

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

## Mike Woodson

### Press Conference



MIKE WOODSON: We just went a little longer in terms of you know, trying to really prep and get ready for Wisconsin but our practices are pretty much the same every day in terms of -- you know, and I try to challenge, I think Geronimo -- I challenged right before the Wisconsin game that day, and I thought he responded.

**Q. Your last two road games started very well at Iowa, just a matter of sustaining what you started, in your experience, what does this team need to do to sustain throughout all 40 minutes of a game on the road?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, you just said it. You've got to put a 40-minute ballgame together. You know, you can't play in spurts on the road and the one thing I do know, when you play on the road, you've got to defend and rebound the basketball, not turn it over. You know, those -- in that order. If you do that, then you give yourself a chance to win.

**Q. With Miller, wanted to get your insight, in Saturday's game, it was 46 minutes before he took a shot and 28 minutes before he made one, as good a perimeter shooter as he is, do you need to try to run more actions or screens off the ball to try to get him more looks to help this offense a little bit?**

MIKE WOODSON: The guys are not leaving him, I don't mean, when he gets good looks, we just hope that he can knock them down, and about utilize him, I run a couple plays for him here and there. But my focus isn't just on Miller. Everybody has to play a role and when you have shots, you have to be ready to knock them down. For some reason, he's not getting a lot of shots because they are not leaving him. And I wouldn't leave him, either.

Coming out of the double team when Trayce is being doubled teamed and rotations to him are a lot quicker based on who we are playing, he's capable of putting down two or three dribbles and he escape dribbles and getting shots. That's something he's capable of doing more if he gets the opportunity but I'm just not here to create a lot of shots for just Miller. I mean, I'm not here to do that.

But I think our offense flows where everybody touches the basketball and getting an opportunity to shoot the ball.

**Q. Hope you're doing well. When you just talk about having like grueling practices, could you just give a little bit more insight on what that entails, like what in terms of just --**

MIKE WOODSON: Entitlement going to get into all that have. I mean, practices are what it is. We run up and down, we complete, we break down defenses and we break our offense down. I mean, you know, practice is just what it is. It's every day, we try to go. Now, the day before the game, I normally go three hours -- I don't normally do that because I like for them to have their legs but there's a lot of skill session and teaching and things of that nature that we wanted to get in, and we got it in and it took us three hours to do it.

**Q. I don't know if there is much -- you said after Wisconsin, you said it might be awhile before we see X and Race back. Where are those two guys in terms of their recovery?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, I talk to Tim every day. The bottom line; they are not on the basketball floor. They are in rehab. They basically are in the training room doing rehab. You know, I don't go in the training room and be inquire about what they are doing or get involved. That's not my expertise. So when Tim tells me they are ready to get back out on the floor, then I'll let you guys know that. But that's not any time soon, I don't think.

**Q. Also a question about X, with him being out, how have you seen him able to contribute without being on the floor mentally from a leadership perspective, anything like that?**

MIKE WOODSON: That's a great question because I think X sees a lot more now than he's ever saw. You know, by sitting over there watching just like I have to watch during practice in games. And he kind of understands, he made that statement last week about I see what you mean, coach, a lot of the stuff that you were getting about me

about is not being done. I mean, you get a better view of it when your ass is sitting over there on the bench watching what's going on there on the floor. In that regard, he's been great because he's been able to kind of help Jaylen and some of the younger guys on some of the things that he sees that I see. So in that regard, it's been great. I need him back in uniform, though, as quickly as possible.

**Q. Illinois got off to a little bit -- or had a rough patch there but they have won four in a row. What have you noticed from them in these last four games where they have turned the corner and started playing better?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, their defense has picked up. I thought, you know, watching Minnesota last night, they got up from a defensive standpoint and when they turn it over, they make you -- because they get the ball up and down the floor. They have got a nice mixture of guys. They don't have Jack echo check he can but the big fella inside is playing well for them and he does a lot of nice things from a low post standpoint. So Trayce has got to come ready to play. But I like their team. I think they are well-coached. And they are playing at home. Then they went on the road, which they had not won a lot out on the road like that, and so that was a big win for them last night and so they are coming in, four-game winning streak, feeling pretty good about themselves.

**Q. When you prepare for a road game like this, are there any -- are there any specific things that you may be try to focus on with these guys more than others when it's on the road in regards to getting off to good starts, or is every game the same in regards to preparation?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, you know, I thought our last two road games we got off to a decent start. Even the Penn State game, I thought it was back and forth and eventually they just smacked us and we didn't answer the bell. But the main thing is just staying with them, what we do, and playing hard. That's the biggest key on the road.

Like I said earlier, you have to defend and rebound the ball. You can't gift them points. It's hard enough playing on the road but you go out on the road and you throw the ball all over the gym and give them easy opportunities to score, it beats what your defense is all about -- I mean, your offense is all about, rather, because it puts so much pressure on you to get stops every time down on the floor, man. That's tough when you're playing on the road. So your offense has got to be sufficient somewhat to the point where you're not turning it over where you're getting some good shots and good looks. But defensive rebounding has got to be a must.

**Q. It seems like Malik has been more comfortable the last few games. What have you seen out of his development? Are you encouraged with things that he's doing in practice or in games?**

MIKE WOODSON: Well, he's playing harder. I thought the Wisconsin game is probably as hard as he's played all year, really. And that's a big part of -- I think once he figures out how to play hard all the time, then I think basketball will start to come easy for him because he is talented, and he does a lot of good things on the offensive end.

But I thought defensively the other night, he really was trying to make a conscious effort to move his feet and do some of the things we've been asking him to do with some force. You know, we're going to need him, because I think he's such a talented kid. I thought Logan came in the game and gave us some positive minutes, the three or four minutes that he played.

My thing is, is that when we are playing bigger teams, I've got to test Logan and Malik a little bit more and just see where they are.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports