

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Monday, November 7, 2022

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Coach Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 88, Morehead State 53

Q. Jalen Schifino plays a team-high in minutes tonight and he's plus 28 and it felt like he was really kind of basically both sides of that starter bench unit. How much of a challenge is it for him to be a guy that can handle the ball for the starters and a guy that did handle the ball for the bench, and how much do you feel you can put on his shoulders?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, a lot was that was because X got in foul trouble. In the St. Francis and Marion game, X was carrying the blunt of the second unit. I kind of want X in with the second unit because he's been around a lot longer than Fino.

I think he can run our ball club, so the fact that he got in foul trouble early, you know, it gave Fino a chance to play more minutes with the second unit, which he can play with any unit. Both of them can.

So I have no problems there. I mean, I feel comfortable now because through the four and a half, five month stretch we've given Tamar Bates and Galloway an opportunity to handle the ball a lot.

So you can even play them two together. I feel good about our perimeter play and who plays what -- any position really.

Q. You guys only put up 11 threes tonight, but shot 61% from the field. You were blistering from the field. Are you okay with that number? Is there a certain number you want to put up as long as it's efficient and playing within the framework? Because nothing was forced.

MIKE WOODSON: Make no mistake about it, our strength -- and this is no knock against them -- we were a bigger team. Our strength is playing inside out. I mean, it's no secret. I'm not trying to hide that.

And they doubled some and we were able to get the ball

out to some of our guys to make shots, and Miller made a couple in transition, which we were capable of doing that as well.

So, I mean, I thought it was a solid game. You put up 88 points, I just don't like the fact that we're missing free throws. That's really bothering me as a coach.

Q. In the first half they made some threes; in the second half you took that away from them plus you forced 21 turnovers. What was your evaluation of how the you guys defended?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, you hold them to 24 points the second half, I say defensively we did a solid job. I thought our switching, we got burned a couple times, but for the most part I thought our switching was on par.

And we rebounded the ball a little bit better. We got to get better in that area, too, man, because this was a close game. I don't know what the rebounding was, but it was fairly close. I know they were up I think one at halftime, so we got to get better. Come out with -- I got to get our guards helping our bigs rebound.

Q. Malik Reneau with 15 points 17 minutes. Curious your evaluation of him in his college debut.

MIKE WOODSON: He's been solid ever since he put on the uniform. It's kind of nice to see, man.

I told you, the freshman, him and Jalen, they don't play like freshmen. They act like they belong. Kaleb came in who hadn't played really much, came in and was solid when he got if the game. CJ has been solid through the Marion and St. Francis run.

So I got a lot of pieces. I just got to figure it out as we go along from a coaching standpoint based on who is playing and how they're playing.

Q. Coach, Race talked about how it really took these guys a little bit of time to settle into the game tonight. Did you really see a moment where it clicked for them, or was it just a thing where it was just as time went on



they needed to gel a little bit together on the court?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, starting the second half I thought -- again, I mean, this was the first game for these guys. I don't know if they were jittery or not. I thought we came out with a great start, you know, but you got to give Morehead State some credit. They didn't lay down. They fought early.

But I thought the second half we turned it up from a defensive standpoint, did what we had to do to secure the win.

Q. Miller Kopp had a couple threes tonight. How much dramatically better does he make your team when he is hitting threes for you guys?

MIKE WOODSON: Everybody. I mean, when you got good looks, I expect you to make them. I mean, he made two big ones to kind of expand our lead, but I think all the guys that are shooting the three ball on our team can make it.

That's just how I feel after watching them the last four and a half, five months.

So we just -- you know, when we got them, we just got to knock them down. That's kind of how I look at it.

Q. Can you talk a little bit about how much more depth you might have this year with the addition of those freshmen and all the guys who came back who got the experience under you last year? Seemed like the guys, when they first came out, felt like they had 10, 11 starters.

MIKE WOODSON: Well, we are deeper this season than we were last season. Again, everybody was new last year. I was new. Those guys last season were trying to figure me out, and the guys that came back kind of know who I am now.

Now it's just getting the four freshmen up to speed. Again, I like everything about our freshmen because they are competitive. They compete. They like to compete.

We're longer. More athletic than we were last season. That helps in the college game, I think.

Q. I want to ask specifically, there was a lineup a couple times in the first half, Trey, Malik, Tamar, Jalen, and Jordan, that had I guess a few runs, good runs together. What specifically do you like about that lineup and what they can do?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, we are big. I mean, I think about three that you mentioned up front, that's a big lineup. Again, I haven't had a chance to really play Malik and Trayce together a lot, and let alone Geronimo along with those three.

But, Hey, as a coach I'm still learning, and you are liable to see a lot different lineups based on the talent we have. All I'm telling our guys is just be ready to play, you know, because if I see you not giving it to us, then I got to go somewhere else and get it.

That's just how I look at it from a coaching standpoint.

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