

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Friday, March 8, 2024
Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Coach Mike Woodson Press Conference



Q. Yeah, Mike, with Senior Day on Sunday, happy that Xavier gets a proper sendoff and play in the game. Have you talked to Trey Galloway and Anthony Leal? Will they be participating in that? Have you had conversations about their future yet?

MIKE WOODSON: I don't know. I haven't had a chance to sit down and see what they going to do in terms of Senior Night, so I'll know more today when I sit down with them about that.

I know X is going to go through Senior Night. He doesn't have a choice. But Galloway and Anthony, they do have choices. They could come back another year. So I don't know what they are going to do. We'll have to sit down and discuss that and see what they're going to do.

Q. I guess over the last three games, the team has shot the ball a lot better on the winning streak, especially compared to the four-game losing streak. Is that better looks, better offense as a whole? What's the root of that?

MIKE WOODSON: We could just continue to work. Guys are starting to feel good about themselves. Having X back helps a lot. Speeds us up a little bit. Getting a lot more transition buckets getting the ball up the floor. Guys are bit offing from it on the backside of the passes.

So I mean, that's what normally happens when you make shots. Offense looks good and not hurting that we are playing pretty good defense and rebounding the ball with our opponents. That helps a lot as well.

Q. Mike, you had 28 assists on 30 made baskets the other night. You've talked about having X back, Trey's individual improvement running the point. Just what does it do for your offense having two guys that are so experienced? And obviously you look at their assist numbers, the way they can pass the ball, and they can both are primary offense outlets for you getting you into your stuff.

MIKE WOODSON: Well, I've been screaming all along about having Xavier back. You know, I think we're like 40 and 22 with Xavier playing basketball for us in an Indiana uniform, which is a not bad record. He's missed a lot of basketball since he's been here and we didn't bring him in here to be on the sideline.

Unfortunately for him he's had the injuries and we've suffered somewhat from it because he is a veteran point guard.

Gallo is just starting to come into his own. I mean, it's what you expect because he's a senior. He's not a freshman or sophomore. He's a senior. I've been harping I expect that from him, I want him to do that. He's been playing extremely well here as of late.

But it helps a lot when you're making shots on the back end of passes. That's what offense is. You don't pass the ball to somebody for them to miss shots or miss layups or free throws. It all goes hand in hand in being a good offensive team.

Q. I know you guys as a program put a lot of time and effort into the recruiting. How concerned are you at this point in terms of how 2024, the class has turned out to this point?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, I'm not going to talk about recruiting with you guys. I'm just not. It's something we got to do and this is going to be a big summer for us. We got to go out and get feel players. You can lose players. You just never know. That's what the portal presents.

That's just how I feel about it at this point.

Q. Do you have any update on the status of Anthony Walker?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, his MRI checked out pretty well. I don't know the status of him being able to practice today. Yesterday he was pretty sore coming out of the MRI, so I'll know more today when I get down on the practice floor to see where he is in terms of being able to play.

Q. Mike, at the beginning of this little three-game win streak you guys talked a lot about needing to validate the defensive effort you've been putting together. As the last game comes up and heading into the Big10 tournament, what's the key to continue playing the way you have been?

MIKE WOODSON: Just got to keep working, man, and believing in what we're doing. You know, in this three-game stretch when you look at the stat line across the board it's kind of scary. It's nice. We have gone through stretches since I've been here where we played like that.

But it's kind of nice to see because guys, they haven't quit. They continue to work and practice and trying to get better as a group. That's kind of nice to see from a coaching standpoint.

We just got to keep doing what we're doing and doing it at high level and doing it for 40 minutes. I mean, that's the key. We just been outplaying our opponents the last three games, we been playing harder than those guys and that's why we have won the last three I think.

Q. When you look at this Michigan State team, they played well defensively, and I know you guys did a good job scoring against Maryland in the second half last week. When you go against the team that don't allow a lot of buckets, what's the easiest way to get shots?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, we just got to keep executing doing what we did not doing as of late. We got to let our defense create offense for us. That's something we've done too here of late. Michigan State is a good basketball team. They're well-coached. They play hard.

You know, we got to go out and commit ourselves for 40 minutes knowing we got to play just as hard as they play and see what happens.

Q. You missed the first part of my question. In terms of Xavier, how happy are you that he gets to be on the floor for Senior Day and play, and given what he's went through the last two years to have a moment here in front of Assembly Hall?

MIKE WOODSON: No, it's special. Should be special for him. When you put four years -- he's been what, five, six years in college, a long time playing this sport, and now you wind down and come to the end of your college career. Man, it's a special night for him.

I couldn't be more proud and more happy for X because X

has gone through a lot, man. From the time I got him, I coached him hard. I was tough on X, man. X wanted to give you all he could give you and the injuries just set in and he just wasn't able to be on the floor a lot.

So this should be a special night for him and his family, man. Now he's got to figure out once our he leaves here, what's next. I mean, that's the beauty of playing sports and getting an education. You still got to go out in the workplace and figure out the rest of your life.

I'm going to always be there for him if he needs me. I'm going to do whatever I can to help him do whatever he wants to do in the next phase of his life. For me that's what coaching is all about.

But it should be a special night for he and his family, man.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports