

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Thursday, March 13, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Wizards 129, Pistons 125

Q. Brian, what was the most gratifying part of this?

BRIAN KEEFE: Our resilience, our ability to stay with it. It was a back-and-forth game. Both teams were making runs, and we executed down the stretch really well. Some really good execution offensively, and then Alex came up with a huge block there at the end, and we rebounded well tonight. We focused the game and we controlled the boards much better, and our passing was terrific.

Q. Is part of what made this win a good one, especially good one, that so many people contributed, especially the three rookies, in crunch time?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, it was everybody. We just talked about that in the locker room. It was contributions up and down the rosters. We had guys in foul trouble, so we had to change up the lineups. Guys stepped up at different points. Everybody contributed, and then obviously we played really well down the stretch.

Q. What did you think that Kyshawn's threes and really the willingness to shoot those in those key moments showed?

BRIAN KEEFE: Shows you the mental toughness that he has. Like he hadn't had a great scoring game early. I don't know if he had scored before going into the fourth maybe. Had some foul trouble. Just shows you the game is never perfect. But if you stay with it and stick with it, the game can turn, and he turned it big-time in the fourth. Really proud of him.

Q. To have won this game despite the free throw disparity --

BRIAN KEEFE: Didn't notice.

Q. You talked about the resiliency. With as many players, especially in the first half, that you had in foul trouble, knowing that it was not going to be the type of

finish it was, the back and forth, needing all types of different lineups, what does it say about what you have been building towards, especially with the consistency that you saw from them fighting tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: These guys just stepped up. Supporting each other, supporting your teammates. Whoever is out there, let's get this done.

That's the stuff how you build when you're -- the games, like I've said, there are games that you have throughout the season that you get a tough call, you get in foul trouble, you're maybe not shooting the ball well. Maybe you need your teammate to pick you up for a little bit, and then you do it for your teammate. You pick them up when the time comes, when your time comes back around.

I thought we did that really well tonight. I loved that. That's really what team is about is that you share in your experiences, and they really bonded with each other to fight through, hey, I got you, I got you a couple minutes' rest, you come back. That type of thing. Guys just stepped up when their opportunity was there. It was great.

Q. I spoke with Corey this morning about the rebounding, more so asking him about the way he, Bub and Justin rebound as guards, but within his answer to me he had mentioned how important it is for you all as a team when the threes are not consistently falling the way that you would like them to, what those offensive rebounds can do for you guys on second-chance opportunities. Do you feel like tonight was one of those nights where it afforded you guys the opportunity to have more possessions succeeding to the win?

BRIAN KEEFE: For sure. We got some key ones there late. I think we got a key one in the last minute or so that led to some free throws. That's why offensive rebounding is so important. It gives you another chance to score, another chance to settle down, get a shot up on the rim. I thought we did a great job on the backboard tonight.

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Q. We haven't seen too much emotion from Alex this season, but on that second block, the one that you successfully challenged, the out-of-bounds, we got to see a little bit of emotion from him. Is that kind of the growth that we're starting to see him -- not just what he does on the floor but kind of showing who he is as a person on the floor, as well, too?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, everybody channels their energy in different ways. I love that he celebrated a defensive play. Wasn't just an offensive play. That's winning stuff. That's a winning play he made, and he wanted to be excited about that. That's great because -- we want him to anchor our defense, and that was a big play he made down the stretch.

Q. What was your rationale to devote the vast majority of the guard minutes to Kyshawn, Bub, Marcus in the fourth quarter and not play Jordan as much in the fourth quarter?

BRIAN KEEFE: Jordan got in some foul trouble. I was just going with the rhythm of the game. We did bring him back late with under two minutes to go. They're going to guard Jordan. Some of those baskets we got, we kind of spaced him out, and they're face-guarding him, so we got some easy baskets.

It was just the rhythm of the game. Like we were saying, we were mixing and matching lineups all night, and we just felt like that was a good rhythm we had with that group on both ends of the floor, but we did bring him back late for offense to space the court, and that helped us because we got some easy baskets. Alex got a couple dunks because of it.

Q. As well as the young guys played tonight, particularly down the stretch, how important was it to have three veterans who played significant minutes tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, those guys have been great. When we're on runs, they know how to stop runs. They make big defensive plays. They can help us get organized on offense. They bring a confidence to our team. They've brought that, all of them, and I thought Corey played a really good game tonight, too, so you can count him as a mini-veteran, I guess. But those guys were terrific.

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