

Indiana University Basketball Media Conference

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Bloomington, Indiana, USA

Mike Woodson

Postgame Media Conference



Indiana Hoosiers 73, Purdue Boilermakers 58

Q. Down 12 at halftime in both cases, the team could have easily packed it in. What can you say about that second half, and how that happened?

MIKE WOODSON: It's a great second half. I mean, I didn't play very many people off the bench. I kind of rolled the seniors. We've been in a lot of close games over the last month and a half, and I just haven't been able to get over the hump. Tonight they refused to lose.

I thought the second half, we did everything from a defensive standpoint that we worked on these days that we had to practice. It was a nice carry over. We couldn't make a shot the first half. I thought we got some decent looks. We just couldn't make them, and they made shots.

I thought the second half, our defense really picked it up and we were able to get stops and we started to make shots.

Q. Two guards with similar strengths, what led you to want to shuffle the lineup a little bit, and two, how do you sort of, I guess, as a coach, evaluate a performance from the guys that didn't come off the floor in the second half, Luke, Anthony, Trey, and Kanaan?

MIKE WOODSON: In the long run, you know, we can't play those guys those many minutes. The rest of the way, still going to need guys to contribute off the bench. So you know, I'm not throwing in the towel on any of our players. I mean, I'm a big believer in guys, that's what you do when you get in the game and you make the most of it. Put us in the best position possible to win.

You know, it was seniors that carried us tonight and I refuse to change up anything much throughout the course of the second half. You know, they will be back in there and Mac will get an opportunity to possibly be back in there, as well.

Q. After the game, everyone kind of rallied around you, how much did that moment, that love, really mean to you?

MIKE WOODSON: This is my fourth year here. Gallo and Malik, who have been around me the longest, and they know truly what I'm about. The new guys have had a tough, probably, time figuring me out, and we've still got a lot of basketball still left to try to figure each other out.

You know, but it was special, I mean, any time your players rally around you, because I do love them, and I'm sure they love me, as well.

Q. How important, Anthony's effort on defense?

MIKE WOODSON: You know, he's been huge. I mean, you expect that. Anthony has been around me awhile, and he's gone through a lot with me. We didn't play him a whole lot because I just didn't play him. But he never quit working, and that's a testament to him in terms of how he approaches the game and now he's getting an opportunity to play and he's making the most of it. You expect that from seniors. I mean, I wouldn't expect anything less.

So it's a good showing tonight, how we played in the second half. So I'm happy as hell.

Q. Myles Rice defense on Braden Smith, Braden Smith had five turnovers and even when he didn't turn it over he was able to slow them down quite a bit. Can you illustrate how important Myles' defense was at kind of the head of the snake?

MIKE WOODSON: I thought Myles' defense tonight was the best he's played since he's been here. You know, we had a few bodies, you know, guarding Smith. You can't just play that young man with one guy. He's really that good.

You know, Gallo had him some. Anthony had him some. But I thought Myles did a tremendous job in guarding him because he's a tough guard. I mean, when things break down, the ball gets back up into his hand and he's able to make plays with the basketball. I thought we did a good



job with him tonight.

Q. Following up on that, Smith and Colvin in the second half combined for two points, eight turnovers; what was the key? Why were you so effective "guarding them"?

MIKE WOODSON: Yeah, their main two guys, along with Loyer, does not take anything away from the supporting cast. You know, they beat us up at West Lafayette. It was those three that got us. And you know, I just felt if we could cut one, maybe two, you know, put ourselves in a better position in the ballgame, we were fortunate enough to cut both of them, which a lot of teams don't do that.

Q. What can you say about your trio of Indiana kids and their performance in the second half?

MIKE WOODSON: It was tremendous. Like I said earlier, you know, they are seniors. This is their last go. They won't get another shot at Purdue unless it's in tournament play. Since we've been here, I believe the series now is 4-4. So that's something to smile about. Matt Painter is a hell of a coach, and he's had some nice players around his program that's helped him win a lot of games.

So this was a big win for our program.

Q. Just kind of follow up on that for you personally, if it is your last time against Purdue, as well, how gratifying is it to go out on a game like this?

MIKE WOODSON: It's always special when you beat Purdue. You know, we had battles when I played here for Coach Knight. You know what I mean, I've had a history and a lot of experience dealing with Purdue over the years. The games are always tough, you know what I mean, regardless of how much talent each team has. Who has the most talent in those particular games are always pretty tough, and we always battled the first half and they were the better team the first half and the second half --

Q. We all saw that you used Coach Knight's chair on the bench. Why was that a meaningful decision for you on the 40th anniversary of that names chair?

MIKE WOODSON: You realize that is "the chair." I've had it a while. A lot of people say they have the chair -- (inaudible) -- tennis coach here, many years ago, he was the only one thinking out of the box that night when Knight threw that chair. That morning he got up and he came to Assembly Hall and he got the chair and he got Sam Bell and Coach Knight and all to sign off on it, took pictures with it. Good friend of mine. His wife was Scott's daughter, and he passed away about a year ago. All the documentation,

I happened to get my hands on it -- that's why it was special to have it here tonight. I wasn't going to throw the chair but I did want to sit in it.

Q. Wanted to get your thoughts on Malik's game tonight, the scoring, what led to him playing this well, this consistency? Didn't even miss a shot from the field.

MIKE WOODSON: We have to keep him on the floor here and there. You get it, he had four fouls, I believe, coming down the stretch, but we were able to mix him and then give him some rest and get him back in there.

But Malik's been a solid player for us. Today, that's pretty special -- playing college basketball. Gentleman help but think if he continues to work and stay healthy, you know, he'll continue to do some wonderful things in college basketball.

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