

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Marcus Smart

Media Conference



Hawks 125, Wizards 111

Q. What was your reaction to the trade?

MARCUS SMART: I was a little surprised but also not -- at the same time I figured I'd get traded. Just didn't know where. Was kind of just waiting. But was a little bit surprised. It was a little last minute. But that's out of my control, and I tend to not focus on things I can't control.

Q. What do you think you can bring to the Wizards as a vet both on the floor and in the locker room?

MARCUS SMART: Just my experience. I'm in my 11th season, and I played for really good teams up until now and was able to do some things with them, and really just bring that experience over here. It's a young group of guys, really looking to figure out their own in this league and just helping them with that.

Q. I'm curious what you think of Bub Carrington, a young point guard, what you think about his game and if you maybe see a little bit of yourself in him?

MARCUS SMART: Yeah, for sure. The way he's able to get downhill, put pressure on the defenses is definitely a sight to see. Me being a guard, a bigger guard, as well, that can get downhill, as well, to be able to see that and come in and be able to work with Bub and see him just progress, but he's heading in the right direction, and that's all you can ask for.

Q. It's a pretty jarring change in team situation, going from Memphis, second in the west, to the Wizards rebuilding as a team. What's that change like for you?

MARCUS SMART: I guess you can kind of say it's confusing because you're just trying to figure out where you stand in that and figure out what you can do to help without stepping on any toes. But also being yourself.

At the same time, it's a fresh start. I get to come into a rebuild to where they're looking for that help. They're

looking for that advice and that experience, and I'm the one to be able to come in and help with that.

Q. In your initial conversations with the front office, how have they pitched the role to you?

MARCUS SMART: Just be me. That's really it. Be me, be what got you here, all the things that you do, the work ethic, on the court, off the court, being the vet to these young guys, and how this game works and how this league works.

Q. How are you feeling physically?

MARCUS SMART: Feeling great. The finger is healing up perfectly fine. We're going to continue to monitor it and make sure we get it back to where it needs to be fully and get back out there.

Q. You were there for the establishment of a pretty robust culture, especially on defense in Boston, one of the people that spearheaded that culture. What did you learn from that experience and what can you apply here with the Wizards?

MARCUS SMART: Just what it takes to go into it. It takes everybody, and it's also not easy. When you're trying to do something great, it takes a lot. But like I said, we have a great young group here, talent-wise, and that's going to make it a lot easier for us to get on that track because of that.

Q. I want to ask you about that. Obviously you know defense really well. What do you think about the foundation they're starting to lay, some of the pieces they're putting in place on that end of the floor?

MARCUS SMART: It's great. Like I say, we've got the talent. It's just finding where everybody fits in this big puzzle of ours and putting us in the right place to succeed and figuring it out. That's what it's going to take, me being here, an experienced guy, trying to glue it together and figure out the things that we're missing.

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Q. The injuries for you, it seems like it's been a bunch of minor things the last couple years. How would you describe your journey to get back to being healthy and being the player that you've been?

MARCUS SMART: It definitely has a couple knick and knacks over the last couple years here. As much as we hate injuries, I'm thankful that those are my bigger concerns and it's not anything worse.

But I feel like it's definitely been an up-and-down journey for me trying to get back, but I'm using this time to my best ability to make sure I'm doing everything that I can to stay healthy and get back healthy.

Q. I know you're familiar with this area with the playoff series and coming through here. What do you think about not only Jordan's organization but living in D.C. and coming to this city?

MARCUS SMART: Yeah, I mean, amongst those playoff runs, me and my wife actually got to get out and go experience D.C. a little bit, and we love it. To be able to be in a city where it's a melting pot of people, diversity everywhere you go, and it's just culture everywhere you go and you get to find something different and see what you like. That's the beauty about it. I'm excited to be here and I'm excited to enjoy what D.C. has to offer as a city.

Q. What stood out most to you during your visits to D.C. as you explored the city?

MARCUS SMART: To be honest, for me, just the city. Coming from Memphis, the city wasn't as big as it is here, and me being from Dallas, from a city, to be able to come here and experience that was something that I was looking forward to and excited for.

I'd probably say the city is what's grown on me.

Q. What are your initial impressions of the Wizards' young guys from your first few conversations with them?

MARCUS SMART: For me, I would have to say that their eagerness to learn. From the moment I got here, asking me questions, what can we do during this game, yesterday's game, at halftime just picking my brain. That's going to be key for young guys. Finding somebody that they can talk to and not have to worry about the backlash of it, being right, being wrong, not understanding anything and learning and growing together.

Q. Being from Dallas, we have to know if you're a

Cowboys fan.

MARCUS SMART: I just got asked this. I'm not a Cowboys fan. I'm just a fan of good football. But I am a Cowboys fan when they play the Eagles, unfortunately, because I've got a lot of friends that are Eagles fans, so I've got to mess with them, so when the Eagles are playing, I'm definitely a Cowboys fan.

Q. I'm curious being a vet if there was any kind of tutelage you got when you were a rookie that you're now trying to impart on rookies that you play with.

MARCUS SMART: Yes, for me, it was just -- I had the opportunity to play with the likes of Brandon Bass, Jameer Nelson, Rondo before he was traded for a little bit, and the main thing that I just got from those guys is just come in and give everything you've got. Everything else will fall in line. Find out what can keep you on the floor, whatever that is, other than offense because offense is going to come and go. Find something that keeps you on the court.

That was my main thing. For me that was defense. I put my hat on that end, and that's one of the things that I honor myself on and try to bring to this team.

Q. You're obviously familiar with Malcolm, played with him in Boston. How do you think that chemistry between you two can lend itself to a new organization here?

MARCUS SMART: It'll be great. That's the beauty of playing with somebody on a previous team or knowing somebody coming into it. I had the ability to learn from Malcolm, as well, learn his tendencies and what he likes, and I think that kind of smooths things over for the process of me coming in and joining the team.

Q. Marcus, you were drafted on a team that won just 25 games and you stayed long enough to be a part of a Finals run, three Conference Finals runs, I believe. Does that give you more optimism in joining a 9-43 Wizards team that maybe a normal vet wouldn't have because you've seen a team draft right, you've seen a team build naturally and reach heights, that when you inherited them they were a down-on-their-luck franchise?

MARCUS SMART: Yeah, for me, I guess you could say it was some of that, but for me it was just personally, the person who I am. My whole goal was to come in no matter where I was going and to make that team as best as possible as I can. If they were already good, make them great.



But with the experience of going through a rebuild and seeing that and being with a team, I am optimistic about that. These guys been working together. They've built their relationship. It's my turn to come in and integrate myself the best the way I can without messing up what they have and going and being that adhesive glue that glues us together.

Q. Obviously you and Malcolm were former teammates, were Conference Finals teammates; do you think that that along with Jordan Poole having a ring, do you think those type of accomplishments can almost be just a -- even without the lead-by-example factor, be just like light for young players like Sarr or Carrington to almost see as an example of what to get to?

MARCUS SMART: Yeah, definitely. I mean, it should be. And if it's not, then that's a problem. That's just what it is. It should be.

When you see a guy that has accomplished or came close to accomplishing what you are trying to, you might want to listen to what they've got to say. You might want to follow what they're doing or try to pick their brain a little bit and try to implement it into your action plan that you have to get better.

But like you say, you just named me, Malcolm, Jordan, guys who have battled amongst each other and have some great battles. Jordan is a champion; I made it there, lost, and me and Malcolm to the Eastern Conference. But definitely, it should light a fire. That's something that you should look and see and go, whatever they did, I want to do; how can I get there.

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