

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Saturday, December 4, 2021

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 68, Nebraska 5

Q. First ten minutes of the first half and the spark you got off of the bench from Tamar and the others that came?

MIKE WOODSON: It was a very important. We came in slow and not really into the game. I mean, we were flat, man, and it's the first time I've seen that, and I tried to let them play their way out. You know, we missed some good shots. We had good looks early. But they built I think a 10-point lead at one time, and so I had to change it up, went to the bench and our bench was fantastic tonight coming in.

Q. Race, his toughness inside, what factor did that play?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, he's been playing that way all season for us. And you know, they were playing small ball so we tried to take advantage of that by posting him against a smaller guy, and he made a couple buckets. That's something that we will explore as we continue to journey if teams are going to play our fours with smaller people. I mean, you've got to exploit it.

Q. You've mentioned how competitive your practices have been. What do you think makes them competitive and how would you go into more depth describing that?

MIKE WOODSON: Because the second unit pushes the first unit, and when we have scrimmages, there's been times the second unit has come away with the win.

So I mean, that's being competitive where they are not succumbing all the time to the first unit, and they showed tonight, they got in there and they did what they was supposed to do and I played them. I mean, I think I played Anthony and a few of those guys nine, ten minutes straight.

Q. Trayce didn't have his normal scoring day but affected the game in other ways. What did you see

from what Trayce did in the game? And a lot of coaches don't exploit what teams are doing to them. They kind of say, you're going small; then I'll go small, too. Why did you do what you did?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, our bigs are athletic enough that we can switch if we get in trouble, and then with Trayce, he missed probably three or four bunnies, I call, around the rim that just didn't drop for him, and there's going to be nights like that that.

Again, I though early on, we struggled to shoot the ball. Miller, I don't even think he made a bucket tonight, and Parker struggled the first half and he got it going a little bit the second half. There's going to be nights like that, but I'm a true believer, man, that if your defense is solid, it will keep you in ballgames. If you're defending and rebounding as a unit, you've got a chance.

Q. You mentioned Anthony had earned more playing time. What have you seen from him recently that gave you more confidence in him?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, he's been very competitive in practice. I thought, I came in tonight knowing I was going to play him, and he responded, which was kind of nice to see

Q. Talk about the impact of Parker. Plays 23 minutes in a game, shooting nearly 50 percent from behind the three-point on 43 attempts this year. Talk about his impact on this offense.

MIKE WOODSON: Well, he can shoot the ball. Just got to put him in position where he can make shots, and he's been making them. I thought the Syracuse game, he was right on the money in terms of the 3-ball, and tonight he made threes when we really needed him. We've just got keep him on good place. He's been shooting a lot of them in practice.

So I mean, I'm happy with where he is as a player right now because he's giving us some positive minutes and doing what he does best, and that's making the long ball.

Q. Tamar said, if I miss 10 shots I'm going to take the 11th. Is that the mindset you saw coming out of high school with him? What have you seen out of him as a freshman in terms of his competitiveness?

MIKE WOODSON: The thing I'll say about Tamar, he's not scared of the moment. He'll take a big shot, and sometimes it's a bad shot, but hey, I'm not -- I like everything about Tamar. That's why he's here wearing an Indiana uniform.

Q. A lot of turnovers early, and then you slowed it down, the turnovers as the game went on. Race didn't have any after he had six the previous game. What did you do to eliminate the turnovers as the game went on?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, all we can do is talk about it, man, and show him on film that, you know, you play offense, you don't give it to the defense. You know, you play offense to score the ball, and have fun while you're doing it. I thought we were a little bit better the second half. And in doing that, we were able to build a lead and by not turning it over and making our defense work for us and making shots, it kind of all goes hand-in-hand.

Q. Super early, first Big Ten game but how important was it to come out and play well and get a victory after the defeat Tuesday night?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, every game is important. Our goal this year is not to lose at home. I mean, and then try to figure it out when we get out on the road. So this game was important. I mean, every game when we step out on that floor is important.

Q. Just wondering, you're going to play another team in Wisconsin that has good shooters a lot like Syracuse. How much help defense will you use or did you learn that maybe you shouldn't play straight man-to-man after Syracuse lit you up?

MIKE WOODSON: Well (chuckling) I'm not a zone guy. You know, we don't play any zone. We haven't put any zone in yet. Our man-to-man defense has really been pretty good this year. So we're going to have to go to Wisconsin and try to figure it out from a man-to-man standpoint. We play some teams, probably not as deep as Syracuse in terms of shooting the long ball, but they made some tough shots, I thought. I think when I look back at that game, if we just erase half the turnovers that we gave them, it's a different ballgame. So we'll see what happens when we get to Wisconsin.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

