

# Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Bloomington, Indiana, USA

**Mike Woodson**

Postgame Media Conference



UCLA - 72, Indiana - 70

**Q. It's kind of an obvious question, but how do you sort of pull a team through a night like this where you have a lot of opportunities, you can't quite convert. It just kind of feels like every time the game's there for you to take, you can't just quite grab a hold of it with both hands. What's the message after a game like this?**

MIKE WOODSON: It's a tough loss. We executed, but we just didn't finish. I thought, after they missed the one and one, we came back and got a good look, Mack got an offensive rebound, point blank layup, and we don't get it. Then we get a wide open three.

We got exactly what we were looking for on the play, and that's a shot that he normally makes. He just didn't make it.

**Q. With Myles Rice, you moved him to the bench recently, took kind of a wild shot at the end there. What has he not been able to kind of get in a groove for you or kind of find the level you want him to play at this season?**

MIKE WOODSON: Again, the play wasn't -- we didn't execute that particular play because that's not the play I drew up in timeout. So that was a botched play, but the ball ended up in his hands. You tell guys, you're in the penalty, you've got to take advantage of your speed or whatever in terms of getting downhill, and he settled.

But that didn't beat us. I look at the five points that we gave up within two possessions, an out of bounds play and then a point blank straight drive where the guy got hit and he made the bucket. Those were two critical defensive stops that we couldn't come up with and still had a chance to win the game.

**Q. When you mentioned just the lack of finish, it kind of seems like you all have lost a lot of close ones late, and when that late game execution isn't there for a**

**wide range of reasons -- I want to say you started four seniors tonight -- is there a reason you can point to for why you guys haven't really been able to finish?**

MIKE WOODSON: I wish I had the answer. I go back to the Northwestern game, the Maryland game, Purdue game, Michigan game -- all winnable games. If you win one or two of them, you're feeling good about yourself when you're in close games. Nine out of ten times, you make the plays that you need to make. The fact that we've lost them, it's been guys are searching.

I'm searching as the coach in terms of trying to get them over the finish line. I'll never put it on the player. I'll take the responsibility. Even though I don't make the shots or miss the defensive assignments, it's still my job to get them over the hump.

**Q. Speaking of the last two or three minutes of the game, was the shot selection where you wanted it to be? Also, how does UCLA's defense kind of influence shot selection? I mean, it's easy to say that, but how much do you kind of see that?**

MIKE WOODSON: They are a good defensive team. They're one of the top defensive teams in the Big Ten, and they get after you. With all of that being said, I still thought we made the plays from a defensive standpoint. We just played so poorly the first half and spotted them 10 points, and they had a lot to do with that.

But I thought we played Indiana basketball the second half and made plays coming down the homestretch, made free throws. They miss two front ends of a one and one that kept us right where we needed to be. Then we get a great look from Mack based on a good executed play on underneath out of bounds, and he just didn't make it.

**Q. How do you feel like the zone defense held up tonight? I know you got away from that later in the game, but is that something you're going to kind of continue sticking with or just kind of going back and forth?**

MIKE WOODSON: Again, I thought there were times it



didn't help -- we just didn't play it right, and they exposed us some early on, and we got away from it. I thought our rotations tonight were off based on how we played at Michigan State.

Two, they have big time shooters around the horn, so you've got to pick and choose when you're playing teams that can shoot the ball from the perimeter when you're zoning up.

**Q. Do these types of late losses sting a little bit more than some of the others?**

MIKE WOODSON: Any loss stings. Any time you lose, it hurts. After coming off the Michigan State game, which was a great game for our young team and the ball club, and then to come in and not finish tonight, it hurts.

We've got a week to put this behind us and get ready for Purdue.

**Q. Speaking of Purdue, you've got a few days between now and then. What are key things you want to get in in order to win that game. Even though the record is where it is, Purdue-IU is big any time. What's the opportunity like to give these guys?**

MIKE WOODSON: Again, we battled our butts off at West Lafayette, and they're sitting at the top of the Big Ten for a reason. We've got a week to work and get ready for them because they're playing well.

We've had our ups and downs, but we've got a week to see where we are and get ready to toss it up next weekend.

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