

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Tuesday, November 23, 2021

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Coach Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 70, Jackson State 35

Q. Just want to know how much you made them run because they were down to 11 turnovers.

MIKE WOODSON: Well, I have to run, too, so I'm a part of that run.

You know, I was shaking at halftime. We had eight and we finished the game with eleven, so that's right where we need to be.

So I complimented them on that after the game.

Q. But the free throws, 16 of 26.

MIKE WOODSON: Well, Geronimo was a big part of that. We got to get him in the gym and we got to keep shooting them, man, because we're a better free throw shooting team than we're showing right now.

I don't like that category at all.

Q. Coach, the starters seemed to play more minutes early on tonight. Was that purposeful? I know there was a couple games where the leads had gone away. Anything to do with trying to get them to be more locked in?

MIKE WOODSON: No, not really. Again, guys, we got a team that if you're called upon to play you got to be ready to play and you got to produce, and we getting that from everybody that steps on the floor.

Didn't have anything to do -- you know, I went with the starters because they were playing pretty good, I thought. I thought they played some really positive minutes.

And then I went back to the second unit, and they came in and kept things going.

So that's the kind of team we going to have to be in the long run, especially when we start making this run towards

the Big Ten. We got to be deep and guys got to be ready to play when called upon.

Q. What did you like and not like about how your team executed against the zone defense, and is that something you were happy to see with Syracuse on the horizon here?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, I asked my coaches coming in at halftime, Is that kind of how Syracuse extends their zone? They had a 2-3 zone. They were in pretty much a 1-2-2 zone where they were matched, and then I made the adjustment by going overload.

We came right out of the time out and Parker hit a big three and then we started executing out of that set. So, again, I don't see a lot of the zones in the NBA, so this new for me and I'm just kind of navigating my way through.

I thought for the most part we executed pretty well in the zone. We were stagnant early until I made the -- called to time out and made the change. Then we kind of went over at halftime and they didn't come back to it after we made a few buckets.

Q. Xavier tonight, 14, I think 7 rebounds, 3 assists, is that an example of what he can do when he avoids the foul trouble, staying on the floor and being productive?

MIKE WOODSON: Yeah. Again, we brought Xavier here to help run our ball club, and he can't do it sitting next to me. And being a point guard, there is a lot of things that come with being a point guard. I'm hard on point guards because they got to run our team and still be able to do the things they're capable of doing, too.

So we all in a learning stage right now. Coaches are in a learning stage and they're in a learning stage as well trying to deal with me, so...

Q. You mentioned that second unit. They were a lot more productive offensively in the second half. Was that just a product of the defense they were seeing, or what did you like more from them?



MIKE WOODSON: I thought when they came in in the first half they were kind of somewhat going through the motions a little bit and it didn't work for them, so I went back with the starters. And, I mean, that's the kind of team we have.

It's no knock against -- they didn't get it done while they were in there early, so I went with the unit I thought could get it done.

Then I thought when they came back in the second half they settled down and was playing the way I know they're capable of playing.

Q. You mentioned a couple times about teaching your point guard to run the team. Can you expand on like what for you running the team is?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, a point guard to me I've always thought a good -- a good or great point guard -- has got to be able to run offense, he's got to be able to know who needs the ball.

If Trayce has got it going, he's got to find ways to get him the ball; same with Race. If a guy hasn't had a shot in a while, he needs to know, Hey, I got to get this guy a shot. That's what great point guards do.

I mean, and then he has to defend. I don't let him off the hook there either. But I think Trayce, Rob is not with us right now, and Khristian are still learning. It's okay because, again, I'm demanding when it comes to -- they probably played for coaches that didn't push them as hard as I'm pushing, but I expect more and I'm going to keep coaching them that way.

Q. Five games in, what do you like most about your team and what are the things you feel need the most work?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, I think we're starting the shoot the ball a little bit better. I like everything about how we're defending, man. I mean, we're getting after it.

I mentioned it to these guys early on when we first started as a team we had to establish some kind of identity, and it had to start on the defensive end.

They've held true to that so far this season, and, man, it's got us wins, it's got us -- kept us in games, it's pushed us out above teams in games.

It's been our defense that's been solid. Hey, I knew that our defense would be ahead of our offense because I spent so much time putting in and demanding things that I

needed to have done on the floor.

And now we got to get our offense up to speed. We're not -- you're averaging 70 some points a game; that's not all bad.

But I want our offense to be a lot more easier than it is right now, and we're not there yet.

Q. How much of getting an offense up to speed is getting the ball in Trayce's hands more? He only had three shots in the first half. Made them all, but he only took three shots. Do you want to see more of a concerted effort to get the ball in his hands?

MIKE WOODSON: Absolutely. He only had seven touches tonight, and a lot of that had to do with the zone. Again, guys, he's going to be trapped a lot this year. I mean, when he got it they trapped him. He made great passes out of the zone.

Sometimes he's going to be able to beat the traps and sometimes he's got to sacrifice the ball for the sake of the took. That's just go offense is what I call it.

Yeah, when I look at the stat sheet and see that he only got seven shots tonight, he's got to get more than that. So that's on me.

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