

Orange, Blue, and Due: The Knicks' Quest for Glory

By: John Diakakis

What does it take to bring a championship back to New York City? For more than half a century, the answer has escaped the Big Apple. Now, the New York Knicks stand as the city's last beacon of basketball hope, and the pressure could not be greater.

After falling to a deep Indiana Pacers team in Game 6 of the Eastern Conference Finals, ending a 25-year drought from that kind of success, the Knicks enter the 2025–26 season with a “Finals or bust” mentality. The offseason brought both bold and controversial adjustments, none greater than the firing of Coach Tom Thibodeau. Expectations, as always, are demanding.

Opening night in the basketball Mecca, Madison Square Garden, felt electric. Facing the Cleveland Cavaliers, a 64-win team laid to rest with a “gentleman’s sweep” by Indiana last spring, the Knicks sought to make an early statement. Prior to tip-off, Jalen Brunson addressed the roaring crowd: “I just want to appreciate your guys’ support night in and night out,” said Brunson. “We’re really excited for this year. Keep riding with us, and go Knicks.”

From the very first play, New York played like a team commanding respect. Brunson and the starters led early on, and by halftime, Mikal Bridges and OG Anunoby’s defense had Cleveland’s juggernaut offense down 65–50. The Cavaliers clawed their way back to tie it at 87 heading into the fourth, but Anunoby drained a 3 from way beyond the arc when tensions were high to seal a 119–111 win. A statement that this team can close against absolutely anyone and compete with greatness.

In the city that never sleeps, something special is happening in the heart of Midtown, and this season, the Knicks are wide awake.