

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Coach Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 86, Ohio State 70

Q. Trayce, it's not like he was bad tonight, but he's not quite as dominant as he's been the last few games. How have you seen this team grow up around him in its ability to play off him when he's playing well but also if a team is really slowing him down more than the average, other guys fill those gaps so easily?

MIKE WOODSON: I think Trayce slowed himself down. He's the one that missed a lot of chippies around the rim, but when you look at the stats, he had 18 and 12 rebounds? 10 rebounds. That's a man's game, I think.

He's not going to make every shot that he gets around the bucket, but it put pressure on the defense to have to guard him, and tonight he missed a lot of shots that he's been making. Had he made them, he probably had a 30-plus point night tonight.

I'm very pleased looking at the stat sheet and seeing where he finished, and at the end of the day, we ended up winning the game, and that's what counts.

Q. When a player like Jalen gets off to the outstanding start he did and as you mentioned some of the other guys were missing some shots, what does it do for the rest of the team to kind of allow Jalen's efforts to make them relax and then play their way into the game?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, here's a freshman that's played very well for our ballclub this season. He did get off to a hot start, and we needed every bit of it because Ohio State got off to a great start. He was basically the only guy that was putting the ball in the hole.

Our defense stayed solid, and then that three-minute mark of the first half is when we made our run. We went on, I think, a 15-0 run, and that's basically, I think, what sealed the game for us.

Q. Kaleb Banks got some playing time tonight. How do you evaluate his performance, and where have you

seen him develop as a freshman this year?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, he's been patient with me. He's been very in tune to what we're doing in practice, in shootaround, walk-throughs. I thought it was time to give him an opportunity, and I thought he came out and played well for us. He shined tonight. It's kinda nice to see. Sometimes when players haven't played, they can easily go the other way, and he didn't. His stat line was pretty good for the 12 minutes that he played.

Q. Just wanted to get your thoughts on Jalen Hood-Schifino. He's sick but still goes 6 for 9 from three, 24 points as a freshman, Big Ten game. Your thoughts on how he played?

MIKE WOODSON: Hey, you've got to play when you're sick. I told him right before the game, I said, hey, I've had some of my best games when I've been sick, so hell, I can't feel sorry for you, you've got to strap them up and go play. We need you. He performed. I thought he came out and played his butt off.

Q. Freshmen are going to have some quiet games, and Jalen the last two just had eight total points, 3 for 17 shooting. How was he mentally through all of that, and does he talk a lot to you, others, or how does that go when he has a couple quiet nights and he certainly exploded tonight?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, I haven't had a whole lot of conversation with Jalen when it comes to the bad performances -- I don't call them bad performances because you're still winning, and he's doing other things besides scoring. He just hasn't put the ball in the hole the last couple games.

You know, you just try to pat him on the butt and tell him, hey, you're doing other good things for us, you're getting the ball up the floor, you're getting the ball where it needs to go from an offensive standpoint, and defensively you're battling. He's gotten some rebounds based on his position that helps us. I can't complain anything he's done.

When he messes up on the court, I let him know.



Q. Sticking on Jalen, what's maybe one of your favorite personality traits about him as a player, as a person that might influence his play on the floor that you've seen?

MIKE WOODSON: He just listens. I mean, even when I challenge him, he listens, and he doesn't bark back. Again, at the end of the day, it's just coaching as far as I'm concerned. When I'm trying to get my point across, maybe I see something that you don't see, and at the end of the day, I'm trying to help him help us.

He's been great in that regard. The guy, he's professional about his approach. When he steps on the floor, he's serious about it, and that's why the carryover when he plays in real games is like he plays. He plays pretty damn good basketball for us.

Q. You guys shot 50 percent from three tonight. More broadly speaking, you guys have drastically improved three-point shooting from last season. Is there any reason you see that you guys have really been able to make more shots from deep this season than last?

MIKE WOODSON: Work. Putting in the time. That started this summer. Guys knew that they had to improve from the three-point line because we weren't very good last season, and everybody has put the time in, and you feel good now when the shot goes up that it's going in. You don't make them all the time, but for the most part, we've shot the three ball pretty well this season.

Q. You talked a little bit about Kaleb Banks a little bit earlier. His play in the first half after not having played a lot, he had four points, five rebounds, was just active, his hands were all over the place, trying to get rebounds, and then second-half minutes. How impressive is it for you to see a guy who hasn't played much but makes the shot and makes the most of his minutes?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, it means a lot because it lets me know that coaching has helped him. My staff has done a tremendous job in terms of trying to bring these young guys along, and everyone is not going to be like Jalen Schifino and Malik Reneau. It's been a slow process with him, but tonight I thought he responded.

I feel good about putting him in the game. I don't know if my staff did, but I call the shots when it comes to that, but I played him, and he responded. I'm going to go in there and pat him on the butt again because I thought he played his butt off.

Q. You mentioned the 15-0 run in the first half that was five minutes you held them scoreless to close out the first half. Was it defense that was the key to that run?

MIKE WOODSON: That had a lot to do with it. We got stops -- I came out of the time-out, I'm like, guys, we're just sitting here trading buckets, and we can't trade the rest of the game. Somebody has got to make a stand. We came out of that time-out, I talked about getting three or four stops, and we got a lot of stops and was able to get out and make plays in the open court offensively to get the cushion that we needed going in at halftime.

Q. With the defensive attention that Trayce gets, what kind of breakthrough do you think it was for Malik tonight to kind of grasp the idea that the offensive glass is where a lot of his points are going to come from?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, again, I think Malik, once he figures out -- we've got to work with him some more in terms of his low post moves and stuff because he's got some great -- he's got great footwork, and he's got a nice touch around the rim.

I thought tonight he was kind of burying himself too low. He wasn't taking the guy high enough, and then when he would turn into his shot, he had nowhere to go. That's something that's fixable.

He did have a lot of cleanup trough where Trayce missed some monies and he was able to tap them back in. Malik has got a big body, and I'm on him a lot about using his body because he is talented enough to do that.

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