

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Wizards 119, Nets 102

Q. First things first, three straight wins, first time doing that this season. How did it feel?

BRIAN KEEFE: Happy for the guys. Played good basketball. Thought we started off the game with pretty good defense. The second quarter not as great. But third quarter we ramped up the D and I think they had 12, but the ball movement was terrific tonight. Ball was just moving, hitting the open man. Always helps when you make shots, but the process was right and the guys were really trusting each other. I think we had 40 assists on 44 made baskets, so that's pretty good.

Q. Bilal first career triple-double. What did you see from him with the assist side of the game?

BRIAN KEEFE: Just delivering the ball, getting in the paint, making the right plays. Starts with his activity and his rebounding. Some of that stuff is in transition, so it's all tied together. Always starts with his defense and his ability to get the ball off the board and push, find guys in transition, then he was able to get downhill and find guys really well tonight. Nice job.

Q. What do you think allowed him to get downhill as much as he did tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: I actually think he gets downhill a lot. We obviously shot the ball great, but we were spraying it out, he was attacking, he saw openings, he was aggressive. Really good game for Bilal. Really happy for him.

Q. Tristan played 18 minutes. What did you see that you liked from his play?

BRIAN KEEFE: You're maybe new to Tristan. Tristan is a good player. He's a learning and developing player, but he has a good feel for the game. He's a good passer and obviously you can see the shooting, but he has a good understanding of space, when to cut, when to make reads, when to make the extra pass. I thought he did a nice job.

Q. You've talked about wanting to see him become a defensive anchor. How do you think he did in that respect?

BRIAN KEEFE: I thought he grew as the game went along. He used his vertical at the rim, was big. That's an area we've been focusing on. I thought as the game got going, he got better.

Q. I know when it comes to the triple-doubles, Russ kind of put it in the stratosphere with the way he was able to do it, but if you can kind of walk us through how difficult those truly are to come by, especially with the way that the game is played today and how the three can kind of change things, especially for a guy who is asked to do so much on the defensive end like Bilal.

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, it's interesting you bring up Russ and obviously I coached him for a very long time. You need stamina. That's what Bilal has. You need to have a certain energy level to be able to defend the best player, go get the rebound, attack, make plays, score. Bilal is growing and developing into that, the ability to be able to do all that. He was terrific tonight. But you need stamina and mental stamina, and Bilal showed that tonight.

Q. The third quarter when I talked to Cape at halftime, he mentioned trying to limit the paint action they had. You guys had a 12-point advantage in the third quarter along with paint attacks and getting some scoring in there, but you also held them to six points in the third quarter in the paint. What shifted defensively with trying to limit how much action they were getting in there?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think all of us decided at the half that we liked how we were playing. We didn't love our second quarter defense. Give the guys all the credit. They really buckled down in that third, and obviously that kind of changed the game. But they wanted to take away the drives, take away the paint, and I think obviously that's

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what they were able to accomplish. Terrific effort by our guys in the second half defensively.

Q. I know we've talked about Richaun multiple times, and you speak very glowingly of him, but the energy he brings, especially when Bub went down and he had his teammate's back, albeit picking up a technical foul, but in that type of moment when you have a veteran guy who has been in a situation as he has all season step up that way for his teammate, what does that say about the type of culture you're building and what he brings to this culture?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, Rich has been terrific. That's who he is. He brings an edge to our team. I've always loved that about Rich, the physicality he brings, the toughness. You saw some of the diving for loose balls recently. And then he was protecting his teammate tonight, and that's always the stuff we love here for sure.

Q. Kyshawn has been, as of late, shooting the ball above 40 percent in the last handful of games. Especially when you look at the beginning of the season shooting it just over 30, what has shifted for him? I know you talk about the work that gets put in, but it also feels like he's playing a little bit more freely, if that makes sense. He seems like he's got kind of this aura about him that there's no pressure on his shoulders, if you will.

BRIAN KEEFE: He's learning and growing. That's part of the process of becoming an NBA player is the consistency factor, and you get thrown in like we throw these guys in, which we love, because our guys are competitors, and you're learning your teammates and stuff -- like we never worried about those things one bit. I have never even thought about it because of the work. It's always about the work. It's always about the stuff behind the scenes. This guy is at the top of the food chain in terms of time in the gym and working on his craft.

I knew that that stuff would change.

Q. I know earlier you said you couldn't talk about potential trades. Can you talk now about --

BRIAN KEEFE: I cannot.

Q. Even when it's official?

BRIAN KEEFE: We'll talk about that another day.

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