

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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## Mike Woodson

### Press Conference



**Q. The other night on the radio show, you were talking about just the importance of holding serve at home, how big of an emphasis kind of just embracing that with your team and getting them to take pride in home-court advantage has there been the last couple days, and also curious, you talked about in the NBA, you had some teams that were really good at home. What do you think goes into having a good home-court advantage?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, I mean, again, if you are talking about winning at a high level, and if you're talking about trying to win the Big Ten, you can't lose at home. I mean, you just -- I mean, I go back over the history of, you know, back in the days with Coach Knight, you know, we rarely lost games at home. And you know, if you are talking about establishing winning ways, you've got to win on your floor, and it's the same way in the NBA. You know, you can't, you know, lose half your games at home and think you're going to make the playoffs in the maybe. It doesn't work like that. So you've got to, you know, that was the first thing when I took this team over, from day one, I told them, guys, we've got to win at home, and we'll figure the road out when we get out there. So you know, so far, we've done what we've said we were going to do. Ohio State's next. We've got to win at home.

**Q. Curious, obviously the rebounding disparity, I know that bothered you in the Penn State game. What have you done maybe in the third quarter to emphasize that? I know sometimes coaches put bubbles on baskets and so forth. How do you get that aspect and physicality back heading into this game?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, you must have been in our practice then yesterday, because yeah, we put -- you put the bubble up, and you get after it. You make guys, you know, block out and rebound the ball. You know, they don't like it, but hell, I thought that was the difference in the game the other night. That one possession I think we gave three, four offensive rebounds.

And we haven't been beaten on the board this season, and

you know, not taking anything away, they are not a really big team. You know, so Ohio State is a big team. I mean, they got big center a big power forward. So we're going to have to block out and rebound the ball if we're going to even have a chance at beating them.

**Q. You've talked about obviously getting more shots from Parker and Miller. Coming into the season, you talked and emphasized a lot about how the offense is going to be a work-in-progress. Are there one or two keys on the offensive end that you thought would be farther along that aren't currently?**

MIKE WOODSON: Again, our pick-and-roll offense is not where I want it to be. You know what I mean, we're not getting a lot out that have right now. And you know, we get it in spurts. Where we've been good offensively is really getting stops and deflections and things of that nature where we're getting out and gotten out and gotten early buckets that way. Runs where we've been able to take advantage of Trayce and Race running the floor our halfcourt pick-and-roll offense is nowhere near where I want it to be. We've got some work there to get better in that area.

So again, some of our halfcourt sets, I think out of time-outs we've been pretty good because we've been able to set and draw up stuff when teams don't zone us.

But our halfcourt sets, we've just got to get better in terms of our execution at setting screens and things of that nature and cutting and passing the ball.

**Q. Would you like to still play faster, too, if you could?**

MIKE WOODSON: Yeah, I mean, you know, I think that's the whole thing when we are at our best is we're getting stops, deflections and we're getting up and down the floor, where, you know, we're getting quick strikes, is what I call them. You know, buckets over the top behind the defense and where we're spraying it around getting three-point shots early.

But you know, you've got to get stops, you know what I mean. That's the name of the game. I thought in the Penn



State game, I thought our defense was solid. You know, it wasn't too bad. I didn't like how we played guard at our pick-and-roll coverage, and the fact that we got smashed on the boards, you know what I mean. That was the difference in winning that game.

Right now, I think we're at a point where we've just got to -- we've got to play a perfect game -- not perfect, but we've got to play 40 minutes, man. We can't play 38, 39 minutes. That was a winnable game the other night, and again, we didn't make the plays and they did coming home.

**Q. You mentioned them having a big power forward. What impresses you about EJ Liddell? What are the most important things about covering and guarding him?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, not just him. Their perimeter play is pretty good, you know what I mean. They have got shooters on the perimeter. They have got the two big guys inside that can demand the ball. Liddell, he's a talented kid. I mean, he can play inside. He can play outside and make plays. So I mean, you know, our two bigs are going to have their hands filled and I feel vice-versa; they are going to have their hands filled with our two big guys.

It's going to come down to I think execution and, you know, how well we defend for 40 minutes and rebound the ball. You're going to have to rebound the ball against this team because they are very active.

**Q. Some of the guys on your team here have been through this Big Ten grind where it didn't go so well. I'm just curious what the mood of the team has been the last couple days and have you had to do anything special to make sure that they are not getting down and staying focused.**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, you lose a game like Penn State, and you get some heads hanging and stuff. But you can't hang your head. The Big Ten is not going anywhere, you know what I'm saying, guys. It's what it is, and you can't -- you can't reflect on what happened in the past. You know, that's easy to do, man, you know, and it's my job to try to keep them from that.

You know, that's what we're fighting right now, you know what I mean. This team struggled in the Big Ten last year and I'm trying to get them over the hump where they are not struggling. We are not playing bad basketball, but Wisconsin and Penn State were both winnable games. I've got to get them over the hump in those games. We've got to keep grinding, practicing, watching film and learning and everybody's got to be committed, man. That's the only way that you're going to get out of the rut that you've been in.

**Q. Trey Galloway, is he ready to go tomorrow, and what does he provide that maybe you've been missing?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, I mean, he gives us energy. He can defend a little bit. He can make a shot here and there. So I mean, again, it just gives us an active body that brings a little bit more energy. That's a plus. He can guard some of the bigger, you know, twos and threes. So that helps a little bit in that regard, and he's not bad on the ball at pick-and-roll.

We've just got to work him back in slowly. But it's not him; it's going to take everybody that we dress that plays -- that steps out on that floor to be ready to play. That's what it's all about.

But it's good to have him back, because he's a big piece to our puzzle, as well.

**Q. You mentioned the Wisconsin and Penn State and Syracuse games as well, were all games you could have won but didn't. Is there a common theme? Is it belief? Is it just having one guy to go out and make plays when you really need a play? What is the reason?**

MIKE WOODSON: I think what you just said, it's believing that you can win. This team has been stuck in a rut a little bit, and you know, we've got to get them over -- I truly believe that if we had won the Syracuse or the Wisconsin game, they are in a different light. You know, they think totally different.

You know, we didn't win them, so again, we've got to figure out how to stay where we are at home, and then next time we're back out on the road, we have to figure eventually, I think we'll break the ice. That's what I'm hoping, because this team needs it, you know what I mean. These guys, they have had some tough go at it in the past, and they get down on themselves a little bit. It's my job as a coach to try to keep them up and keep them ready to play.

**Q. You mentioned just the halfcourt offense earlier. It seems like you obviously have placed a lot of emphasis on Trayce doing a good job of passing out of the double team. Are teams changing how they are doubling him? Are they changing who they are doubling him with, and is that why it's harder to find Parker and Miller?**

MIKE WOODSON: No, not really. I think they are just staying home and saying, Trayce, it's okay to beat us. You think about in the Penn State game, I mean, hell, he had

18 looks down there. I think he shot one jumpshot. And he had a lot of, you know, a lot of good shots around the rim that he didn't finish. And that wasn't from double teams, you know what I mean. Before the double team even got there, he was beating the double teams a lot. So they pretty much stayed home on Parker and Miller and said, okay, Trayce, you know, see what you got, you know what I mean. Hell, a bucket or two here or there, that's a different ballgame as far as I'm concerned.

I mean, he missed a few little bunnies down there but he made some for us to keep us where we needed to be. I mean, but he's been double-teamed, guys, from the low side. He's been doubled from guys cutting and coming back. He's been doubled just from the ball thrown into him, you know, when we enter -- when the team enters the ball, they just come from the ball and double. I mean, he's seen all kinds of looks in that regard. But I wouldn't leave Miller or Parker, either, you know what I mean. They are shot makers. I thought Penn State did a good job of saying, all right, Trayce, you've got to beat us. And you know, we missed some good looks. I mean, he had some good looks down there I thought. I even thought the last play we went to him was a good shot for him.

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