

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Malik Reneau

Press Conference



Q. Can you talk about Clif Marshall and what he's done for you?

MALIK RENEAU: -- with Coach Clif and the need to compete with the older guys because coming from high school to college is a big difference and the playing style and the toughness, so we have to get stronger and Coach Clif is helping us do that.

Q. You mentioned competing with the older guys, imagine that means you've probably got a lot of run-ins with Trayce Jackson-Davis, what's that been like so far and what similarities do you see in each other's games and things that you've learned already and that you think you can pick up from playing against him and being around him?

MALIK RENEAU: Well, from Trayce, we are both lefties, so I keep in mind what he does as a lefty. He's real dominant down low and understands how he can control his man in the post, and he just finds a way to get easy baskets down low and I look at that and I see how I can have a resemblance to Trayce being tough and being dominant down low.

And then when it comes to competing with the older guys, just really like not falling into all the trash talking and just really ultimately playing my game and that helps me play -- compete against the older guys and I think I do a good job of that.

Q. Continuing on with going up against Race and Trayce, has there been a moment in scrimmages going up against those guys where you realize, hey, I can't get away with some of the things I used to do in high school or just kind of the changes in your game that you've had to make going up against guys like that?

MALIK RENEAU: It's been a lot of changes. I mean, I've been going against Race and Trayce for two weeks now. You can tell the physical difference from high school and college. It's hard to bump bodies with Race and Trayce because they are all solid and it's not easy to move them.

So I've got to, you know, I have to find different moves or get past them with speed and not just overpower them and that's where I found a big difference and from high school and from college. I mean, I feel like it's more a finesse game and not just trying to back down your man. So that's what I found.

Q. I hope you're doing well. Who has been the biggest influence in your basketball career, and can you go into some depth as to why that is?

MALIK RENEAU: Biggest influence, I'd say my parents. Both my parents, they played basketball, and I know just looking at my mom when she was coming up, she was a good basketball player herself. Just looking at my mom and my dad play, I just wanted to be a basketball player, too.

Q. Curious, you obviously are familiar with Jalen, playing with him in high school but you're not as familiar with CJ and Kaleb coming in. Just curious your impressions of both of those guys, and maybe what stands out in terms of their games and what maybe they impressed you with since you've been able to play with them?

MALIK RENEAU: You said CJ and Kaleb, right.

Q. Yes?

MALIK RENEAU: CJ and Kaleb, they are both guys on and off the court. We all play with a little toughness and chip on our shoulder, which is great, especially when you're competing against the older guys and I feel like we do a great job of really competing. That's the biggest goal, we need to compete.

Then when it comes to their skills and abilities, they all can pass, shoot and dribble and they all do what's necessary to win. That's what I love about playing with my guys.

Q. How have the older guys helped the freshmen get used to the college game and the college life?



MALIK RENEAU: I would say, just being around us and helping us out on and off the court. Trying to do stuff and go out and go eat, or go bowling, and just team bond and do stuff like that together. I think we do a good job of that.

Then on the court, really just talking to the freshmen and telling them what to do and what Coach wants us to do on the court and stuff like that. Just really helping us out all on and off the court.

Q. You've already talked about kind of going up against Race and Trayce, and just overall in the front court, there's a lot of talented players between you, those two, and a few other guys. How do you feel like that kind of competition and that sort of competitiveness will help you going forward?

MALIK RENEAU: It's going to help me a lot, it's going to help not only me but everybody take their game to the next level and that's what we need, to take our game to the next level step-by-step and compete against all these other good schools around the country.

Q. Give me three or four things basketball-wise that you're most confident in having impact your freshman year, certain skills, certain moves, certain things that you feel that's going to be something I'm going to be able to have as a freshman once games get going?

MALIK RENEAU: I'd say having a winning mentality, competing on the court. You know, doing whatever it takes to help my team win, not only you know trying to score the basketball but help on the defensive end, set good screens to the point guards and stuff like that and just try to do all the little stuff and that's what's going to help my game expand into like scoring and that's what's going to build my confidence up to be able to score the basketball and to play defense and all that stuff.

Q. What are the parts of your game that you're working on and you want to expand, and connected to that, I know you're not all the way into practice but how are you functioning positionally? How much five have you been playing versus four?

MALIK RENEAU: Actually, I mean, I've been playing, you know, I've been playing the four and the five. I mean, going between four and five but I've been playing the four most of the time, going up against Race a lot, and just being able to improve my shooting from pass to arc, and improve my three-point shot, and just being confident with my jump shot and working on attacking close-outs, and staying where I'm comfortable at in the post, too. Just trying to touch on everything. But mostly my jump shot.

Q. Curious in terms of the upperclassmen, have they talked to the younger guys in terms of what goals and what they want to achieve as a team next season at all? And also for you individually, I know you're not worried about numbers and things like that, but what are your expectations out of yourself as you prepare for your first college season?

MALIK RENEAU: Well, the older guys, they are definitely trying to teach the younger guys how to compete at a high level all the time with ultimately trying to get the Big Ten title and stuff like that.

So it's been a big expectation for the freshmen to really sponge in everything that Coach Woodson and all older guys are talking about and trying to help us improve on, and I'd say -- what's the second part to that question? I'm sorry.

Q. I know you're not worried about your numbers specifically or anything like that, but curious what you expect out of yourself this season. You're going into a new situation and you're not exactly sure what your role is going to be but what do you expect out of yourself going into this year?

MALIK RENEAU: To be a spark player for my teammates, whether it's coming off the bench or starting the game off or whatever it is, just really being that spark player for the team.

Q. You said both your parents played basketball. Did they play in college, and what was it like growing up with two parents that played basketball?

MALIK RENEAU: Well, my mom played college basketball. My dad is from Belize. He didn't play college basketball. But.

Growing up with my mom and dad, they took me to the outside courts all the time and played against them, and they always beat me in one-on-ones and stuff like that.

It was fun growing up because they taught me the game early, and trained me early, so I didn't have to really, you know, try to pay for a trainer or anything to help me out with that type of stuff.

Q. I wanted to go back to your training and development with cliff Marshall. I know when I saw you at the team camp several weeks ago, you looked quite a bit different than some of the other freshmen. I think you came in kind of physically further along maybe. Curious if your plan was a little bit different. Were you really looking to come in and add weight or

what was the main points of emphasis over this month?

MALIK RENEAU: When I sat down with Coach Clif it was really maintaining my weight and building muscle and trying to stay at a good weight, not trying to gain weight or lose weight, because I came in already built and had that weight on me. So I'm really just maintaining my weight, getting stronger in the weight room, and that's, yeah, that's pretty much it.

Q. Last week CJ talked about the defensive end and how much work and emphasis he put on that as he's transitioning to playing the college game. For you what is your development going on the defensive end and what have you learned in this month or so you've been really on campus and what have you learned in that aspect?

MALIK RENEAU: It's a big difference from high school basketball to college basketball on the defensive end. A lot of terminologies you need to learn and just ultimately buying into what Coach Woodson got to say because they are one of the best college -- one of the best defensive teams last year. So it was really buying into what Coach Woodson saying and understanding the defensive scheme he's going through at the time.

Q. Obviously having a prior relationship with Jalen in high school, can you just touch a little bit about what he does on the court that makes him so good and talented on both ends of the floor and what you think he can bring to the team this year?

MALIK RENEAU: Jalen, he's a very unselfish player. Finds his teammates. Knows how to get his shots -- get open shots for himself, and he's just -- he's an all-around player on the defensive end. He pick up the ball 94 feet. He's going to defend their best players and he's just going to be a spark plug regardless if he's starting or he's coming off the bench, and he's just a great guy to be around.

Q. You were just talking about working out with your parents when you were younger. Were there any like really big lessons that they tried to hit home to you as you were trying to start your basketball career?

MALIK RENEAU: Really, I'd say just staying focused on myself and not worrying about other people on social media and stuff like that. I would say that was the biggest thing, about me trying to worry about what other kids were doing and not what I was focused on, so I think that's probably the big -- one of the biggest lessons. Just worrying about myself and staying in the gym and locked in.

Q. Going back to what you said about the skills you've been working on, you said you've been shooting outside a lot. How much have you been operating on the perimeter versus the post? How much of a focus has that been for you and are you spending a lot of time defending on the perimeter as well and how is that going?

MALIK RENEAU: Yes, I've been playing outside. The way Coach Woodson's plan style is, the four is outside on the perimeter a lot of times. I've been working on my perimeter game trying to guard the one through the five, and just being able to -- be able to switch on defense and to help expand my game might help expand my range for offensive end and to be able to knock down threes when I'm wide open.

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