

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Mavericks 130, Wizards 108

Q. Where do you think you lost the game?

BRIAN KEEFE: First quarter. That was the game. That was the whole game. They blitzed us in this game. Give them credit, but we didn't have the necessary force. They beat us to a lot of loose balls. Those turned into some threes. Thompson obviously got hot, but it was the first quarter. Pretty much after that the game was even. I think we won the second half. Lost the second quarter by four, but we've got to have better starts. Didn't have a great start. We tried to figure out a way and then we got into the game a little bit, but it was too late.

Q. What do you think led to the poor start?

BRIAN KEEFE: It's always a little bit of a combination of some things that you do. We'll take that one ourselves. Just not the force necessary to make it hard on them, but you've got to give them a little bit of credit, too. Thompson hit some tough threes. A couple coverage mistakes, but some of those he got it going. I think we got him going because we left him open, though.

Q. At halftime you were able to mentioned the pace that they were playing with, you needed to match that to give yourselves a better opportunity in the second half. Do you feel like you did that in the second half versus the way that you guys had started?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, we played better even going into the second quarter. Second half was much better, much better force, much better intensity. We started changing that I'd say the last six minutes of the second quarter. But the start killed us.

Q. This was after the Phoenix game, but Kyle talked about basically how for much of the season he'd been trying to fit in and trying to help with the development of the young players, but against Phoenix he was playing in the moment, doing more of his own thing and being aggressive. I'm curious as a coach who's

trying to help the development of the team, how do you react to those comments?

BRIAN KEEFE: We want him -- like we talked about the other day, we want him to be aggressive. He's trying to find his rhythm. He's been out for so much, in and out of the lineup a lot this year. That's what we know Kyle is capable of. Rebounding, pushing, expending energy on defense, attacking the rim because he can make plays for others, so we want him to be aggressive. He's finding his rhythm with the different units that he's playing with, but that's what he's capable of, and that's what we're going to start seeing more and more of because he's getting his legs underneath him. I think that's the biggest thing is we want him to have an aggressive mindset for sure.

Q. To him it seems like that aggression sometimes comes at the cost of player development. How do you think he is trying to balance those things and should balance those things?

BRIAN KEEFE: We want him to be aggressive. I think he's trying to find what that looks like for him with the group, and that's normal as you're figuring out different rotations. He hasn't played with some of the lineups, so some of that stuff is normal.

But when he's downhill and he's attacking, that's good for everybody, and that starts with his rebounding. When he really rebounds, he can really push in transition. He had, I think, nine to ten defensive boards last game in Phoenix. We want him to continue to play like that.

Q. You don't typically get to utilize your full rotation. Tonight you mentioned the first quarter, but tonight you were able to go into your bench and get those guys some minutes. What did you think of the way they came out? After kind of just sitting and watching the game that long, it's difficult to come off the bench and have some impact?

BRIAN KEEFE: Rich had a nice impact on the game, obviously Justin came in, Johnny gave us some good

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minutes down the stretch, got to see Tristan, Anthony, PBJ. Everybody got a little bit of a chance. I thought those guys, when their number was called they were all ready and they all contributed to good basketball, so credit to them because it's not always easy when you're coming into the game maybe seven minutes to go. We ended up winning that quarter, so that was good stuff.

Q. Do you have any update on Alex?

BRIAN KEEFE: I do not yet, no.

Q. Did the injury happen on that fall he had in the first quarter?

BRIAN KEEFE: I believe so, yes. Don't quote me exactly, but I think it was when he was going to the basket. I think he might have stepped on someone's foot.

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