

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Head Coach Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 74, Penn State 57

Q. -- flicking at both ends of the floor, this is what we can do to Big Ten teams?

MIKE WOODSON: It's probably our best game in terms of a half that we put together in the Big Ten. We had some earlier games this season when we started where we had halves where we were holding opponents to less than 20 points, but to do it against a Big Ten team, man, I thought our coverages, everybody was on par in terms of how we went into the game with a plan. That was on both ends of the floor, but our defense was really, really good the first half.

Q. Coach, what's the diagnosis on Rob Phinisee, and how does that look moving forward?

MIKE WOODSON: Don't know right now. He has to be evaluated probably sometime tomorrow, and somehow we've got to get Khristian ready because he is not able to play either. That's why he didn't play tonight, so we've got to get one of them back. I don't know when, but my theme has been all season it's the next man up. We've just got to mix and match based on who we got in uniform. It's kind of how I look at it.

Q. Is it fair to say Xavier has found more composure, kind of balancing playing fast and also being a facilitator and playing within himself and more under control? If that is correct, what has he done? What's changed?

MIKE WOODSON: I just think the game is starting to slow down a little bit for him. Big Ten is a little bit different than the league he came out. Not that that league is not good. They've got great players and coaches and teams in that league, but the Big Ten forces you to really think about what you are doing. Especially at the point guard spot. I think X is starting to slow down and see things ahead of him, and he is making guys a little bit better around him,

which is kind of nice to see because I've always thought point guards, that's their job and what they are supposed to do, so he is starting to get a little bit better in that area.

Q. Wanted to go back to what you said about Khristian not being ready. Obviously, he has been dressing out. Is it still the lower leg thing? Is it physical that's holding him back right now?

MIKE WOODSON: It's strictly physicalness that's holding him back. He would have played tonight if I could have stuck him in there after Rob went down, but he can't play.

Q. You talked about how much you demand out of your point guards. How have you seen, I guess, Xavier just kind of grow in that role of being able to run a team and get guys in the right places?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, it's still a work in progress, man, but he has gotten better. His last three ball games have been pretty positive and productive. I just need him to continue to grow, man, because we're going to need him as we this journey in the Big Ten.

Q. First half you guys were really locked in. Three-point defense, 1 of 10, and then the second half they made a few. Curious what changed in your mind with regards to that and if that's something you want to look at going forward?

MIKE WOODSON: I wasn't real happy about it. I don't think that they did anything differently from an offensive standpoint. They were still trying to execute just like they did the first half. I just thought the first half we were locked in. We had three to four times we had miscues on switches, and they made us pay for them. Again, you've got to stay with the game plan all the way through for 40. That's what you got to commit yourselves to for 40 minutes. I thought we played 20 good minutes tonight.

Q. We talked about this team after big wins and then having to learn how to live with that success. How have you seen them grow in these last couple of games with it, and how do you expect them to respond to this game going on the road now?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, the road is what it is. We're playing Maryland on the road. They're playing a lot better. I just thought yesterday's practice was a gut check practice. It was a practice that we really kind of went at it a little bit and worked on some things that I thought we needed to work on preparing for this game, and now Penn State is behind us, and we've got to get ready for Maryland, which, like I said, they're playing great, man, and you're going to have to commit for 40. We'll put a game plan together, and we've got to commit ourselves for 40 minutes to go down there and get a win. It's not going to be easy, but we're capable of winning on the road. We proved that in Nebraska.

Q. This is by far the best three-point shooting of the entire season. 10 of 13, 76%. What changed tonight? Was it just a case of just making the shots?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, I thought the ball movement was great the first half. When Trayce was doubled and Race got doubled some, the ball was moving, and the defense really couldn't catch up, so we got good looks that way. We got some early in transition where we got stops and the ball came up, and we was able to get what we call quick strikes for threes. Hey, I've never told us not to shoot threes. We've bot to shoot them when you're open, and I thought Parker and Miller and X, everybody who shot them, they were in tune and knocked them down, and we're going to need them to continue to do that because we need the three ball. Ain't no doubt about that. We can't go 4 for 17 like we did against Michigan.

Q. When Rob actually got hurt in the first half, what did you see on that play, and did he say anything as he was coming off?

MIKE WOODSON: I didn't see the play. I just saw him when he came up limping. He wasn't really moving, so I figured he had done something. Again, I don't know. I've got to go back in there and see what's going on. I'm sure he will be evaluated tomorrow.

Q. Michael Durr didn't play tonight. Is there anything going on with him physically, or was it just a coach's decision?

MIKE WOODSON: Coach's decision.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports