

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Thursday, December 5, 2024

Washington, DC, USA

Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Mavericks 137, Wizards 101

Q. Generally speaking, about Bilal, how would you characterize his offense last the last few weeks?

BRIAN KEEFE: Sometimes you get out of rhythm in certain things. I think he's a little out of rhythm. We added some new guys to the lineup. Sometimes some different combinations can cause some of that.

Sometimes that happens. Sometimes you go in these little things in your season and career. I have great faith in Bilal and his character and who he is.

Actually thought he played a pretty game. Just didn't make some of the shots he has been making. He was aggressive. I thought his defense was pretty good at times.

He'll get out of this. But I believe in his character.

Q. What did you think of Bub's defense on Tyrik?

BRIAN KEEFE: The one thing that is great about Bub, he's not scared of anybody. He's going to go out there and compete. He's going to give everything he has. He is learning how to guard all these guys.

I love the no fear that he has when he goes out and plays. He shows that on the court.

Q. What do you think made the difference tonight? Dallas got off to a quick start. Anything specific you saw?

BRIAN KEEFE: They made definitely some shots. We made some errors in some of our execution defensively. Give them credit making shots when we did make some mistakes.

I thought they closed the end of the second quarter, that kind of pushed them ahead. We had cut into the lead, maybe could have got it to 10. They made a little bit of a

run right there at the end that kind of bled into the second half.

Q. Have you got any sense if Bilal's confidence has dipped at all? He's a young player.

BRIAN KEEFE: I don't feel that, no. I just think he's a little bit out of rhythm. Sometimes the game just changes. Sometimes you can get in those situations.

Like I said before, the great thing about Bilal is the work. He's still putting the work. We've all seen players, even really good players, have some tough moments. These obviously can test you.

But I believe in the character and the work that's behind that in Bilal Coulibaly for sure.

Q. Everybody knows the direction of the team. It's not a secret. How do you keep the fire in these guys, motivated?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think I've talked about this quite a bit. I think the character of these guys is great. Tonight was not one of our better games for sure. We're not running from that. We're owning that.

These guys are putting the work in. These guys are getting better. Tonight was not representative of that. You want to show those in the games. We'll address that and try to improve tomorrow in practice, get ready for the next one.

But these guys believe in what they're doing. They believe in the process. We're building some habits that are important to build. We got to build 'em when it's tough.

The NBA is tough. There's a lot of resiliency that can be built in the NBA. Every team goes through it. They struggled at the beginning of the year. Dallas wasn't playing their best. Their record was below .500. Every team has their moments. I've always believed in the character of our group.



Q. How do you get the work outside of practice to translate into games?

BRAIN KEEFE: I think we do do it at times, to be honest. We just don't do it always consistently. I think we've had some games recently. Obviously at Milwaukee, close game. The Boston game here, close.

We have shown that we can put good stuff out on the court. We just have sometimes some dry spells. Tonight was not a full one. I thought we had a little bit of a stretch there in the second quarter we kind of cut into it. But we couldn't find the momentum in this game, for sure.

Q. How important is it in a difficult stretch to also have to deal with a difficult schedule?

BRIAN KEEFE: Never run from it. Like, I embrace all the challenges. You want to play against the great teams. You want to play against the great players. Embrace it and look forward to the challenge of all of it.

The schedule is the schedule. Everybody has to play the schedule in the NBA. You can't run from it. You can't hide from it. You got to go after it. I think that's what our group is about.

We're going to keep looking forward to those challenges as they come 'cause it keeps coming.

Q. What happened with Malcolm? How is he?

BRIAN KEEFE: Don't know quite yet. Came right in here after. I know he felt a little something. Pulled himself from the game. Don't have an update for you. Sorry.

Q. Any news on Corey Kispert?

BRIAN KEEFE: No timeline yet. Obviously ankle. Don't have anything more than that.

Q. Were you encouraged at all by Justin Champagnie's performance?

BRIAN KEEFE: This is an example of our symbiotic relationship with our (indiscernible). Like he's played great minutes down there. He was prepared. He played a lot of minutes down there. He was ready to play high minutes tonight, was able to step in that role with some bodies down. I thought he really contributed and gave us a good little push tonight.

Credit to Justin for that.

Q. (Off microphone.)

BRIAN KEEFE: I think probably supporting us, supporting them. We do the same when they play. We go to their games, too. We're all just really one big organization, as we talk about a lot.

Q. Did you like the attempts at threes that your team got?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I thought for the most part we got decent threes. Sometimes they just don't go in. That was one of the things tonight.

Q. Bilal, early in the year, looked like he was poised to break out. Can it be a positive thing? Hitting the wall can be a positive thing?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think for me, I'm a very positive person. I like when things are tough, when the challenge is here. I think this a good thing for players. I've been around a lot of great players in this league who had to go through some very tough moments. I think that can build some real resiliency.

That's what I think this league is about because it's night after night, how do you bounce back, how do you stay consistent. You got to fall back into the habits, the work that you do. I think that's what makes players great in this league.

He's learning to go through that. A lot of great players have gone through this, too. I've seen it. He can embrace this challenge, which he already has, he does every day. I have great faith in Bilal.

Thanks, everybody. Good to see you guys.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports