

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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## Jalen Hood-Schifino

### Press Conference



**Q. Curious, with Coach Marshall, what you've kind of learned so far working with him and if there's anything specific that you want to try to accomplish this summer with conditioning and strength and all that?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Aside from him being a strength coach, he's just a great guy. Outside of, you know, being in the weight room he does a great job of sending motivational messages.

And as far as in the weight room, he does a great job with us on our body making sure we are staying on top of our nutrition.

So overall it's been great for me. Through my time being here, I got here on June 2nd and when we started our workouts from then until now, I see a difference in my body, so it's been great.

**Q. Based on what you know about how Coach Woodson wants to play this year, what do you think the chances or probability is that you play a lot alongside Xavier Johnson, and what do you think you have to do with your game to make sure that that happens?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: I mean, the way he wants to play fits my game perfect. He wants to play fast, get the ball out. For me, playing alongside Xavier Johnson that would be great. I think we both complement each other's games pretty well.

Prior to coming into Indiana, I already had a relationship with Xavier. So we kind already built that bond. So it get here now and to practice with him and kind of get a feel for everybody, I think it's going to be great.

**Q. I guess now that you've been practicing with the team for a few weeks now, what do you think the biggest learning curve or adjustment to your game will be transitioning from high school to college?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: For me playing at the highest

level of high school basketball, playing at Montverde, a powerhouse, we were playing against some of the top guys in the country. So obviously transitioning from high school to college is definitely a big difference.

But for me honestly I already had the body and worked on my game all the time. So really just some of the small things, some of the terminology everything and but I'm pretty much good, just learning every day, learning from the older guys and watching film, and pretty much that's it.

**Q. To keep going on what you said about Montverde, obviously when you were there, your first year obviously you had some guys ahead of you and you were coming off the bench. You've played next to a lead guard. You had to play a whole bunch of different roles there. What was the value of that for your game, and how much do you think it helped specifically with the possibility of having to play next to X, back up X, being a guy that's going to have to play point and 2, as well? How do you think all of the experiences you had at Montverde are going to prepare you for that?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Yeah, that situation at Montverde my junior year is different from the situation now.

But for sure that year at Montverde, my junior year, was definitely a different year for me. Like you said, coming off the bench a little bit and not getting as much minutes as I would like was different.

But I think it was good because sometimes you might be put in situations like that. I think that prepared me for whenever, if I have to come across that in the future.

**Q. You're our foremost authority on Malik and you played with him the last year and so forth. So you has he adjusted and what will he bring to Indiana?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Malik is a really good person and a great player. He works really hard, and that was my high school teammate obviously, so I know his game really well.



Like I said, he works really hard, and from being up there with Indiana, I know Coach is going to get him right and he's going to be locked in and he's going to have a big year.

**Q. So here we are, late June. Between now and early November when the season starts, what are the two or three things you really want to try to work on hardest with your game in regards to trying to get everything as fine-tuned as well as you can by November?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Everything, really. I'm still young so I feel like every part of my game has to get better. For me, keeping up with my body, being a leader, being vocal.

At the college level, you have to be vocal, especially at the point guard position. Just pretty much just keep doing what I'm doing. Getting better at everything. Keep shooting the ball. Everything, really.

**Q. Curious about your relationship with Xavier. You mentioned that earlier. Can you expound on that, how you knew him? And also, what's it been like practicing against older guys?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: I'm from Pittsburgh and he played at Pitt, so me and him had kind of already built a relationship. I started to talk to him like through inis it a is it a gram and I even played pickup with him when I was in Pittsburgh a couple times. Just building that relationship was pretty good. So for me coming here, me just continue that relationship.

And getting here, playing against these older guys, I've been playing against older guys all my life, so it's definitely good. It's been great learning from everybody, you know, getting out there with the guys.

**Q. Somebody asked you about Malik, but I'm just curious, your other two classmates now that you have a little time with them, maybe you've watched them or gotten to play with them in open gyms at different times but now that you've spent quality time around CJ and Kaleb, you've spent time with them in the weight room. What are your impressions of those guys?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Before coming to Indiana, I watched a lot of film on those guys but sometimes film can be a little different from seeing them in person.

From seeing them in person and being around them, they are pretty good. CJ is a great player. Kaleb is a great player. They still have work to do like all of us, but they are going to be good. I think they are going to be good for us

this year, and just got to keep grinding.

**Q. I guess as far as what you've been able to do on the court, have you guys been working mostly on offensive stuff, defensive stuff? What are kind of the first steps that you guys have been taking this summer, and what's the biggest thing that you've learned from Mike Woodson so far?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Yeah, everything, defense and offense, but really getting up and down. Coach Woodson is big on, you know, live actions because then, you know, that's how you get better.

So we do a lot of scrimmaging, and some of the biggest things I've learned is he just want his guys to play hard. He's big on defense, which that's a big part of my game. So I think this year is going to be a really good year for sure.

**Q. Wanted to ask you, you just got on campus with that freshman class, so how have the older guys and Coach Woodson coached and you welcomed you to Bloomington?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: It's been great. Obviously we are the new guys, so the coaches are tough on us and they push us but it's like tough love. Outside of the basketball court, they are loving. We have great relationships with each other.

But whenever we're on the court, they are real tough on us. Make sure we're on top of our game, because Coach Woodson always says for us we have to speed up the process. It's been good.

**Q. Curious from a basketball perspective, what do you feel like you need to improve on the most this summer, and what do you think the biggest adjustment is going to be next season when you start playing games?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Like I said before, I'm still young and I have to get better at everything. I'm nowhere near as good as I can be. Just keep working on everything. I think the next, you know, thing I really have to showcase is probably my 3-ball, which I'm in the gym every day working on it.

This year, I think people had get to see a lot of my game. You know, how much better I've got since the high school season and how much more expanded by game has got. I think it's going to be good.

**Q. I've seen a lot of national people say you're one of, if not the best defenders in your class, especially on**

**the ball. Tell us why that part of the game is so important to you.**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: I'm just very competitive and I hate for somebody to ever say they got the best of me. So just growing up, I always played against older competition. Played against my older cousins. When I was younger, they used to like bully me, so I always took it to heart. So as I grew up, I always wanted to be the best defender and make sure no one ever got the best of me.

**Q. We've heard you described as a point guard. Do you consider yourself a point guard, or 2-guard or just a guard? And is there somebody out that your game, you style it upon or it's similar to?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Yeah, I'm a definitely a true point guard. But at the end of the day I'm a basketball player. I'm versatile. I can play wherever the coach need me to play, but I'm definitely a point guard, I love getting my teammates involved, love leading.

As far as players I look at, old school players, I like looking at Jason Kidd's highlights, Kobe, and then current day I like looking at Chris Paul, Devin Booker and Luka.

**Q. How did you become a better point guard at Montverde? What are some things about the position that you came to understand playing at that level and with those guys and with that calibre of competition and also teammates, how did you get to be a better player and make your game as a point guard better there?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: I would just say that every day grind, just the practices, every day you're going against the five-star guys in high school, so it's just good. The coaches did a good job of pushing us, and you know, I think overall, you know, it gave me a big leap to where I am now, and it's definitely helped me now that I'm in college.

**Q. How much did you watch Indiana Basketball last year and Coach Woodson's first year? I know there's going to be a lot after additions to that this year, but how much did you watch, and how much are you looking forward to being a part of that system, both offensively and defensively?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: I mean, I watched everything. I'm big on film. I like to see.

Last year, I like to see how they played and how Coach Woodson coaches and everything just to see if I can fit in. And I still watch the games now to make sure I'm on top of everything, just looking at some of the defensive schemes,

looking the offense.

Now that I'm here, it's great. I get to watch and actually like break down film with the coaches and everything, so it's been good.

**Q. When Malik decommitted from Florida, what was your recruiting pitch for him to come join you at Indiana?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: So I was with him, actually, when he decommitted. So as soon as that happened, I literally text my coaches, I was like, we have to get Malik. As soon as I said that, the coaches got on him and they did a great job of recruiting him.

**Q. You had mentioned when you were younger playing against guys that were bigger than you and kind of getting pushed around. Like are there any memories that you have, I guess, whether it's playing pickup or anything like that that kind of sticks out to you that helped shape your toughness?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: It was literally just every day playing in my grandma's backyard, my grandma and granddad's backyard, going against my other cousins Sherron and DeAndre, they pushed me every day. I was always the young kid, and all their older friends, my big bros, they would be up there and they would always bully me.

It got to a point where I got good and I was able to compete with them, so it just helped me and really bred me into who I am now.

**Q. How old were you when you were finally able to beat them?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: I would say 12 I was able to compete with them and then once I hit probably eighth, ninth grade, I was like wing some games a little bit. But now, it's like, you know, I don't lose no more.

**Q. We touched on this a little bit earlier, but being at Montverde and one of the most prestigious and well-renowned programs in the country, how has that helped you transition and how do you think that's going to help you transition into your freshman year?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Like you said, it's a prestigious program and Coach Kevin Boyle and Coach Rae Miller have been in it, for, what, 30-plus years. They have the track record; if you look at the players they have, they have NBA All-Stars and things of that nature.

But like I said, the everyday grind at Montverde, people don't know what we put into it, like the practices. It's almost like college practice; you're practicing three-plus hours every day, and it really prepared me for now. Now that I'm in college, it's almost like I'm at Montverde but at a college level. It's been great and I'm very thankful for Monday adversity.

**Q. You've been in college for the first time here this month. What are your favorite things about the City of Bloomington and the new campus?**

JALEN HOOD-SCHIFINO: Everything. Just the love and support from everybody, and really just for me, my favorite thing is being in the gym. Just grinding, working on my game and being around the fellas and the coaches.

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