

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Trayce Jackson-Davis

Miller Kopp

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 66, Rutgers 60

Q. Miller, you seemed really determined tonight to get the ball. When you got the ball obviously you were able to hit the mark, but tell me about your mentality coming into this game. You seemed a little bit more demonstrative than usual on the floor?

MILLER KOPP: I think a lot of it was just game plan. I knew kind of like coming into the game how their wings and stuff guard off the ball and kind of looking at last game's film, how they guarded Trayce and kind of finding where the gaps are in the defense, especially when Trayce has the ball in the post, I'm always trying to move and get in his line of vision, and when we lock eyes, I know it's coming.

It's just being super opportunistic, that's all, really.

Q. Miller has talked about, basically, just knowing his role, knowing that he doesn't have to necessarily take a high volume of shots. How have you basically just seen him embrace what you guys need to do, maybe it's not tonight where he has as many points as he had but just taking the shots?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: First off, he's a competitor. He's going to do whatever Coach asks him to do.

And not only was he hitting shots but what really stood out to me was his effort on the defensive end of the floor, how he's sitting down and he was guarding. He was really, really locked in on the defensive end and when you're playing like that on both sides of the ball, a player like him, he really impacts the game at a high level.

Q. Miller, wanted to get your thoughts. You've been around basketball a long time. When you see somebody get 2,000 points and 1,000 career rebounds, what does that show? What are we looking at when we're talking about those kind of numbers?

MILLER KOPP: Well, it's just dominance, really. It's just consistency, really. At the end of the day, you not only have to be a really, really good player but you have to be consistent.

I remember playing against him my freshman year to now, it's like, the dude has been doing it since then since he was a freshman, you know, been that dominant. I still remember the scouting reports when I was a freshman and we were playing against Indiana and kind of what he was doing.

So it's just like, you know, it's one thing to be a good player, a really good player in college, but to be able to do it year after year after year shows a lot. It really shows a lot.

Q. For Trayce, obviously back in December when you played these guys, Coach Woodson made a point TO talk about how they out-toughed you guys. How have you gone about the last couple of months making sure that didn't happen again?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: That's how we've been playing. After the Penn State game, we went into Wisconsin and we started playing with a chip on our shoulder and it was the same thing to the paint. They were being tough, but I thought we were being tough right back.

They are a great team. Defensively they get after it. They muddy it up. But we got the best of them tonight, but props to them because they made it a game the whole time.

Q. Friday Coach talked about a belief, that you believe more now than maybe a month ago. I guess the question is: What changed and why do you believe more now than you did previously perhaps in?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: I think the biggest thing for us was just confidence. When you lose three in a row, you're kind of down on yourself.

But coach Woody always said, you've got to find a middle ground, and so that's what we did. And so when you win



one game it can string the two to three, and then you win seven out of your last eight. And so that's with us, and we've just got to be consistent and just take it one game at a time.

Q. Miller, a great night for you obviously with the 18 points but the offense seems to have really kind of opened up in the last few games, a lot more movement with everybody, and it's more space, hopefully more room for Trayce and opportunities for you. Is there anything changed? What adjustments have you guys made to make a difference there?

MILLER KOPP: I think we've gotten a lot better playing around Trayce and when he has the ball and giving him space to let him work but also keeping the wings, defenders, hold them accountable, as well, because we work a lot on shooting and the shots we're going to get and kind of where they are coming from.

And so you know, just comes down to getting better at what the coaches are asking us to do and we all are kind of feeling more comfortable with where our looks are coming from and kind of how to be opportunistic and aggressive in those areas.

Q. I know your back is feeling better but in the last month, you've had the four best rebounding games of your entire career. How do you explain that? What's different now than you over your entire career?

TRAYCE JACKSON DAVIS: I just felt like I try to have a knack for the ball. I know Coach Woody, what he always says, the board man gets paid. I just try to get rebounds, whether it be offensively, defensively, just try to time where the ball is going to be.

But again, I think it's how long I've been here, as well, and just kind of knowing how players are playing me, if I'm watching, if I know a shot is going to go up, getting inside possession, just stuff of that nature, being smart and kind of timing where the ball is going to be.

Q. In this 7-1 run you've been on, you've made a lot of gritty plays that changed the game, going after loose balls with full effort. What is it about how you were brought up and how you were coached younger that makes you want to give that effort for your teammates and your team?

MILLER KOPP: Well, I grew up with three brothers, and man, we just really just fought all the time in a good way. You know, playing one-on-one, two-on-two basketball in our driveway late at night, we had the cops called on us a couple times just because there's yelling and screaming

and stuff. You know, the worst thing my dad did is getting us boxing gloves for Christmas one year. That didn't last long. (Laughter).

That really shaped me to who I am because without them, without my brothers, you know, I'm not who I am today, and even my mom, she works her tail off. She works the hardest in my family. It really is just in my nature to grind and work and be that dude who is willing to do whatever to win.

Q. There's been a lot of attention and today, when you hit the 2,000th point and 1,000 rebounds and all the assists and blocks, and Coach said before you guys came in here, your career has been "unbelievable" to him. Have you reflect the at all at what you've accomplished to this point and how -- are you conscious of those numbers, and how much better a player do you think you are now than as a freshman?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: Do I know about the numbers? Yeah, I do. I don't really pay that much attention to it right now. We've got a lot of season left and a lot more to be focused on than me just individually. We are trying to win. I'm just doing my best to help my teammates win basketball games, but when my career is over, then I'll kind of reflect and think about all that stuff.

Just me from my freshman year, it's been a long ride. It's really, really -- it's just crazy because I remember my prior teams my freshman year, players like Devonte and DeRon, it feels like a long, long time ago.

So just being able to just do it consistently like Miller said for this long and keep growing areas of my game, whether it be my passing, my ball handling, stuff of that nature. It's really been a blessing to play here and I wouldn't trade it for the world.

Q. Going off that, you're talking about how important it is just to win basketball games now. Despite all the accolades, how important is finally betting Rutgers to you?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: It's very important. I think that was the last team in the Big Ten that I had not beaten. We got Wisconsin earlier this year, but they are a tough team and credit to them. They will always bring it. The RAC is always the toughest place to play in that I've personally played in but they have a lot of pieces.

Caleb is great. I remember when they used to have Miles Johnson; he was a monster. Big Cliff is a really great player. They have a lot of pieces around them and just finally getting over that hump and like Coach Woodson

said, getting the monkey off your back, it's big for us.
We've just got to keep moving forward and taking it one
game at a time.

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