

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Wizards 116, Kings 111

Q. Can you talk about the late-game execution when the game got close in the last few minutes?

BRIAN KEEFE: Great. They were obviously trying to make a push there at the end, started trapping, picking up full court, and our guys just continued to make the right play, hit the open man, and I think that was an evident synopsis of the game as JT Thor, wide open, made the right play and he bangs the three, which was great. Our guys just kept trusting the pass and making the simple play tonight, play after play the whole game. I think that really helped us.

Q. Can you speak to Bub's performance? He was hot from deep, probably his best three-point shooting game in maybe a few months.

BRIAN KEEFE: I loved his floor game. I just liked how he controlled the tempo. Obviously he was the one controlling what we were running offensively down the stretch. He was really calm, great composure, got us organized, and we were able to get great shots and then obviously made threes. But I really liked his floor game tonight. It was really good.

Q. That interaction between Vukcevic and Malik Monk, what did you see there?

BRIAN KEEFE: This is basketball. That's just guys being competitive. I love that stuff. That's part of the game.

Q. What did you think about the presence of mind from JT to fake, make sure that Monk gave him some space and then take the three?

BRIAN KEEFE: Great play, great composure by the whole team, but big shot for sure.

Q. Anthony Gill, 10 points, 31 minutes. With the level of consistency he brings you guys as a person day-to-day, what's it like to give him this amount of

extended minutes and see him perform the way he did?

BRIAN KEEFE: Anytime he gets an opportunity, this is how he plays. He's so locked into everything that we're doing, so when he gets extended minutes, this is not surprising. He does this stuff every day in practice, and I give him some time during certain games and short minutes because he can handle that responsibility then with extended minutes. He's always producing because he's always making the right play, and he plays so hard. Great competitor.

Q. 17 for 43 from three. What do you think allowed that?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think it was just because -- someone asked me about that in the pregame. We just trusted our process. Play with pace, they put two on the ball, move it, continue to move it, and we're going to get great shots, and I think we continued to do that throughout the game, and that led to us being able to shoot it efficiently from three.

Q. How important is it to you getting to watch the young guys evolve as closers as the season has gone on?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I think this is great experiences for them. Learning how to play in these situations, I'm calling time-outs, I'm drawing plays up, execution, play with a lead, how to take good shots, all these things are great. I thought those guys handled it really well.

Q. On a game like this, AJ Johnson had 19. How does his explosiveness and ability to change gears add another dimension to the Wizards' young corps on a night like this?

BRIAN KEEFE: You can see his speed, his ability to get downhill, create shots for himself but also create shots for others. So that gives us a great little thing to have on our roster where a guy can create like that. When the shot clock is going down, he can create a shot for himself.

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Those are nice things to have for sure.

Q. How did Richaun hurt himself, and how is he feeling?

BRIAN KEEFE: He was a little banged up before, and I think he just got hit in the game. Hopefully it's not too bad. But he got hit. I don't know exactly when, but obviously he wasn't out there too long.

Q. Alex Sarr, he had a much better night offensively tonight than against the Heat. What do you think went into that? How did he have a better night overall?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think it's good always to bounce back. I think that just shows you who Alex is, his character and the work he puts in. You're going to have some tough games in this league; that's part of the deal. Everybody does. It's always how you bounce back, and he bounced back really well tonight.

Q. What have you seen from JT Thor overall?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, you can see his length, his size, defensive versatility. Obviously made the big three tonight, but I like what his size is and how he can guard multiple positions. He's been a nice addition to our roster.

Q. Alex cracked 100 career three-pointers tonight, Bub is now second amongst his rookie class in three-pointers made and Kyshawn is already over 100. What can you say about them as shooters for this team?

BRIAN KEEFE: I didn't know all that, but thank you for sharing. It just shows you the work they've put in. That's the stuff that's the most important to me. We talked about that with Jordan. These aren't things that are done by accident. There's a lot of work behind the scenes that these guys are putting in a massive amount of time working on their craft, and the fact that they're above that number is great, but I'm sure they want to keep getting better, and I know these guys are going to keep working at it.

Q. Can you talk about AJ Johnson's growth the last couple games? It seems like he's just getting better and better each game.

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, these are great experiences for him. I've been very impressed with how he's handled these opportunities, but we're learning about him daily, what he can do out there, how we can put him in positions to be successful. Obviously we love his explosiveness, but we like his feel for the game, but getting a chance to do

these in fourth-quarter games is just going to accelerate his growth. So these are good situations for us for the rest of the year to be in.

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