

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Bucks 104, Wizards 101

Q. Can you take us through the last possession with Khris?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, we got a stop. We thought we had a break, but we were bobbling the ball, and I was trying to call a time-out just because I wanted the possession. We could have maybe gone. But we got a decent shot at the end. We ended up having to take it out at half court. The guys executed the play well. Tough shot by Khris, but hey, he made some big ones to get us back in the game. Terrific.

Q. What went into the decision to play through him near the end of the game?

BRIAN KEEFE: He's been doing this a long time. He's done this at a high level, so we've got trust in him to be able to execute. He's a closer, has been for a very long time in this league, and we were going to take advantage of having him on our roster.

Q. What allowed them to take control in the third quarter?

BRIAN KEEFE: They upped their physicality, their ball pressure, their defense, and they won some of the 50/50 rebound game. But give credit to our guys. Huge comeback in the end, huge fight. Our defense was terrific in the fourth. Pretty much two and a half quarters, really good defense. Like the guys really buckled down, and that's how we got back in the game. We didn't shoot the ball great in the second half, but our defense propelled us to have a chance to win.

Good growth. Our guys showed a lot of resiliency tonight. Really good stuff.

Q. What did you see from how they defended Alex, especially after the hot start and how he navigated it?

BRIAN KEEFE: I thought he was fine. Obviously he hit

the threes early and he had some ones in the second half he hit. Didn't hit them all, but I thought he was great tonight, aggressive. This is really only his second game back really. Liked his force, liked his aggressiveness. I liked how he played tonight.

Q. How impressed were you with Kyshawn George and how he played Giannis tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: Fought him, Bilal fought him. We were switching on him. We were showing crowds. We took multiple charges on him. That's the grittiness and toughness we want to show as we grow as a team. Really good stuff.

Q. Haven't had Marcus and Khris with you long, but you got your team and game active for the first time. How has it been since they've come into the program?

BRIAN KEEFE: First of all, they've been great. Really thankful and grateful to have them with us. I thought they did well. They're getting acclimated to what we do. They kind of fit right in. We're going to get better and learn and grow as a group as we continue to build, but I thought they were really good tonight. It was nice to have them out there.

Q. As for Marcus and Khris, are there any particular traits you're hoping they can integrate into this final post-deadline part of the season or any players you're hoping they can rub off on?

BRIAN KEEFE: I just think we want them to be themselves, and what that is is really high-character guys who have been huge experience in winning basketball, playoff basketball. These guys have played deep runs, Eastern Conference for a long time. They've probably played against each other in some of those. To have those guys on your team who are good players and really good guys, really high-character people, that's just going to rub off naturally. They don't have to do anything more than just be themselves, and that's already showing with our group. So good stuff for sure.

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Q. The last few games have been truly competitive. How have you felt about the young guys scaling their games up with the roster in flux?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think those guys are showing improvement from week to week, month to month. I've been happy with their development, and now we've got more time. We've got more games, so let's take advantage of this and let's get better as a group and get better collectively, and that's what we're focused on. We're looking forward to this challenge this last part of the season.

Q. It seems like Marcus communicates a lot on the defensive end. What can you say about that element and what it brings to your team?

BRIAN KEEFE: That what goes into being a good defensive team. It starts with communication. That's the experience. That's maybe one of the questions you asked, the stuff that can rub off. Like his ability to communicate in the game, in time-outs, things he's seeing, that stuff is invaluable.

Q. The defensive intensity you saw from your team late, especially in that run as you guys kept getting to those loose balls, forcing, what does that say about the team, and is that exactly what you want to see?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, because the game is not always going to be perfect. The game is not played perfect. We came out, they made a run, and we responded. That's the game. That's how life goes. We didn't make a lot of shots, as much as we probably would have liked to, and that didn't deter us from bouncing back from a tough moment. So credit to our guys. Those are things that you can build on, and I was really pleased with that tonight.

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