

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Trail Blazers 108, Wizards 102

Q. Brian, did you like the looks your team generated over the final minute and a half, particularly Jordan's threes?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I liked the looks. I mean, we got into what we wanted. We just missed 'em. So good execution. Got the shots we wanted. Those guys usually make those. I trust them to shoot those. They just didn't go in tonight.

Q. This was a night where you struggled from three, but you still held them to a low field goal percentage. Even outscored them on second-chance points. Are you happy with the way you didn't get away from what you're trying to accomplish?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yes, that was the positive part of the game, was we give up too many offensive rebounds in the first half. I think they had 14 second-chance points. They end up only having two in the second. We made a good adjustment at halftime. Helped propel us to get back in the game.

We were able to stay in the game with 33 from the three-point line, shots that we normally make. That's the process we want. We live with those shots. We were able to stay in the game because we fixed our problems defensively. That was really the rebounding in the first half.

Q. Corey had 10 points in the first half. Is there something that changed in the way they guarded him in the second half?

BRIAN KEEFE: No, Corey got some looks that he usually likes to take. Unfortunately they didn't go in. But those are shots that he hits. Then that usually generates him driving the ball.

The process was good for Corey. Hopefully he'll come back next game ready to go.

Q. Despite the loss, a pretty clean game in terms of turnovers. Was this another example of Jordan doing a good job keeping you guys under control?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yep. Only ended up having two of nine assists. This is a great learning for our whole team, but great for Jordan to put us in positions to take good shots.

I thought he did a good job down the stretch leading our group. Got us good looks. They just didn't go in.

Q. With Deni, how much has it helped your overall defensive game plan having a guy that can guard one through five?

BRIAN KEEFE: It's great. That's the challenge we put on Deni. We think he can guard anybody on the court with his physicality and size. Another big defensive rebounding game for him. 11 defensive boards. Really positive for that.

But we're going to continue to put him in those positions.

Q. Deandre had a great game against you guys. Obviously tough with some of the injuries that limited the size. What did you think of the defensive game plan and how do you think it worked?

BRIAN KEEFE: He hurt us a little bit. It was a lot of boards. I felt like early he did hit some midrange jumpers. In the third quarter, the only thing we didn't do great was we fouled too much. There were some free throw attempts from their whole team.

But overall the second half defense was way better. That kept it in the game when our shooting wasn't the best tonight.

Q. How do you think Tristan and Anthony did against Deandre?

BRIAN KEEFE: I thought they did good. I think when we

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started switching the pick and roll, it made it a little bit more difficult for him. These are great experiences for Tristan. He's learning daily on these guys. I thought another good game for him tonight. Continuing to grow and develop, so... Pleased with his effort.

Q. You've talked since you've taken the job about improving the group you have. Obviously seen signs of that the last couple weeks. That said, this was a loss that tied the club record for most losses in a season. As a coach, as a staff, do you have reflections on that? Does it matter at this point?

BRIAN KEEFE: Look, we're all competitors here. Everybody wants to win. But we're so focused on the process to get to winning. Those things you don't want to hear. Sure, we all got stuff inside of us that wants to compete and win games. We're in the process of improving, how to win games, how to figure those things out.

Our group has grown. Our group has gotten better. We're going to keep working on that the remainder of the season.

Q. Early in the third quarter there was a hug for you from Tristan. The time was during a timeout. Was that a result of him staying mentally focused even though he missed the dunk? What was the backstory there?

BRIAN KEEFE: Hey, look, I support our guys. I think he had missed something in transition. Hey, that happens. I've seen top best players in the world miss those shots. Hey, move on to the next play. We love you. Let's continue to play. We've got a long game. Nothing more than that.

Q. You talk about growth, improvement of this team. We focused on the past couple weeks. What have you seen from them through the course of this season, how much they've gotten better?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think our resiliency has grown. I think our togetherness has grown. I definitely think our defense has improved. The numbers would show that. We're learning what winning looks like. We're building the habits to what that is. That's been the sole focus, is on building the right way, not skipping steps. Our group hasn't done that. Because of that I think we have improved. We've shown that with some results here recently.

But again, it's all about the process for us.

Q. Your thoughts on Jared Butler, how he's played this season? He just got the new contract.

BRIAN KEEFE: Thrilled for Jared. Definitely deserves it. The amount of work that he's put in, playing down with our Go-Go, then with us when he's gotten the opportunity. He's been a steady hand.

Showed great progress running the team. His defense has improved. Thrilled that Jared is part of our program.

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