

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

Sunday, March 10, 2024

Bloomington, Indiana, USA

## Cpach Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana 65, Michigan 64

**Q. Mike, I guess talking about the game specifically, I know you have other experienced guys on the floor, but what do you feel like as a team you had to work through once Trey goes down, losing a key facilitator there, and what do you think your team found in the last maybe seven to eight minutes in terms of pulling together at both ends of the floor?**

MIKE WOODSON: I didn't really have to go back to the bench much. I was determined tonight to play the seniors because it was their night. X and Leal was going to stay in there no matter what.

You know, we shuffled Gabe in and out. I don't even know if Walker saw the floor in the second half. Maybe for a few.

But it's tough losing a key player. That's a part of sports. But we you hung in there. We got the big stop we needed coming down the stretch and got the rebound to secure the win.

**Q. Obviously Kel'el has been a big contributor, especially down the stretch as the late. What's been the key to unlocking his game? He had another big performance today?**

MIKE WOODSON: All I can tell you guys after that first month, he's been a totally different player. I got to give tribute to your coaching staff and how they work, and we pushed him and his teammates believe in him and I believe in him. He's been phenomenal, been playing unbelievable, which is kind of nice to see.

**Q. Coach, Anthony and Trey obviously in their speeches came out with their full support of you. What does that mean to you to hear from two guys like that so forcefully in public?**

MIKE WOODSON: I'm not surprised at all. It means a lot. You know, we been through the battles together, and yet Leal hadn't played a whole lot but played some this year

and played well for us.

For him to tell Hoosier Nation that he's coming back, along with Galloway, that means a lot to me as a coach.

**Q. When Michigan State made their run and ended up taking the lead, what was your message to the team to stick with it and not let them pull it out in the end?**

MIKE WOODSON: I thought we would play through it. I think when they went up five, hit a three and went up five or six and I took the time-out. I just expressed, hey, you seniors, this is your last go-round. Relax. We're okay.

We came out and we scored a bucket and we were able to take the lead. It was back and forth, but we made the plays that we needed to make to secure it.

**Q. I know Galloway got hurt today, but thoughts on what he has meant to you guys as a senior, a leader, points, assists, just everything he's given you guys as a senior?**

MIKE WOODSON: It means a lot. As a senior that's what I expect you to do. You know, you go through four years with the program, you grow. You're supposed to grow every year. If you don't grow then I haven't done a great job in coaching.

He's grown and he's helped us a lot this year in so many ways because we haven't had Xavier Johnson, the other senior.

So I don't know what his status is right now. He's being evaluated, so we'll have a better feel of where he is tomorrow. But I give a lot of credit to the guys in that locker room that kept fighting. It's tough playing Izzo's teams. He can coach his ass off and their teams, they just play hard. They force you to have to play for 40 minutes and that's what happened tonight.

**Q. Last week you had the news about your job and recruiting, meanwhile you're on a four-game winning streak and like an NCAA team. What has it been like for you personally to manage those two different**



## things going on?

MIKE WOODSON: Should never be any questions about job based on what I have done here since I stepped foot in Indiana as a coach. I'm not going to entertain questions about it because shouldn't be anything out there floating around about my job. I've done my job and I'm going to continue to do it.

**Q. Trey and Leal afterwards saying they're returning for next year, the last few days, what have you said to them, what have they said to you, and what's their return mean for next year?**

MIKE WOODSON: I mean, for them to say they're coming back, hell, we got to continue to build or basketball team. I don't know who is going to be here and where we got to go and get players. That's the world we live in with the portal and what's going on in college sports.

I can't address none of that and I can't tell them who's going to be their teammates. Just don't know. I don't know that yet. So this summer will be very pivotal and important for our program in moving forward. That's just what college basketball presents every summer.

**Q. Mike, obviously won all the games you can win in the regular season, 10-10; if you win the Big10 tournament you'll get in the NCAA tournament. Would you think that three wins will get you? This is a chance to plug your program.**

MIKE WOODSON: I don't know. We're playing as good as any team in the country right now based on the last four games. We got to take it a game at a time, man. I'll never jump ahead.

I don't know who we'll face the first game of the Big10 tournament, but one game at a time and see where it leads us.

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