

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Coach Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Illinois 94, Indiana 69

Q. Mike, I know you don't share specifics a lot of what you say in the locker rooms, but after a first half like that, just what do you say to a team few try and pick them back up, try and try keep guys together if nothing else?

MIKE WOODSON: Long season, man. I mean, you can't throw in the towel. You know, I mean, we didn't play well the first handful. We were awful.

I thought we came out the second half and we competed and played a lot better, but the damage was already done in the first half. Got to give Illinois a lot of credit, their coaching staff. They played great.

Q. Coach, big picture, you guys are 1-5 in quad one games. I think 15-34 in quad one games over the last three years. What do you see is the problem with you guys not competing with consistency against the better opponent?

MIKE WOODSON: We've had some good games against big time opponents over the three years. The record doesn't indicate that.

It's tough. You know, I mean, when you prepare and you work, because we work in practice, we do all the things that you are supposed to do going into the game. Guys just didn't step up tonight and didn't step up in the Iowa game.

I can't go back to past years. I got to coach what's staring me in the face right now. We just got to continue to work. I mean, still a long season. Hopefully we'll get Malik back soon. He's a big piece to what we do and we can get guys back playing the way I expect us to play.

Q. The fans were very vocal tonight about their disappointment. What will you say to reassure them about the direction of this team?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, I love our fans and I respect our fans, but it's up to me to get our players to play at a high level. That's my job and I'm going to continue to work in that area and hope that our fans will hang in there with us.

Q. Mike, in your long tenure as a coach, when you have younger guys who are trying to figure things out, especially after two bad games, what is your approach with them and what do you feel like you need to do to do some soul searching of your own?

MIKE WOODSON: You got to continue to work. I got to make some changes. We haven't been getting off to a good start in terms of who we been starting. Sure, we do miss Malik. He's a big piece to the puzzle. But I got to put guys in there that I think is going to get us off to a good start and see if we can maintain it over a 40-minute ballgame.

We can't two games, and these were embarrassing games for us, determine our season. We still got a long way to go, a lot of Big10 games left. I just got to get us better prepared and ready to play.

Q. Mike, how do you explain 60? 125 year history of Indiana basketball, that's never happened before. How do you explain that?

MIKE WOODSON: I wish I knew. You know, I mean, I thought we played better the second half. They scored what, 34 points the second half. 60 points is just way too many.

I just thought our defense and our intensity just wasn't there and they exploited it.

Q. Two questions. First one is what happened with Oumar Ballo at the end? What are you going to do about that?

MIKE WOODSON: There is not a whole lot I can do. You know being until I can back and review it. I'm sure the commissioner and everybody will take a look at what happens and make a decision on what they plan on doing.

I just hope Ballo is with us our next game as we travel over to Ohio.

Q. Mike, that raises the question of accountability. You got a player doing what he did and you're hoping he can play in the next game. What's going on here?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, they're taking up for each other. I get that. In the heat of the battle anything is liable to happen. I don't condone players pushing players or their player got into our player's face. It went back and forth, two guys pushing and shoving.

I don't condone that by any means. In the heat of the battle I'm not right there in the situation where I can stop it. Sometimes things get out of hand and they happen.

You know, Ballo and I will sit and talk, along with Myles, because he was assessed a technical, too, and see where we go from there.

Q. To you have this performance after the way the Iowa game went on Saturday, just what did you see from the team's response and what needs to change coming out of this game?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, we can't let this be a snowball effect. Like I said, we got a long way to go in this Big10.

Do I think we're good enough to win? Yeah, I do. I just got to get us to believe that and keep pushing these guys in the right direction.

Q. This is a roster in October you said was I think the most talented you've had here. Is there a reason you can look at for why it hasn't really clicked yet?

MIKE WOODSON: Again, you're missing your leading scorer the last five, six games. I mean, that doesn't help.

I mean, again, I've always said we won games without Malik. It's next man up. The last two games we haven't fared well without him. Hopefully get him back soon and I can get guys playing back at a high level so we can get back on the winning track.

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