

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Friday, January 24, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Coach Brian Keefe

Media Conference



LA Clippers 110, Washington Wizards 93

Q. Your thoughts on the result tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: Always disappointed in the result. Didn't get the result we wanted. I really liked our second half defense. I thought we really committed to what we were trying to do coverage-wise and the intensity level went way up. Held them to 47 points in the second half.

Love that, love the competitiveness. We were getting our hands on balls, we were getting deflections, we were getting steals.

That was good growth from our defensive against some high-powered offensive players. I thought we tried to do the right thing.

Q. What do you think led to the jump in intensity level from the first to second half?

BRIAN KEEFE: Character of the guys. I think we were trying to do the right things in the first half, when we didn't have some turnovers, got some easy transition for them. I think we were trying to do the right thing defensively.

I think we were in the right spots. We just you upped the level of intensity and made it tougher on them. We didn't shoot the ball as well as we would've liked. I thought the process was right, so I told our guys to keep trusting that, which we will keep doing.

But I thought the defense made a nice jump in the second half and that's a big area of focus for us right now.

Q. They limited you guys to 34% from the field. What did you see from their defense against your offense?

BRIAN KEEFE: They put their hands on us. They're strong and physical. Once we were able to break them down and touch the paint I thought we got some decent looks. Sometimes we played in crowds too much; led to some of our turnovers in the first half. Credit to them for

their physicality.

Q. Brian, did you feel like your team came out in the first half, in the first 31 seconds also of the third quarter with the necessary energy and focus?

BRIAN KEEFE: I didn't think the energy was bad to start the game, even though it probably looked like that. I think we were trying to do the right thing. We were moving the ball. Sometimes when you're not making shots it looks like the energy is not there. I think we were trying to do the right thing.

We called a quick timeout the third just to re -- adjust where I thought we needed to be. Guys responded and I thought we played really hard.

Q. Was the timeout early in the third quarter, was that a tactical change or...

BRIAN KEEFE: We gave up a layup in transition that we talked about we didn't want to give up tonight. We just addressed it and moved forward, and the guys really responded after that. Came out and were super locked into the game plan.

Q. You mentioned the second half you liked much better than what you saw in the first half. You guys were able to cut it to 15 and eventually 12. What went into cutting that lead down that you liked, that you want to see continue?

BRIAN KEEFE: We got stops and we got defensive rebounds; had some timely baskets during that stretch. But it was our defense. We shot the ball a little bit better in the second half, but our defense got stops. We got deflections. We got turnovers. We put them in positions, areas we wanted to force them into, guys we wanted to shoot.

I thought that was a good adjustment by our guys, execution of the game plan in the second half with force.



Q. As much focus and preparation that you put into the game plan, what can you put your finger on, if anything, as to why they didn't come out the way that you would've liked them to in the start of the first half versus the way they did in that second half?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think we actually came out and did the right thing. I think our offense affected us and led to some turnovers. I think when we got our defense set in the first half we were good. We made them play in the right areas.

Couple of the guys they had shots where we wanted them to take, so that sometimes can happen. That's on me coverage-wise.

But like for the most part when we were in the half court our defense was solid. I think just the level of intensity in terms of how we executed our coverages in the second half, give credit to our guys to keep fighting. A night when he weren't making shots we are capable of, that didn't distract from the effort and energy in the second half.

Q. Bub's shooting seems to be in an upward motion. I have noticed the work he has put in specifically with the way he's going through his shooting motion with JJ. How much of that has led to him not having more confidence but more confidence in the way the shot has been falling?

BRIAN KEEFE: To me it always goes back to the daily work, which we talk a lot about here. The consistency of your habits, how you work on your game, how you prepare yourself. I think that's one of the things I often mention, is how you prepare is going to lead you to be a more consistent player in this league.

Our guys are terrific in that area and they're building good habits.

Thanks everybody. Safe travels.

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