.0%	3× Catch-and-shoot 3 · 1× Stepback 3PT
	 Karl Anthony Towns	NYK	3/4	4	75.0%	3× Layup · 1× Fadeaway
Black	 Keldon Johnson	SAS	2/8	8	25.0%	3× Catch-and-shoot 3 · 3× Layup · 1× Dunk · 1× 2PT jumper
	 Devin Vassell	SAS	1/6	6	16.7%	3× Catch-and-shoot 3 · 1× Pull-up 3PT · 1× Fadeaway · 1× 2PT jumper
	 Dylan Harper	SAS	3/5	5	60.0%	2× Floater · 1× Layup · 1× Dunk · 1× Catch-and-shoot 3
	 Victor Wembanyama	SAS	2/5	5	40.0%	1× Layup · 1× Floater · 1× Dunk · 1× Fadeaway

MATCHUP READ

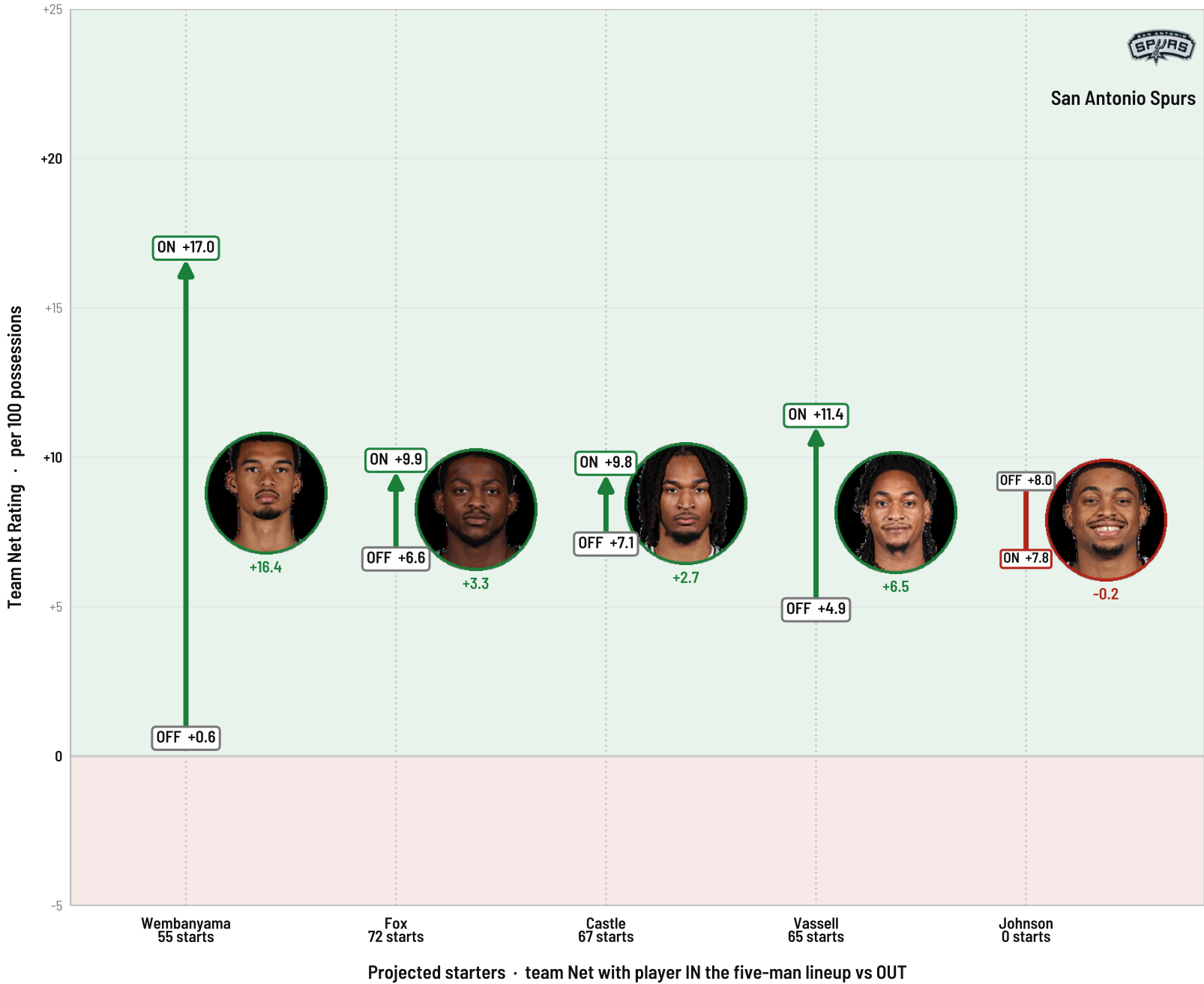
Jalen Brunson leads NYK ATO first looks (7/13) - 3× 2PT jumper, 2× Pull-up 2PT, 2× Fadeaway. NYK secondary options: Bridges, Anunoby, Towns. Keldon Johnson leads SAS ATO first looks (2/8) - 3× Catch-and-shoot 3, 3× Layup, 1× Dunk. SAS secondary options: Vassell, Harper, Wembanyama.



Starter	St	ON	OFF	ΔNet
 Brunson	74	+6.1	+6.9	v-0.8
 Towns	75	+7.0	+5.0	^+2.0
 Anunoby	67	+9.2	+3.0	^+6.2
 Bridges	82	+6.0	+6.4	v-0.4
 Hart	52	+5.5	+8.0	v-2.5

STARTER READ

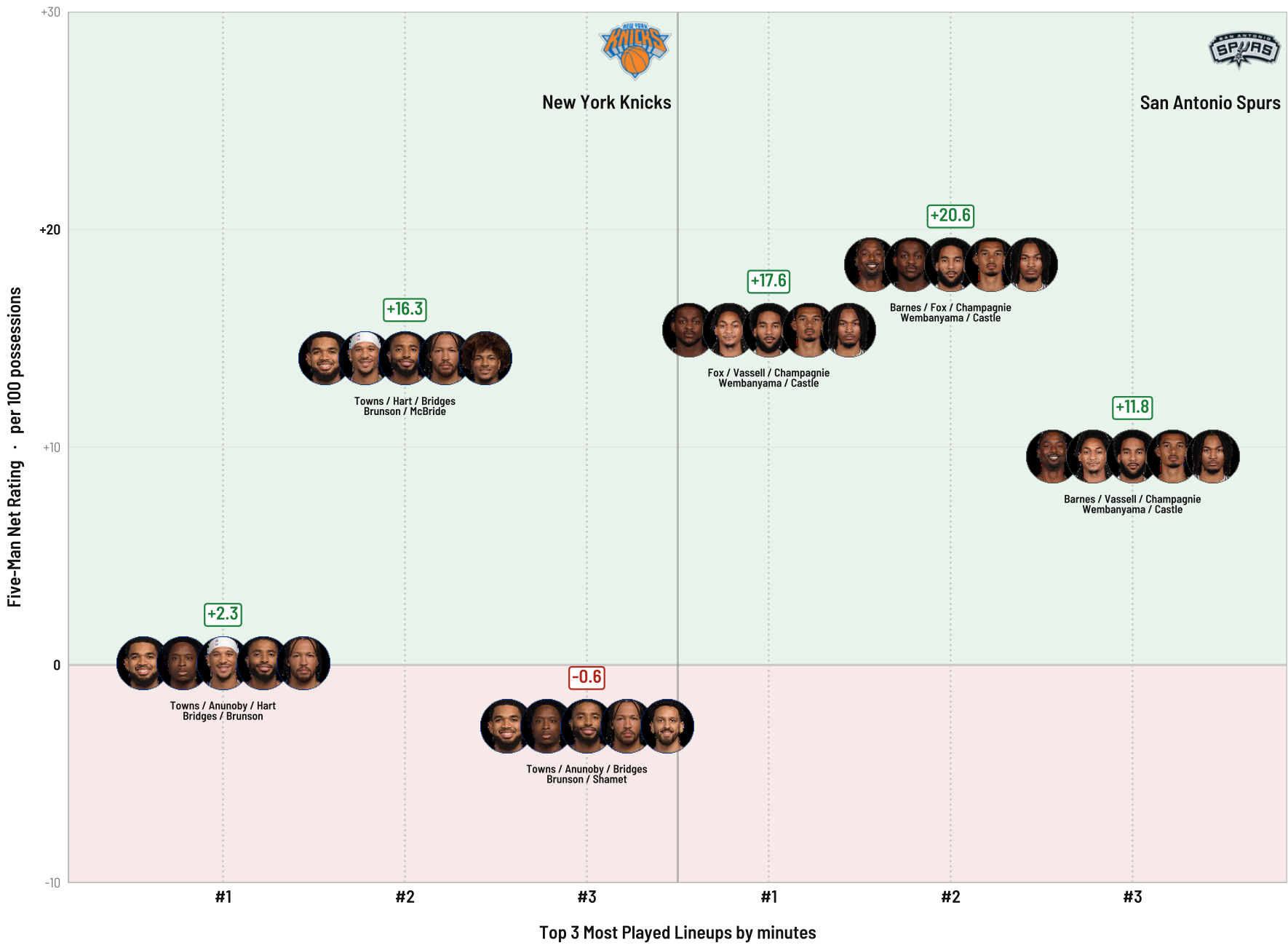
New York flips a switch with OG Anunoby on the floor - the Knicks post a +9.2 net rating with him in the lineup versus +3.0 without, a 6.2-point swing that leads all starters tonight. Karl-Anthony Towns reinforces that edge, pushing the unit to +7.0 when active compared to +5.0 when he sits.



Starter	St	ON	OFF	ΔNet
 Wembanyama	55	+17.0	+0.6	^+16.4
 Fox	72	+9.9	+6.6	^+3.3
 Castle	67	+9.8	+7.1	^+2.7
 Vassell	65	+11.4	+4.9	^+6.5
 Johnson	0	+7.8	+8.0	v-0.2

STARTER READ

Wembanyama leads San Antonio's starters with a +17.0 net rating on the floor versus +0.6 off it - a 16.4-point swing that makes him the Spurs' most irreplaceable piece tonight. Devin Vassell delivers the group's second-biggest lift at a +6.5 swing, and when this five shares the floor, San Antonio consistently outpaces opponents.



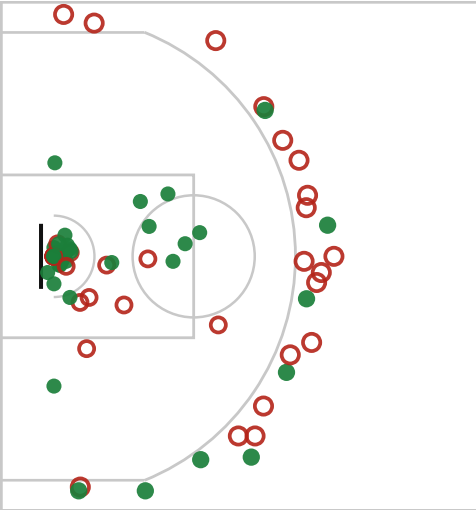
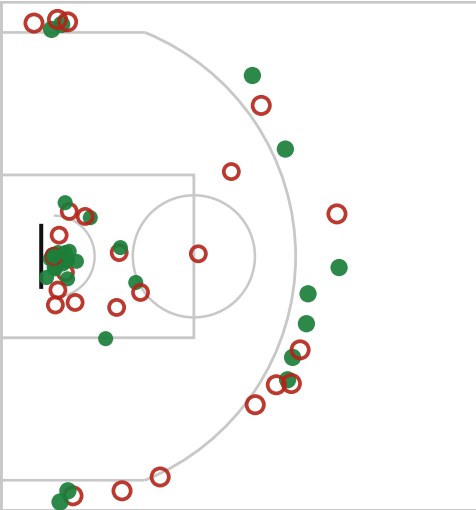
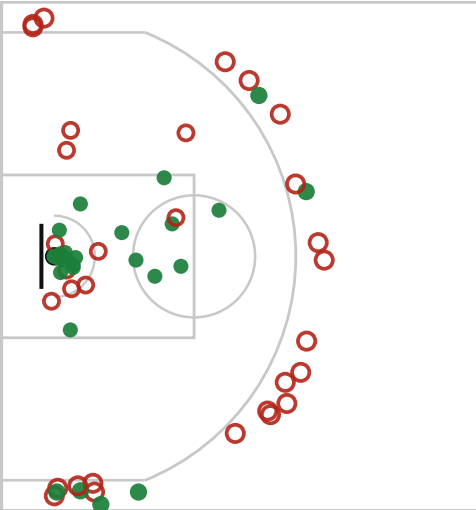
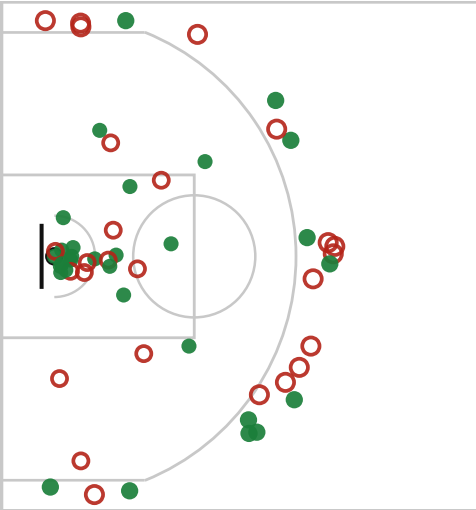
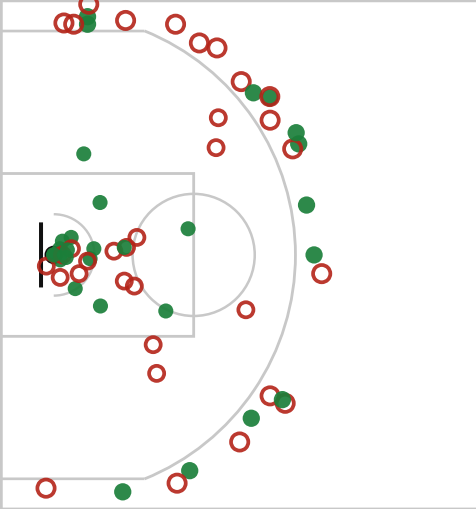
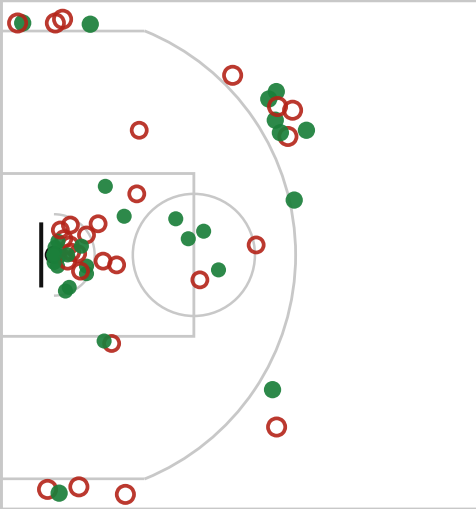
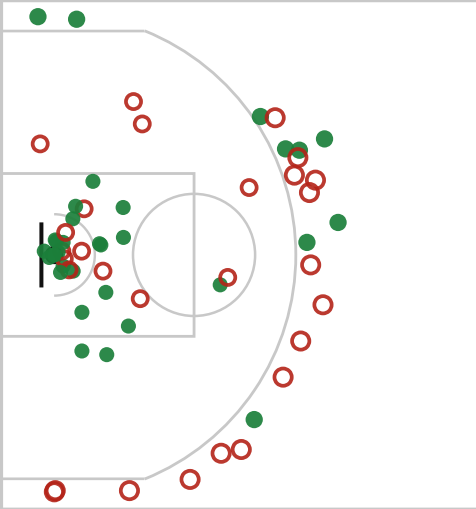
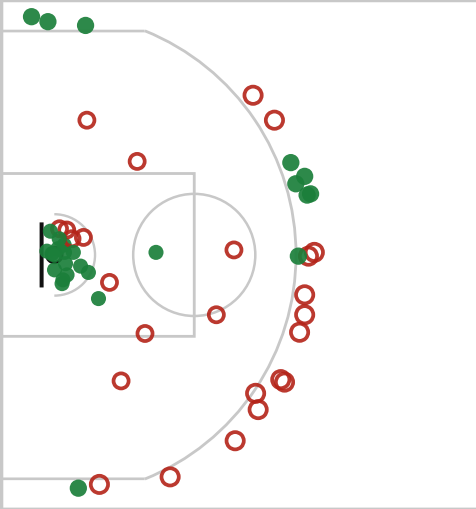
Unit	GP	Min	ORtg	DRtg	Net
New York Knicks					
Towns / Anunoby / Hart Bridges / Brunson	43	542	115.0	112.8	+2.3
Towns / Hart / Bridges Brunson / McBride	16	123	132.9	116.6	+16.3
Towns / Anunoby / Bridges Brunson / Shamet	20	120	108.4	109.0	-0.6
San Antonio Spurs					
Fox / Vassell / Champagne Wembanyama / Castle	29	284	125.4	107.7	+17.6
Barnes / Fox / Champagne Wembanyama / Castle	19	137	133.8	113.1	+20.6
Barnes / Vassell / Champagne Wembanyama / Castle	17	133	114.7	102.9	+11.8

LINEUP READ

New York's top unit leans on efficient ball movement and a heavy three-point diet, using Brunson's creation to generate clean looks - a formula that's kept them marginally positive across 43 games. San Antonio's most-played five counters with a dominant net rating of plus-17.6, posting elite efficiency on both ends while sharing the ball even more freely behind Fox and.

BOARD 6 · OPEN QUARTER

First six possessions of each quarter · each club's last 10 games before tip



TEAM COMPARE		
Metric	NYK	SAS
Open FG%	51.7%	52.8%
Q1 FG%	52.8%	53.6%
Q2 FG%	54.1%	47.5%
Q3 FG%	52.5%	55.6%
Q4 FG%	47.6%	54.4%
3PT att	98	101
At rim	78	82

EARLY CREATORS	
Player	FG
NYK	
OG Anunoby	18/40
Karl Anthony Towns	17/34
Mikal Bridges	19/29
SAS	
Victor Wembanyama	32/59
DeAaron Fox	24/43
Julian Champagnie	15/35

MATCHUP READ

NYK opens hottest in Q2 (54.1%) and coolest in Q4 (47.6%). NYK early volume: Anunoby, Towns, Bridges. SAS opens hottest in Q3 (55.6%) and coolest in Q2 (47.5%). SAS early volume: Wembanyama, Fox, Champagnie. First-six threes NYK 98 / SAS 101; at-rim NYK 78 / SAS 82.