

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Saturday, October 29, 2022

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

## Mike Woodson

### Postgame Media Conference



EXHIBITION WITH MARIAN

MIKE WOODSON: I'll just take questions. Let's go.

**Q. Jalen, what was it about him, what did he do to a starting spot as a freshman?**

MIKE WOODSON: He's competing. He competed when we first started five months ago, and he's put himself in that position. You know, I didn't know who was going to start but you know, I thought having two guards that can handle the ball and make plays, and then you can take them out and play them with the second unit.

I played a lot of X and Jalen together, not a lot, but some. But I played Tamar Bates and Gallo together, a lot, as one, two, however way you guys perceive positions.

**Q. Tamar Bates?**

MIKE WOODSON: Tamar Bates and -- not tonight. I'm just talking about since we've been together. And the reason I did that was to give Tamar Bates and Galloway more experience in handling the basketball and bringing it up the floor and being decision-makers, and you know, my coaches probably thought I was crazy in doing that.

But it's been good for us because I think it's going to pay off in the long run. I'm not saying that I'll play -- I'll play them two together, but probably with a point guard, either X or Jalen. But Jalen earned the right to start. He's put in the work.

**Q. About Jalen and Malik, you were strong defensively as a team a year ago, how smooth has the transition been with the team when they are defending the way you want them to?**

MIKE WOODSON: That's going to come more and more with practicing games, but I thought tonight, everybody was pretty much on par in terms of how we defended. I look at Jalen and Malik, they came out of a system in Montverde that that coach is a damned good coach, and he pushes

guys to play hard and do the right things on both ends of the floor. I think the transition for them coming in, especially for Jalen has been easy for him because the kid works.

Malik, I thought tonight was fantastic. He did a lot of good things defensively. He rebounded the ball, and we know he can score the ball. So I mean, it was kind of nice. I mean, starting those two guys, first time at the college level, I thought they passed with flying colors tonight.

**Q. Logan was just in here and said last summer maybe he didn't do everything he needed to earn minutes last year. What as a coach did you notice different out of him this off-season and where do you think he's grown the most as a player?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, he's working. You know, he's putting in work but he's got to work more. I mean, and I'm on him about that, and I know I'll never make guys work where and get in where the class work gets in the way. Class is first.

But when you have a minute, ten minutes, 15 minutes where you can get in the gym and get shots and do some things that can enhance what you do to help us, he's got to do that. So that's what I'm on him about more.

But I thought tonight, I told him after the game and in front of everybody, I was just so proud of him because he's hung in there with me and he's caught a lot of help, and he responded.

**Q. You mentioned having run Tamar at the one before. When did you find out you were not going to have Trayce and Tamar and how much did that team from you doing some of the experimentation you wanted to do in this camp?**

MIKE WOODSON: Yesterday I knew that they weren't going to play today once I got to practice. So you just go to Plan B. It's next guy up. That's kind of how I look at it. You know I can't, wait on guys. I mean, I've got to build a team to win, and you know, we'll get Trayce and Tamar back eventually, and then we'll fit them in and do what we



need to do.

**Q. You obviously had a plan to see how this ballclub was going to play today. What impressed you most about today's game?**

MIKE WOODSON: Our defense, in terms of how we communicated. You know, it's tough when you add your young guys to your team, and they have to be a big part of it this season and I'm on them constantly. You guys have to be a sponge. You have to absorb everything that we are trying to get done on both ends of the floor. I thought tonight they did a hell of a job in terms of our switching. We got beat a few times but for the most part, they were competitive, and that's all I can ask.

**Q. You've made it a point of emphasis with Race about hitting some perimeter stuff. He goes three-for-three tonight. How did that make you feel?**

MIKE WOODSON: Makes me feel good, because again, when I came in, I was told he couldn't shoot threes, you didn't want him shooting threes, you didn't want him handling the basketball, and now, he's a player. He's a basketball player now. It's kind of nice.

**Q. You did the closed scrimmage last year against Belmont, I believe it was. This year, two exhibitions. What are the pros and cons in your mind of this approach versus last year?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, it was new for me last year. That was already in play. I had nothing to do with that.

Marian, Steve Downey who is the AD there is a great, great friend of mine for many, many years. I always give him -- I talk about it all the time. In '76 when IU was playing for the national title, I sat at his house. His wife cooked a big-ass pot of chile and man, I probably eight four, five, six bowls of that chile, man. I've been starving ever since. So I'm going to see her here in a few and I'm going to tell her, she's going to get that chile going again.

But no, Steve and I have been friends for a long time, and I'm proud of the job he's done as an AD at Marian and giving them an opportunity. I'm going to do it every year that I'm here; that they can come in here and play.

**Q. You talked earlier about the play of Malik and Jalen, and we knew that they had come from a program that had been pushed playing for national championships, but even with that and seeing them in practice, they are the two leading scorers for you today. As freshmen in their first game, you know how hard that**

**is as a former player. That's got to go impressive to you to see them do that.**

MIKE WOODSON: No, it is impressive. But a lot of it is the fact that they are so in tune in what we are doing, and that's valuable, man, in terms of building a winning team. Everybody has to be on board, and it can't be just about Jalen or about Malik. You know, this is a team, man, and I'm trying to push these guys, along with my staff, to do all the necessary things on and off the court to help us win basketball games.

**Q. All four freshmen get in the game as well as all available scholarship players. I know it's an exhibition, but this is probably the plan going forward when you come to a game like this. How important is it for all those guys to get valuable minutes today?**

MIKE WOODSON: It's important for everybody to play because from a coaching standpoint, I'm still learning and trying to figure out who can do what, even though we've been together five months, you know, practice is different than the game, actually. I've always believed that if you practice well, you play well. And I thought yesterday's practice, we didn't do a whole lot but it was pretty sharp, and the carryover was nice.

Now, if you would have said that two or three days ago and we walked into a game, I would not be making that statement, you know, because we had a terrible practice.

I thought yesterday, everybody was in tune, knowing that we had this game today, and they all came out and performed.

**Q. I know it's a big win for you guys, but you just said practice and games, your first game of the year against a different opponent, what areas of improvement do you see and where can this team get better?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, you can always get better. Defending and rebounding the ball, that's got to stay consistent every time you step out on the floor. Because I know -- I mean, I know it works. Man, if you defend and rebound the ball, you will be in every ballgame. Every game.

Now, if you're making shots and you're making free throws, then it really enhances what you do from a team standpoint. So yeah, we've still got a lot of work to do, man. I've still got to get Trayce back and I've got to get Tamar in the mix. We've got some work still left to be done, a lot of work.

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