

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Saturday, January 14, 2023

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 63, Wisconsin 45

Q. How much of what went on the last couple days in terms of watching things and accountability and such played into today?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, it's been a lot of film work. There's been a lot of practice. A lot of yelling and screaming and trying to get things accomplished in practice. I thought our guys answered the bell tonight. Our backs were somewhat against the wall, and losing three in a row is not fun for anybody. But you know, our guys still had good spirits coming in to practice, and it was a nice carry over today. I mean, we played Indiana defense the way I think we should be playing.

Q. As far as your defense, it looked like it went away from the slot positioning and played guys straight up and helped bring off track --

MIKE WOODSON: No, that's not true. It's what they ran offensively. They ran a bunch of staggers. They had a bunch of pin-aways. They ran what they call chin actions where they cut and move and slice off of people. So there's no nail there. We had other people in position if there was break downs on the basketball, but for the most part, there were not a pick-and-rolls. There were some but not like what we faced here of late. I'll never get away from the nail slot and rim, so that's what we do.

Q. Your defense specifically on Chuck Hepburn, what Jalen did, your thoughts on that?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, I mean, it was a total team effort. He played the whole night in a crowd. He saw bodies when he was coming off. I thought our bigs were excellent when they were up on the pick-and-rolls. We got burned a few times where guards got downhill and made plays, but for the most part we were solid for 40 minutes.

Q. What does it say that even when shot weren't falling, defense is what they concerned themselves with, especially the first half into the second half?

MIKE WOODSON: It's a great question because I know defense wins basketball game and I've been about enough games where neither team could score the basketball and it's a dogfight. You know, everybody is scratching and scraping and trying to get a bucket and can't get it and that's how it was the first half. I don't mind games like that. I told our guys at halftime that the defense was solid and if we can just find some offense to get a cushion, we'd be just fine and I thought we started the second half on a bang. We were great. I think it was an 18-2 run when we started.

Q. Jordan Geronimo in a dogfight kind of game gives that you energy, what you want off the bench. Can you illustrate the good things he did today and what it meant?

MIKE WOODSON: Gallo? I mean, you say Gallo, right? Oh, Geronimo started for us. I thought he played so within himself tonight. It wasn't even funny. He did a lot of good things defensively. He rebounded the ball. He finished around the rim and we're going to need that. He didn't have to guard anyone that was so much bigger than him. We got cross-matched a couple the finals where the big fella took advantage of him on the block. Other than that we were able to keep our match-ups with Trayce and Malik, and when Logan came in, I thought he gave us some positive minutes. It was just a great total team effort.

Q. Staying on the topic of Geronimo, when he's playing the way he is, bringing understand, what does that allow you to bring as a team that you might not be able to do otherwise?

MIKE WOODSON: It's great but it can't just be Geronimo. Everybody has to bring energy. I thought everybody that played tonight, they were touching the offensive man, putting heat on the basketball. We were in great position to help and recover. There was a lot of good things from a defensive standpoint that's been missing. You know, we've just got to build on this game and continue to grow.

Q. Wisconsin seems to want to run teams off the three-point line and take away the paint and give you



the mid-range two. Seems like Jalen excelled in that area today. How important was that aspect of his game?

MIKE WOODSON: It was great. He's been good at that pretty much all season. We took eight threes is all we took and we try to put emphasis on getting the ball inside, which we did that as well.

But Jalen made his mid-range shots. But make no mistake about it, it was our defense that got us in position, defending and rebounding the ball.

Q. What impresses you most about Jalen's mindset, just the way he goes about preparing things and getting ready?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, I'm new at this, guys, and I can only go back to when I was a freshman. He's a little ahead of the game in terms of he's not your typical freshman. He plays like he's been in college a few years. You know, that's a sign of the fact that he's gifted and he's been blessed with the talent and he works. You know, he puts himself in that position to be good.

So I'm not surprised. I saw it his last year at Montverde when he played, he was the same way, just steady. It's been a nice carry overcoming to Indiana wearing that uniform for us.

Q. I know it was a team effort defensively but back on Jordan Geronimo, what was it that made the switch and the change, because he had been making mistakes on the court but tonight I played extraordinarily well and everything seemed to come together for him.

MIKE WOODSON: Well, he looked comfortable. You know, as a coach, when I'm challenging players, you know, sometimes it makes them a little uneasy and get that. But at the end of the day, they have to understand that I'm in their corner and I need them to perform at a high level. It ain't personal, but it's culture; what I call it. I thought he was more relaxed tonight and he did a lot of positive things on both ends of the floor. I just hope he can just grow from this game and continue to play that well.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports