

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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## Coach Mike Woodson

### Press Conference



**Q. Miller Kopp talked after the game, and he mentioned how getting that first loss out of the way isn't a positive, but it can remind everyone that anyone can beat anyone in the Big Ten. What do you think that did for your guys to give them a kick in the rear or a boost?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, it's not just the Big Ten. I think you can be beaten by anybody in college basketball if you don't come to play. For sure the Big Ten because there's so many good teams and good coaches.

He's kind of right on target. We can't play like that, especially on the road. I thought we did some good things after watching the tape really the night of the game. After the game we watched it on the way back, and then we watched it again yesterday with the team.

There was some good things, but I just thought we got out-toughed. That was more glaring to me than anything.

**Q. If you see this theme of teams doubling Trayce, emphasizing the paint real heavy. I know you said you've got to make shots, but what other things are you focused on offensively to kind of counteract that move?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, there's not a whole lot you can focus in on. The bottom line is you've got to make shots, guys.

If somebody is posting the ball and he's getting double-teamed, if he's double-teamed down low, if he's double-teamed out top, the ball has got to move around and it's going to fall in somebody's hands, and they've got to make a shot. It's just that simple. It's not scientific, guys. It's not. There's nothing magical about it. You can be double-teamed down low; you can be double-teamed out top, on the side, which we were double-teamed out top. We were double-teamed down low. Guys got to make shots.

We had some good looks, we just didn't knock them down.

**Q. Looking ahead to Arizona, one of the most efficient offenses in the country not only shooting the ball but getting multiple guys involved, what are the keys defensively for you to really slow down that offense and kind of make it uncomfortable for their guards and big guys?**

MIKE WOODSON: I haven't even looked at Arizona. I'm facing Nebraska right now. That's where my mind and heart is.

I never jumped a game ahead when I've got a game right there staring me in my face. I would never do that as a coach. I can't give you any information on Arizona right now. I really can't. I've seen them play a number of times, but my focus is not there, it's on Nebraska.

**Q. When you got here, you talked about restoring the program and kind of the glory of IU basketball, and you talked about wanting to play the UCLAs and Kentuckys of the world and that sort of thing. What is good about having an Indiana program in the top 15, playing the North Carolinas and the Arizonas and the Kansases of the world? What is good about that for college basketball?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, it's good for our fan base, number one, and if you've got a good enough team that can compete at that level, why not give it a shot. As a player and as a coach, I've never feared any team or any players, so I think we're good enough to beat anybody in the country if we commit for 40 minutes on both ends of the floor. Why not play the Kentuckys and the Carolinas and the Kansases.

I think it's good for basketball. It's good for viewership, and it's definitely good for our fan base. They love that. I don't see anything wrong with it.

**Q. You grew up in a state and time when college basketball was really in a golden age with Purdue, Notre Dame and Indiana all really playing good basketball. You're in a situation where you've got two teams that are in the top 15 in the men, two teams that**



**are in the top 5 in the women and two teams that are knocking on the door to get in the top 25. What does that say about the state of college basketball in the state of Indiana?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, it's great, number one. This is home for me, so anything that goes well here in the state means a great deal to me. I follow Purdue, Indiana, Notre Dame. I followed all those schools my 34 years in the NBA. That's just what you do as a guy growing up here in the state playing basketball. I followed Butler. I've just been that way over the years.

But I think it's good for the state. It gives our state an opportunity to get out and see good basketball being played around the state.

I think it's great. I really do.

**Q. You mentioned the toughness against Rutgers; how much of that when you watched the film showed up in the rebounding, and what in your eyes makes a good rebounding team?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, to me, rebounding is guts and just going -- when that ball goes up, not ball watch. You've got to go find bodies to put your body on to block out, and we didn't do that, especially with our perimeter plays, and our bigs got busted a couple times, too, not putting bodies on bodies.

It's just effort and guts, man, because rebounding is a big part of winning basketball games, and it was so glaring based on what they did to us from a rebounding standpoint, and it started right from the start. We haven't been smacked in the face like that from a rebounding standpoint.

I thought our defense was good, guys. It wasn't too bad. You give up 63 points on the road, you've got to be happy about that.

But rebounding, yeah, we were three turnovers above where we normally are, but I don't think that played a major factor. I just don't think we executed against the press because there were holes where we just didn't get the ball out quick enough, and they capitalized on it.

I mean, we've been pretty good against presses, and Trayce has been pretty good against double teams. But when the ball did come out, we didn't make shots. Looking at the tape, we missed a lot of good open shots.

**Q. With Xavier Johnson just in the last couple days, what have kind of been some of your conversations or**

**messages with him just after he had a great game against Northwestern and then a down performance against Rutgers? What have been your conversations with him lately?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, he had a great game against North Carolina, not Northwestern.

But let me say this: I think X, the fact that we have been training the last really six months now with two point guards, and we've kind of taken the ball out of X's hands a little bit, and not having Jalen on the floor, it put it back in his hands in a dominant way, which is okay.

But you've got to be smart about some of the things you're doing.

I think X was just trying to do too much. He kind of to me converted back to when I first got him, and for the sake of our team, he doesn't have to do a whole lot. He's got to do his part, but he's got to also make sure that everybody is involved and he's not just going off on a tirade doing things that he shouldn't do.

In doubt missing Jalen hurt, having another ball handler to take the slack off a little bit from him, but hey, I don't know when Jalen is going to get back, and we're going to have to figure it out, with X running the point, and Tamar and Galloway happening him -- with CJ helping him handle the basketball out front.

**Q. I know the learning process for freshmen is always difficult and such, but now that Malik has had an opportunity to play in some of these big high-profile games, what is it that you're seeing from him not only in the games but in learning, in practice and stuff in between, and I'm sure you're hoping to get more out of him going forward, right?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, I want much more out of him because I think he's talented enough. He's gotten in foul trouble. The one thing I've learned in dealing with young players is getting them to understand how hard they've got to play. It was obvious in the North Carolina game with Malik -- I mean, he's got to play harder. It's a process in getting them to do that.

But the kid is so talented that it's hard -- you can't sit him down and teach him that way, you've just got to let him learn on the fly. In doing that, he's going to get in some foul troubles. We hope not to get him in foul trouble, but he has been in foul trouble lately, and it's hampered us a little bit in terms of keeping him on the floor when we want him on the floor.

**Q. You had just talked about Indiana getting out-toughed by Rutgers. I know toughness is one of those intangible things, but is there anything that you guys can do to work on that, any drills in practice, any things just to get the most out of your guys in terms of toughness?**

MIKE WOODSON: It ain't magical. I don't know if you guys have ever played sports, you've just got to work them and display it on the floor, display it like we did in the Carolina game. If you look at that game and you say, well, who was the toughest in that game, you're going to say Indiana was the toughest team. They got 50/50 balls, they defended the shit out of Carolina. It wasn't that way against Rutgers; they were the toughest team.

We've been pretty good in that area. Well, we got out-toughed against Rutgers, so we've got to figure out how to not let that happen again going forward. That's the key. There's nothing magical in practice that you can -- I can roll a ball out and say "loose ball drills" like Coach Knight used to do and make you get on the floor and knock the shit out of somebody and getting a loose ball. I can do all those things.

But that don't mean shit to me. You've got to do it in the damn game when it counts. That's when it counts. Not in practice, knocking the shit out of each other, which we do. We beat up each other for almost four months before we actually got an opponent.

Well, we've had some pretty good games going forward, but it wasn't too good for us at Rutgers, and I don't like the fact that we got out-toughed. That just takes guts and hearts to go out, rebound and get 50/50 balls, things of that nature. That's something that we've got to display in the game and not just in practice.

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