

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

## Race Thompson

## Xavier Johnson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 74, Penn State 57

RACE THOMPSON: That's something we have to bring every single game as starters. That's the main thing. We just talked about it for the past two days of getting off to better starts because I think Coach said we were, like, minus 47 over the past four games or something, or however many games, so I think we just talked about that as a unit, and we came out, we responded. That was good for us.

**Q. Did you guys as starters -- Woodson said he challenged you. Trayce said something about it after the last game. Did you take it personally? Was it about energy? Was it about tactics? What was it?**

RACE THOMPSON: Yeah, I think we took it personally. I think it really was just about energy, just calming down a little bit, playing with more energy, but at the same time being composed and really keying in on what they're doing. Again, it really just starts for us on defense. If we can get some stops, we're feeling good about ourselves, and then our offense will come.

**Q. Xavier, can you discuss your role, floor game, 19 points, 6 assists? What were you seeing? What was working for you? Also, what does it mean to have a game like this going into Maryland where I know you're going to be probably playing in front of some family and friends as well, and how many people are you going to have down there?**

XAVIER JOHNSON: My game is to get downhill first. Coach told me to get downhill, make plays, and that's what I did tonight, and I made the correct read. Going into Maryland, I do have a lot of family down there. It's only 45 minutes from being home. I know it's going to be a good environment overall. I'm still going to play with my team and go and win the game on the road, another one.

**Q. How much is that defensive intensity that you**

**showed early, though, kind of contribute to the offensive run as well?**

XAVIER JOHNSON: That's a big part of who we are as Indiana. When we first came in, our number one thing was defense. That's the first thing we worked on, and that's what got us to this point in the season of winning as many games.

**Q. Race, from your perspective, we asked how Xavier has changed things for you guys just over the course of the season, but in particular over the last seven, eight games. It feels like he has gone up another gear. What does he add for you, especially at the offensive end, just as a whole team when you see him playing as well as he has been?**

RACE THOMPSON: He is getting everybody involved, and also getting himself involved when he needs to. He really helps set the pace of the game, and then again, it starts for him on defense. I know if I see X playing defense and he is getting a steal, I know he is going down to finish or dish to somebody. Really he is just getting everybody involved, making everybody feel good. I think he really helps our team. I think he will continue to do that.

**Q. Xavier, as a point guard, you are responsible for bringing energy, for doing a lot of things, having the ball in your hand. These last three games you have averaged 17 points, four and a half assists, four and a half rebounds, only one and a half turnovers. What has been this calming influence for you all of a sudden?**

XAVIER JOHNSON: Like I said, I know my level of play wasn't as good at first. I just knew I was in a slump, and I knew I was going to come out of it, and I was going to keep playing and keep getting better. I know when my dad came up here, my family came up here, I needed that because I haven't seen them for a long time, and my teammates always pick me up. We're just going to keep getting better, and I'm going to keep playing with my teammates and keep believing in them because I know they believe in me.



