

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Heat 120, Wizards 94

BRIAN KEEFE: We always call things when we see it. We have a standard to how we play, so we just address it quickly. But yeah, we didn't rotate on that one. But got to be better on that possession.

Q. One positive was that Jordan Poole broke the franchise record for threes in a season. Can you speak to that?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, just thrilled for Jordan. There's a lot of work that Jordan does on his craft and on his game, and it's really impressive to watch him methodically work on this stuff day after day after day, rain, snow, sleet, sunshine, good game, bad game. He's in there every day, and it's really impressive. This stuff doesn't happen by accident. You don't just show up to the gym and you make all these threes. He puts a tremendous amount of time into this, and it's really fun for me as a coach to watch that, watch him try to perfect his craft, so well-deserved.

Q. This season how useful have those time-outs come after defensive lapses in terms of correcting mistakes, and how valuable were they tonight?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I think we made a couple runs out of time-outs. I think they've been good. Our guys always respond. We always just tell each other the truth and then we get on to the next thing. But I think they've been helpful.

Q. Why do you think this game was so lopsided on the boards?

BRIAN KEEFE: A little bit their start big, a little bit. We didn't make the second and third efforts that we have been making, and it just led to some easy baskets for them. That was really the start of the game that really hurt us with that stuff and continued on.

Q. Alex's night, did you like the shots he took?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, for sure. Got some easy ones there in the second half that just didn't go his way. Sometimes that happens. Some stuff around the rim, I liked the shots he took. He just didn't have it going tonight. One of those nights.

Q. What did you think about Alex's defense versus Bam?

BRIAN KEEFE: I liked it in the second half. I didn't like any of our defense in the first half, and it wasn't Alex, it was our whole team. I liked how he came out in the second half and was physical, put pressure on him, affected the game. I liked his start. We got a fifth foul so then he had to sit for a bit, but I liked how he started the third quarter.

Q. What changed from the first half to the second half with Alex?

BRIAN KEEFE: It was our whole team just upped our physicality a little bit, but then we had to make some substitutions because of some of the calls, but I liked how we stepped up little bit the start of the third. Just had a couple breaks didn't go our way, missed lay-ups, and then they would hit a three. Just could never get ourselves into rhythm in the game.

Q. Tristan had a solid outing. How important are these games at the end of the season as he tries and as you guys as an organization try to make your evaluations?

BRIAN KEEFE: All the games are important, not just the end of the season. Every game is important, so we never look at it as because it's end of the season it's different. Every game is important. We value everything here. Great opportunities for these guys to get in, get some playing time, get better, so we're going to take advantage of that. We've got more to go.

Q. Other than Jordan, no double-digit scores until there was about three minutes left in the game. What do you attribute the offensive struggles to?



BRIAN KEEFE: To be honest, we missed some shots tonight. We were just out of rhythm, could never really get it going. We missed some chippies, some easy ones around the rim. We missed some open threes that we -- sometimes the game is going to go that way.

I thought we had a good competitive response there in the second quarter defensively even though we weren't scoring, but we could never get ourselves going on the offensive end, and that's when you've got to stay together on defense, and we tried, but we couldn't overcome it.

Q. With the guys still figuring out, some of the young guys figuring out their ceilings and limitations on defense, what went into you starting Bub on Herro, and how do you envision his reaching his potential on that end?

BRIAN KEEFE: Bub has been a terrific defender all year. From the first night we put him on Jrue Holiday, so he's taken the challenges of these guys all year. He's a big guard, he's got size; he's one of our better defenders. He's active. That's one of the things we like about Bub is his size, his physicality, his competitiveness. So he's going to have tough assignments his whole career. Nothing has changed for him the whole year.

Q. What positives are you seeing out of he and A.J. as some of the part-team lead ball handlers in the half court?

BRIAN KEEFE: Bub almost had a triple-double tonight. You see A.J.'s ability to get in the paint. He plays for himself and others. Those guys are growing. These reps count. They all matter. So these things are going to help them improve as we finish down the season.

Q. Obviously Jordan last season struggled a bit, got benched. Now he broke a franchise record for threes. Can you talk about the changes you've seen from him since you started coaching him until now?

BRIAN KEEFE: To me he's been terrific. I obviously took over midway through the year last year, and we just want Jordan to be himself. Get the ball in his hands more. That was one of the reasons we put him on the bench, so he could have the ball.

The credit goes to him. Like I talked about, the work that he's put in, couldn't be more happy for a guy because of the amount of care he has for the game and his craft. We just always wanted him to be himself, and he's been like that since I've coached him.

Q. With Vuk, obviously he had a comeback off an injury this season and spent some time in the G-League, now he's had quite a few games over 10 points in the NBA this season. Can you comment on how you've seen him improve on both ends?

BRIAN KEEFE: Just his consistency. Like he played pretty well for us at the end of last year. I've liked the minutes he's given us. You can see his skill, his passing ability, his shot-making ability, and he's getting better on the defensive end. So that's one of the big areas we've been focused on, and you're seeing improvement. Just like a lot of our guys, he's still a work in progress with some of those things, but I like the progress he's been showing.

Q. It's rare for you to pick up a technical foul. Was that technical that you picked up something that you were hoping to make a point either to your players or to the referee or were you simply that upset with that call?

BRIAN KEEFE: I'm going to refrain from answering that one because of what I thought the call was, but I'll leave it at that.

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