

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Hawks 125, Wizards 111

Q. What do you think made the difference there end of the first half, beginning of the second half where Atlanta started to pull away?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, that was the difference in the game. We were up 54-49. They closed the half on a big run. That bled into the start of the second. Give our guys credit for fighting back in the fourth. I think we cut it down to eight so we didn't give in to the game, but that was the run that changed it for sure.

Q. There was a stretch where it was 112-104 and there was a few opportunities --

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, we had two shots and we missed. That would have cut the lead a little bit but we did get it to eight so we showed some good resilience there. But taking care of the ball, closing to start the second and third were the difference.

Q. Bub had a career high tonight. What did you see from him?

BRIAN KEEFE: He's just tough. He's just a competitor, tried to will us back into the game. Obviously he made some shots, but this is Bub growing before our eyes. Nice effort by him to keep us in the game and get us close there in the fourth.

Q. Slow start for Jordan shooting the ball but he figured it out. What led to that breakthrough?

BRIAN KEEFE: We started getting some stops, most importantly, and then we were able to get out in transition, he was able to get loose. I thought he actually had good looks in the first half, just didn't make some of them. We didn't shoot the ball overly well in the first half.

Q. You guys had a pretty overwhelming advantage inside, points in the paint, rebounds, that kind of thing. Is it frustrating when you do so much well but the

three-point shooting just kind of varies some nights and doesn't go your way and leads to the result sometimes?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, shots can come and go, but we didn't take care of the ball as well as we should have. Some of our shots weren't exactly always on rhythm, so give them a little bit of credit, and our defense was not enough force to make them take contested ones. Give Young credit; he made some tough ones, but some of the other ones were offensive rebounds or transition that we didn't get matched up quick enough on. Those we can control.

Q. You say Bub is growing right before our eyes; where are the things you're seeing the biggest bits of growth as he takes on added offensive responsibility?

BRIAN KEEFE: It's just game by game, his leadership, his ability to read the game, what it needs, what it takes, that feel for when to be aggressive, when to get his teammates involved. All those things he's grown on.

Q. Season-high 20 field goal attempts for Bilal. What did you see from the shots he was getting?

BRIAN KEEFE: He got good shots. He was attacking and was downhill. He got some open threes that he's been making lately that I liked, but I liked that he was constantly in the paint. That led to some offensive rebounds and some of the ones he didn't make, but he was aggressive tonight, which I want him to continue to be.

Q. Can you speak to how Malcolm Brogdon impacts the lineup whenever he's in?

BRIAN KEEFE: Just a steadying presence for us, understands the game flow, time and score, what to do. Just a good solid approach and generates rim shots for us because of his ability to get to the rim, get to the free-throw line, draws fouls.

Q. Seems like every time we ask you guys about

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Tristan himself, it's emphasized the defensive end and his improvement there. How has he progressed on that end of the floor?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think each one of these games he's shown some progress a little bit. Using his size, he's really tall, vertical at the rim, a little bit better tonight. You've got to get game reps in this league, and he's getting some against some good players. That's all part of it. The 5 man is such a tough part of defense because you're really involved in every play, such an important part of your defense, and he's grown a little bit each game from that.

Q. Tristan is someone who reads the game really well on offense. How have you seen him doing that on defense? Seems like at times he can be a little bit late coming over to contest.

BRIAN KEEFE: Some of them he's been good. He took a charge the other night, so he has a good feel for some of that stuff, but you're involved. You get so many volume of stuff when you're a center; you're involved in almost every possession. So there's no hiding when you're in those positions. So there's some he's going to be good at and there's some he's going to learn and need some progress on, but that's part of his development. And I think he's done overall good job, but we're going to keep working on it.

Q. Does the sheer mass of repetitions that the 5 men get speed up the development process on the defensive end for them?

BRIAN KEEFE: For sure. It's like a quarterback. You're getting reps. You need as many reps as you can. It's hard to simulate that guarding me in a practice.

Q. A.J. Johnson got some run there. He had four quick fouls. How do you think he can grow on the defensive end and limit those?

BRIAN KEEFE: Some of that I thought he used his strength better than people would have thought. Some of them he got caught in a couple tough ways, but I liked his physicality. He kind of chested some guys. He's just got to show his hands at the end. But I liked what he's shown us in his first two games. He's not been scared. He doesn't know all our stuff yet, and he's just been aggressive, and I like that mentality.

Q. Where is A.J. at in terms of his acclimation and him and some of the other trade acquisitions in terms of their acclimation to you guys' schemes?

BRIAN KEEFE: At the very beginning. At the very

beginning.

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