

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Monday, February 24, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Marcus Smart

Media Conference



Wizards 107, Nets 99

Q. The team had 23 turnovers but held Brooklyn to under 100 points. How is that possible?

MARCUS SMART: It took everybody. That Brooklyn team, as we all know, they don't back down from nobody, and they're going to come out and test you on both ends. We did a good job responding. It took everybody. It wasn't perfect, but we stayed the course.

Q. What about the fourth quarter in particular? You guys held them to 12 points.

MARCUS SMART: That just shows the focus and intent we had, trying to get better on both ends, but especially that defensive end. Shots for us always aren't going to fall, stuff is going to happen such as turnovers, and you've got to figure out a way to win such like doing those things on the defensive end, and that was tonight. It was a great performance.

Shout-out to Bilal, doing his thing, being able to stay in their game even though he got in a little foul trouble, and that's frustrating, but to come in and keep that aggressiveness that he had, that was big for us.

Q. What was it like to get the reaction from the crowd when you took that charge late in the fourth quarter?

MARCUS SMART: Felt good. Brought back some memories for me. But no, that's what I do. It just felt good to be back on the floor doing what I love.

Q. You got the kip up right after. How long have you been able to do that?

MARCUS SMART: Since I was a little kid. It's just part of me, who I am, my personality, my character. I think it just goes to show the passion that I have. Hopefully I can continue to do it as long as I can.

Q. To paraphrase what you see in your postgame

interview, you said you still do this. How important is it to you to prove to everybody, not just yourself but to everybody else, that you still have a lot to offer to an NBA team?

MARCUS SMART: I mean, it's huge. As a player who loves playing the game who's a very competitive person, you always play with a chip on your shoulder. To be able to come out here and show the world that you still can do what you're known for -- there were some people that probably slept since I hadn't played in a couple years consistently, and they probably forgot about me, which is cool. I'm used to it. But like I said, I can still do what I do.

Q. Over the last couple years, did any part of you ever wonder if you could reach the levels that you had before?

MARCUS SMART: Yeah, I'm always thinking. I'm always trying to get better. What can I do to maintain who I am but also get better in the process. It's not easy. You've got to be real with yourself. Sometimes you don't like it, but for me, I have a great supporting cast, and they allow me to focus on doing that and getting better for me.

Q. What's stood out to you the most about Jordan Poole and the young guys so far?

MARCUS SMART: Just the camaraderie that they have. We've got a lot of young guys doing things that they're not used to. They're put in situations, they're put in the fire really early, and it's frustrating because things aren't going the way that you would expect when you're out there playing as a competitor. But they're sticking with it. That's all you can ask for, and that's what I love to see, and that's what makes this team great. They're in the process right now, and we're just going to see what we do.

Q. You and Khris Middleton have had some battles over the years. What's it like being his teammate and teaming up to get the stops that you got tonight?

MARCUS SMART: I need to get some freaking rest, man.

ASAP . . . when all is said, we're done.®
sports

Khris is going to run you everywhere and use his body to get to the rim, shoot threes and just do it all. It was good to finally have him on my side and watch him do what he does best. I enjoyed that.

Q. When you join a really young team that's more focused on development, is there any part of you that worries, are they going to rely on me too much as a mentor rather than giving me opportunities to play on the court?

MARCUS SMART: No. I mean, you know, I think I'm that unique player where I can do both, play and mentor at the same time. Also locked into playing. My game speaks for itself, as well. Leading by example is something that I live by, and I'm not worried about that at all. If I'm on the court, I'm on the court. If not, I'm going to help you when I'm off it.

Q. What did it mean for you and BK to close with you and Khris?

MARCUS SMART: It meant a lot. It showed the trust that he has in us. He's trusting his vets to come out and get the job done.

Q. Can you speak to Kyshawn George's defense? He finished with three steals, three blocks, very active hands in the paint. What did you see from him?

MARCUS SMART: You see that fire. He's talking crap back to guys. He's holding his own. He's being physical. He's taking contact and he's dishing out contact. That's what you've got to have in a young team. Guys are going to try you, especially the way the record looks for us. Guys are going to come in and think it's going to be easy, and we showed that it's not. That's what you've got to have.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports