

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Jordan Poole

Media Conference



Wizards 113, Hornets 110

Q. It looked like you were in a lot of pain during that game, and of course you go back in and make the big shot. Can you tell us what you were dealing with?

JORDAN POOLE: A little bump and bruise. Nothing crazy.

Q. How did it feel to go back in there and obviously make a big three to help the team win?

JORDAN POOLE: Rewarding. Rewarding. A team effort, first and foremost. We battled all night. We found ways to continue just to make the right plays, especially down the stretch, found ways to close out the game. Just overall proud of the guys for gutting out a pretty tough win and just finding ways to continue to get better.

Q. Can you take us through that last three? You got the iso with Josh Green. Is that what you wanted? Take us through the play.

JORDAN POOLE: Yeah. Coach called time-out, we got an ATO. First of all, they had a really good ATO prior to that. I think the shot that I shot on Miles was off a little bit. Credit to Alex for crashing the offensive board, putting it in. Then they drew up a really quick ATO, a quick one for a lob out of bounds, LaMelo to Mark, and we were down one, so Coach drew an ATO, something that we practice for moments like this.

I knew the entire time I was going to be aggressive and try to get up a look. I practice those every day, and I've always felt like I've been the man for the moment. I make big shots all the time. Credit to the coaching staff for putting the ball in my hands. Shout-out to my teammates for finding me, as well.

Q. In your post-game interview game with Megan you shouted out the D.C. crowd. Can you talk about feeding off them?

JORDAN POOLE: Yeah, I know it's tough. We're not winning as many games as we want. But I know that the fans are, like, really good fans, sports fans. I want to say that they're some of the best fans in the league. Obviously as a team we've got to give them something to cheer about, but whenever it's a competitive game, they normally find a way to stand up, get involved.

They were really loud in that fourth quarter, probably the loudest I've heard since I've been here the last two years. But I don't think they understand the way players feed off of that in the game.

My previous employer, I had pretty good experience with just feeding off the crowd, the energy, the momentum, and we really felt that, especially being a young team. Guys not being experienced when it comes to moments like that yet, it was really good just to hear them get involved, cheer whenever we got a rebound, cheer whenever we got a stop.

There was a moment I think with about two minutes where everybody was singing, "defense." We need that, especially being a young group, because we feed off of that. Clearly it worked tonight, but you've got to find ways, both sides, from the team and the fans, to kind of be in cahoots.

Q. For you guys, so much of your wins this year have come on hot shooting nights from three. You can shoot poorly from three but rely on your defense and pull it out. What does that mean?

JORDAN POOLE: I mean, defense wins games. Defense wins championships. Just the way the league is going right now, a lot of teams are shooting threes. You normally base -- the best team in the leagues are normally the ones that are kind of alternating the way you play a little bit, and Boston is shooting a lot of threes right now, so statistically you get up more threes, you can score more. I just think that's the way the game is going.

But after being in the league, you're not going to have

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nights where you make them all the time. You're not going to be hot from three all the time. So being able to rely on our defense and our schemes and just our toughness down the stretch -- we had a lot of guys who stepped up today, played big minutes, got big boards, made big plays. Just really happy for our guys to get a win how we did tonight.

Q. What does it say about the culture that you guys are trying to bring? What does a night like this do for that?

JORDAN POOLE: That's a good question. That's a good question. Just find ways to get better. Build off of this, use it as momentum, go back, watch some film, fix the things that we can get better at. You don't want to ride the wave that's too high because we've got a game in a couple days, but embrace it because it's really hard to win in this league, and just find ways to get better.

I think it was really good for us to be in that moment in that situation, especially for our young guys to experience that, experience how chaotic the end of the game can get, having to be locked into the game plan, to the detail, to what Coach draws in a time-out to what the switches are. It gets extremely specific later in that stretch, and I think it's good for our team to see, and I'm glad we were on the winning side of that tonight.

Q. You brought forth a very valid point, that the most successful teams alter the way in which they score, produce on offense. I noticed that the paint play was more of a focal point in tonight's match-up. How do you think that you and your teammates could do more to play more of that style, that fast tempo, and be consistent with it like we've seen tonight?

JORDAN POOLE: In terms of just like Boston getting up a lot of threes now, just the way that they've altered the game? Yeah, clearly -- well, more so you still have to work within the framework of the dynamic of your team. Boston has been building their team over the last couple years, and they've got guys who can tailor their play style to that.

But we also have guys who are coming into their own, figuring out how they want to play in the league. We're learning. We're trying to get up a lot of threes, but I think something Coach harps on night in and night out is just relying on our defense because we're such a young team right now that we're still trying to find our identity on offense.

It's not going to be heavy-hitting nights consistently, but one thing we can bring is effort and defense and be gritty. Teams are just going to have to find ways to come in and

we're going to have to compete, we're going to have to make it tough on them every night, and if we can find ways to get it to close games at the end, we're going to use this experience to try to close games out.

Q. This is the second year you've been put in a leadership position. What does that mean to you, and how does this shot tonight help?

JORDAN POOLE: I love it. I love it.

This is stuff you dream about as a kid. I felt like I was raised properly. I've been in moments. I've been on winning teams all the way back to high school. I've had really good coaches who have taught me, and I feel like I've learned so much to be prepared for this moment, this opportunity. Then just trying to help the guys out with things that I do know.

I'll be the first to tell you that I don't think I know everything at all. We're still learning as a team, as individuals. We just have a really good group in that locker room. We've got guys who want to win. We've got guys who want to work. We've got guys who love the game. I've always wanted to be in a situation where I can just use my positive energy and my high character to push a team, to give guys confidence on the floor to be themselves, to be really good NBA players.

The game winner is cool. That's obviously stuff you think about as a kid, but it's really awesome leading this program, the organization in the right way, using the things that I've learned to put me in a position that I'm in now, and it's really dope.

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