

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Raptors 112, Wizards 104

Q. Speaking of shooting, how would you evaluate the offense tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think we were 5 for 11 in the first quarter from three, and obviously I don't think we made a lot of shots after that. I don't even know what we finished. 11, so we made six more the rest of the game. I thought we had some good looks. Guys just didn't make them as much as we have in the past. Alex has been shooting the ball great. He got some good looks. We would take the same looks again.

So the process was right, just didn't make some of them. Kind of an ugly game for both teams from shooting for a long time, then they hit a couple threes in the fourth that kind of changed the game.

Q. How about the impact of A.J. Johnson?

BRIAN KEEFE: He's been great. He's getting better and better every game. It's great to see him in these situations grow. I thought he's doing a nice job. You can see his athleticism, getting to the rim. Obviously had some great highlight plays tonight, but I like how he's playing; I like how he's progressing.

Q. Bub career highlight, 11 rebounds. Can you speak to how he's improved in that department?

BRIAN KEEFE: That's one of the things he's got a knack for is rebounding for a guard, and we talked about that, I think, in the pregame stuff. When your guards can rebound, it can start your break. So when he's doing that, he can kick it ahead and get some easy transition.

Nice to see Bub have a good game tonight. Happy for him.

Q. With A.J. specifically, you mentioned his rim running. Can you speak to how much it helps to have a lob threat like that, especially in transition, a guy who just has a nose for the rim?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I mean, it just gives you vertical spacing when you're out in transition. You're able to convert. You can hit him. He's getting out fast. He does have a knack for scoring, that's for sure.

Q. How is Kyshawn?

BRIAN KEEFE: I don't have an update yet. We'll probably know more tomorrow. We'll see.

Q. How encouraged are you by A.J.'s ability to draw fouls, and how hard-nosed he is considering he's a little slight and he's still attacking the basket against a guy as tough and big looking as Orlando Robinson?

BRIAN KEEFE: Sure. He's got an explosive first step, good change of pace to his game that allows him to get on the rim. That's something that's really valuable to your team. He's brought that to us since we've had him, and we're learning more and more how to put him in situations to take advantage of that, but you can definitely see his burst and his ability to get to the rim. It's great.

Q. What did you think of Alex's shot selections tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: I thought it was great. It's the same shots he's been taking here for the last couple weeks. He just didn't make some of them. I love the aggressiveness. I love that he got nine free throws up. That's how you become a consistent scorer in this league. You get free throw attempts. So I love the aggressiveness. Some nights you're going to have like that, but the aggressiveness was good.

Q. With A.J. outside of just his adjustment to you guys' schemes, what is the biggest improvement you've seen as he's started to get some regular NBA experience?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think his comfortability with his



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teammates and the stuff that we're doing, how he can learn to attack. I think you're just seeing that, a bit of growth each game.

Q. What have you noticed from his confidence as someone who hasn't got in the early career opportunities that the rookies who started the season in Washington did?

BRIAN KEEFE: He's a confident young man. He's got belief in his abilities, and you can see that on the court.

Q. Are you okay with Alex taking some threes that aren't wide open, like some semi-contested, contested on a regular basis, or is that something that you're not worried about right now?

BRIAN KEEFE: I always want all of our guys to take uncontested threes. Occasionally you're going to take one at the end of the clock. That's going to happen sometimes. But for the most part, he takes good threes. So I've never had a problem with any of the shots he's taken from there.

Q. With Tristan defensively, what have you made of his progress this year, and is there anything you'd like to see him continue to improve?

BRIAN KEEFE: His rim protection is improving. His pick-and-roll defense is improving. But like our whole roster, he's still got ways to work on. This is why he's out there getting time. I liked our two-big lineup tonight, see what that looked like again, but we're in that stage where we need to keep growing, and that's a step that he needs to take on that end, but he has this year for sure.

Q. Third game against Toronto, third time that you guys have struggled to contain them on the offensive rebounding. What are you noticing that has been a common theme in each of those games?

BRIAN KEEFE: They're an attack-the-rim team, so teams who attack the rim like that, it can lead to second-chance points because they're putting so much pressure. Their bigs are coming over -- you saw some of our shot blocking tonight, but sometimes when you're doing that, it leaves the backside open for offensive rebounds. And it's something they do really well; you've got to give them credit.

Q. With them crashing, do you feel like you guys could have taken advantage of some of the fast break opportunities?

BRIAN KEEFE: We've got to get the ball. That's the key, right? We've got to get the ball first. We did get some transition looks, good stuff in the second half, but if we got

more of the rebounds, we would have been able to have more opportunities.

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