

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Indianapolis, Indiana, USA

Trayce Jackson-Thomas Race Thompson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 75, Michigan 73

Q. Can you put into words what kind of roller coaster that game was, and how you guys were able to pull it out of the fire in the end with your defense and some other things?

TRAYCE JACKSON DAVIS: I just think that's the story of how our team has been this year. We have had some ups and downs and it's been a roller coaster, but we fight. There's been a lot of fight from this group of guys. We could have easily quit when we were down ten early in the second half. They were hitting shots, but instead we dug in on the defense and we counteracted their runs and we just played hard and played for each other. You do that, you go on a little run, you get this crowd engaged, we have the best fans in college basketball, so we ride that.

Q. After what happened Tuesday night and the way things were turning today, what was the mindset like? Was there any time where any heads starting to hang or where were you at mentally?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: No, we knew what was at stake. Obviously we saw the games that happened before we started playing with Penn State and Maryland and Iowa, Nebraska and we watched both of those so we knew that double-bye was at stake and we had to play hard.

Obviously we knew they were going to go on a run. It's basketball. Nothing is ever perfect. They are going to hit some shots, and they did, and you have to credit to them because they are a great team that has a great record in the Big Ten. Their overall record doesn't show it, but they played a lot of good ball at the end of the year; so credit to them.

We fought and that's all you can ask from our guys is we never quit.

Q. Dickinson is hard to deal with, size everything and.

How did you get those two steals late? What happened?

RACE THOMPSON: I was just sitting on the back side. I was guarding Reed who is a good player but he's not known as much of a three-point shooter, so I was just kind of thinking, I'm going to sit a little deeper, I'm just watching him. He was on Trayce one time. I think I was kind of playing the game. I mean, I play against Trayce all the time in practice. So you get to practice against good post players like that, and when he put the ball on, I just kind of ran in there and, not got lucky, but I reached my hand in there and got the steal, so that was good.

Q. Race, asking something similar to what was asked of Trayce, but Iowa is the first time in a while you guys have not really been able to dig in and push back in a game when it's gotten away from you. Where does this team's quality that was there today that wasn't against Iowa of being able to pull together and when things are going wrong? Where does that come from and where do you go find it if that makes any sense?

RACE THOMPSON: Yeah, I think the Iowa game, I wouldn't say it's good thing that this happened but I mean we learned a lot from it. We know that can he wasn't go out there and expect to win every game. You have to go out there and play when you're playing in the Big Ten.

I think that today, everybody was trying to win it for each other. The way that the game ended last year here on Senior Night was something that I'll never forget and part of the reason I came back, really. We talked about it and just there's no way we are losing this game. We are leaving everything we got on the court, and I think just going off that, knowing that almost the next couple games could be the last games of our career, we are just going to play desperate. And I don't think we'll lay an egg like that ever again.

Q. I want to ask you about Race. To see him make those steals at the end of the game, the big plays and have a double-double his last game on this court, how special is that for you to see?



TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: It's huge, because he's a huge part of what we do. He says he's go and all this stuff but he's been really battling. He's been with Timmy G. doing stuff of that nature just to get his body right to be out here, and he's giving it his all every time he's out here, and I know he was down after the Iowa game. And he said he got me, and this game, he had me.

He played really, really well down the stretch, and we needed every single basket that he got, every steal that he got to get that win. It was props to him, and we need that the rest of the way.

Q. For both you guys, we have talked about your friendship in the past but this season you guys have both dealt with injuries and ups and downs. How have you continued to lean on each other through that and your -- your friendship, I guess, just kind of continued to evolve?

RACE THOMPSON: I would say just knowing each other. We know when one of us is having a rough day, and not really knowing, you just kind of go up to him and just try to make him laugh and try to say something funny and try to lighten up the mood. Knowing somebody as well as we know each other, you can tell when someone is not having their best day. You try to make light of it and know that it's going to be all right.

I've battled injuries and he's battled injuries earlier in the year, and on those days we make each other laugh. It just makes it so much easier to come in every day and get that treatment even though you can't go out and compete on the court with your teammates every time. Just having each other's back I think is really what it is.

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: Yeah, I agree with what he said.

Q. You give your all all the time but today there seemed to be a moment in the game where you started on the perimeter but settled down into the paint, and once you did, you just seemed to have a look of determination every time you got the ball that you were going to score. Where did that come from and what started that?

RACE THOMPSON: Really, Coach Woodson. I got it in the paint one time and tried to pass it to Trayce, and I ended up turning it over and he got on me about that. He told me to go score the ball. I was like, I just told -- I told Trayce -- I told Jalen, I'm like, "I'm not losing this game. I can't lose this game." It was really just playing desperate, and I think that's really what it was.

And then I mean, again, I think practice this week, too, helped a lot, too. We played a lot in practice, and I think that helped us go out there and perform.

Q. How special was it that coming down the stretch in regulation and into overtime that it was really in large part the three seniors on the floor that were making the key plays that led to this come back win?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: It was great. I know Miller, Miller was down on himself a little bit after he missed a few shots, and I told him that big one was coming and I saw him in the corner and he hit a huge one for us that we really needed.

So I know that kind of got his mind off of that, but it was just awesome to see. Coach Woody kind of put us in that situation, too, where he was basically telling us that the seniors are going to have to lead. He told that to us in practice. And so just going out on the court and just leading and doing what we do, obviously the other guys really helped us along, Trey, Malik, Tamar came in and did some good things as well. But just down the stretch, leaders got to lead, and that's what we did.

Q. So we saw the last time before your speech, you did your "Raise the Roof" signal one last time to the crowd, and you seemed to enjoy really enter acting with the crowd a lot. What makes you enjoy that engagement that you can have with this Assembly Hall crowd?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: Absolutely. Just knowing that it's my last time in this building, playing in front of these fans in Assembly Hall is bittersweet. Wish I could play here forever.

But at the same time, we have the best fans in the country. We have the best student section in the country, and it's been an honor and a privilege to play in front of them, and to put on this uniform every day, I'm going to cherish every second that I have in it from here on out and hopefully we get to play for a little bit longer. That's the plan.

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