

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Malcom Brogdon

Media Conference



Q. What did you learn about Brian Keefe this season?

MALCOLM BROGDON: That he has what it takes to be a head coach in this league for a very long time. I think it's that simple. I had my exit interview with them earlier this morning. I told him I thought being a head coach is multifaceted, but I think I articulated their two main areas of being a successful head coach.

One is being able to command a room, and players respect you, hear you, players look you in the eye, try to go out and execute what you tell them to execute. I think the other piece is X's and O's. I think there are head coaches that don't have both. I think there's coaches that have one and coaches that have both. I think BK has both. He's a guy that guys respect off of his résumé, who he's coached, where he's coached, the success he's had in this league, the knowledge he has for this game.

When push comes to shove, you need an ATO, something at the end of the game, BK is getting on that board and he's putting something on the board that is excellent.

I think he has what it takes.

Q. You said on Media Day that it was a goal of yours to play for this organization, you detailed all the connections you have. What was the year like playing in DC?

MALCOLM BROGDON: The elephant in the room. I was injured a lot of the year. So that was frustrating, of course. But as far as playing in DC, man, it's been incredible. With my wife and my kids, it's been a joy to be in the city, living in northern Virginia. Just sort of old stomping grounds for me. UVA being down the street. The city is diverse. It has a lot to do. It's very family-friendly.

It's been if not the best, one of the best places we've lived during the season, not during the season. It's been terrific.

Q. What about the culture here do you think could lead to winning down the road? These are the habits

that are going to lead to good things...

MALCOLM BROGDON: The process is right here. The leadership is intact. The leadership is organized. You can see the plan. I've been with organizations, I've been in places where you can't really see the plan. It doesn't feel organized. People don't feel like they're on the same page.

That's not the case here.

I think they have their ducks in a row. You can see that from how communicative they are with the players, the coaching staff. Little things from how the food is prepped here at the facility, the arena, how we travel. It's a high-level operation here. I think they're really trying to rebuild this thing the right way. I think they're doing an excellent job.

Q. Behind the scenes, a lot of things happen. Is that what gives you confidence this team is heading in the right direction?

MALCOLM BROGDON: Yeah, man, it's the process. Like I said, it's the steps that are being taken every day, the approach, the energy that's brought to work every day. The coaching staff we have now brings incredible energy to work every day, regardless of losing 16 games in a row. We show up to work the same way the next day.

That I think made all the difference. For a lot of people that were in the gym with us this season at practices watching, the energy didn't change, shift, from the coaching staff, from BK, but also the players.

I think it was very resilient. Those are the habits that you build now. The young core, Kyshawn, Bilal, Bub, Alex, they become vets here. This team really becomes a Playoff team and a contender. That's the goal at the end of the day.

I think they're building the right habits.

Q. Malcolm, you talk about how you were injured for a



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lot of the year. What did you learn from sitting back and watching?

MALCOLM BROGDON: Whew... A lot. Like I said earlier, I got to really watch BK coach this team. I got to see him grow as a coach over the year. First-time head coach. I thought he was great. I thought he learned, I thought he changed.

I got to see our guys grow up. I got to see our guys mature. I got to see Jordan grow as a leader. I think that was a big test for him this season. We know he can go out and have 40 points, know he's a champion, know he's really, really good, but can he lead, relate to the young guys, can he respond to Coach in a way that the young guys are watching and he can be an example for them. I thought he grew in all those areas that year.

Yeah, I think it was a season to grow. People are looking at the win/loss column. That's not the only way in which you grow in the NBA, especially for rebuilding teams. It's about the process, how you're approaching the game and the work every single day.

I thought this team and organization overall did that.

Q. When you think about yourself as a player, what would you say are your biggest strengths and some of the things you want to work on most?

MALCOLM BROGDON: As a player, my biggest strengths are leading by example. I've become more vocal over my career. I think this year I was able to -- blessing and a curse of being injured, you can pour into other guys. I was able to pour into the younger guys, build authentic relationships with them, being friends with them. I can't say that about every organization I've been in.

On the court, being the stability, being the calm on the court, being a guy that has the ball at the end of his hands that's making the right decisions to finish games.

I broke my thumb at the beginning of the season. My shooting was off from the three this season. Usually shooting the ball is a big strength of mine, getting to the rim. I feel like I can get to the rim and get to the free-throw line as well as anybody in the NBA.

Then guarding all five positions. That's something I have grown into and continue to get better at. I think those are my strengths.

Weaknesses? I think my biggest one is being healthy. Been a big frustration for me. Some of my stuff for me this year was fluke injuries, breaking your thumb, having

someone fall on you, getting your ankle sprained. Some of my stuff is the hammy, soft tissue stuff. That's always been a big frustration of mine.

It's back to the drawing board, continuing to work on your mobility, your strength, making sure your body is right going into training camp next year.

It's a four- or five-month process now. The work starts now. I won't be on the court, but in the weight room and on the P.T. table every day going forward.

Q. As a defensive guard, how important is it to build that, to have a defensive backcourt, and how well do you think the Wizards are building that, not only yourself and Marcus, but young guys like Bub and AJ?

MALCOLM BROGDON: I think they're building it the right way. I think Winger and Will are drafting in a way that makes the team well-rounded. I don't think they're thinking about next year. I think they're thinking about in four or five years. What will and can these guys become?

You look at Bilal, he should be a First Team All-Defense every year. You look at Bub, he has the ability to be an All-Defensive Player every year, too.

They're building it the right way. I think defense is important. A guy like Marcus is the epitome of the impact they can have on a really high-level team. I think the building blocks for being great defensively, especially in the backcourt, and the one, two, three position I think is here.

Q. The broken thumb, was that the injury that sidelined you at the beginning of the season?

MALCOLM BROGDON: Yeah.

Q. What was your impression of the Wizards before joining the organization and how did it compare to the reality?

MALCOLM BROGDON: It hasn't been an organization that has had a lot of success over the last so many years. As a vet, outside looking in, you think it's going to be an easy game when you play the Wizards, you think you're going to get a win. It's not a team that you're going to take as serious as a Boston Celtics.

Coming here, those are my thoughts. Then I got here. It's a complete 180 what the new regime is doing, Winger and Will, they're really turning this around, inside-out. A lot of the work and good habits that they're building right now with the organization on the daily aren't going to be seen for another four years to the outside. But the players here,



the staff here, the people that work in this building every day, see the change happening right now. It's a change that will pay off later.

Q. What did the end-of-season plan that they delivered to you look like? How did it compare to other teams?

MALCOLM BROGDON: I think here there's just an expectation that you are working this summer, that summer's not for vacation. That was clearly articulated in one of our meetings. There are opportunities really every month for the team to get together and work.

I think a lot of guys in this league will not like that or not want to get together as a team during your off-season. But I think the guys they put in this room together, this team, guys want to work, want to get together and work during the summer because we built good relationships, and they do want to be better next season. It's the expectation of the front office and the coaching staff put on us going into the summer that I think will propel us next season.

Q. What conversations have you had with the team about returning next season?

MALCOLM BROGDON: It's a fluid thing. My agent, the front office, have ongoing conversation. It's not really something that I'm talking to the front office, the organization about. For me, it was just about getting healthy.

I'm 100% healthy now. I feel great. Fully healed from my ankle sprain. I was playing five-on-five at the end of the season. That was my goal. That was my focus going into this off-season.

Of course, I'm a free agent. I know that's something that some people are talking about and thinking about. But as far as the conversation, that's something my agent and the front office will have.

Q. When you look at the season that you had with the injuries, you talked about the frustration, when you look back at that, what was the biggest thing that you learned about yourself as a vet going through that process of being healthy, dealing with the injury, back on the floor, then unfortunately it happening again?

MALCOLM BROGDON: It was really less about myself. I think it's about the impact you can still have on the people around you even when you're not at your best. I wasn't healthy for a solid portion of the season, but I feel like I still had a big impact on the young guys, especially, the level at which I was able to really pour into them, get to know them, influence them in a good way. I think that was important.

JT III came to me maybe a third into the season. I was out for a game. He was like, man, I really watched you attack your rehab. The young guys are watching, too. That stuff is important, they're watching how you handle as a vet, had a lot of success, how you handle adversity. It's going to pay off later. We appreciate how you're doing that.

That meant a lot to me him saying that, but it made me realize I can still have an impact how I handle my rehab. That's really the thing I learned about myself.

I was resilient. For me, I didn't get to this level without being resilient, without defying the odds. Being impactful even when you're not at your best for me was important for me to see.

Q. When you look at yourself and Saddiq, BK talked about how you were talking about your rehab. With such a young group and so many of them at one time, how impressive was it for you to see how much and how willing they were wanting to learn and just be sponges from all of you within the organization that have been at the highest level, to help impact their careers moving forward in such a very quick time?

MALCOLM BROGDON: Yeah, I think as a vet I see it as a privilege to be able to impact the young guys, to have that influence, for them to look to you for advice and guidance. I think you cherish that. You handle it carefully because you do have a big influence on these guys, how they're going to turn out in their NBA careers.

I think it's a testament to the young guys, the character that they have as far as them being sponges and wanting to learn. Alex was a number two pick in the draft. That's a feat right there. A lot of us get drafted, have great careers. No one gets picked in the top five. That's special. But for him to come in here with the attitude he had all year, wanting to learn and get better, it was incredible.

I think it's a testament to the front office and the guys they select. I think they're very meticulous about the people they select, the environment they're crafting here. I think they do their due diligence on the guys they're trading for, the guys they're trading, the guys they're bringing in and drafting, the guys they're signing. I think it's incredibly important for them that they bring in the right people. They've done that time and time again.

The young guys they brought in have been incredible, all of 'em. They want to continue to learn and get better. They're competitive and they want to win. I think that's all you can ask from them.

Yeah, I think we're building something good.

Q. How do you describe Bub?

MALCOLM BROGDON: Oh, what comes to mind? Competitive, fiery. Silly. Intelligent. Those are the things that immediately come to mind about Bub. You hear just those attributes, and that's the making for a great NBA player for a long time. I think that's what he'll be.

I thought he showed flashes. People will remember the season about him making that last shot against Miami, finishing the season like that. That was an incredible shot, a great moment for him. But Bub had a great season overall. I thought he really grew as a player. He's fiery. He has a competitive nature where I think he's been great at all the levels he's been at and dominated.

I watched him grow this season from someone that, I don't know... He's so competitive, man, he struggles with losing. He's a guy that struggles with losing. I don't know. He really grew. I got close to Bub. We play the same position. I really got to see him grow as a leader, grow as a player, and grow as a teammate. I thought he was great all season.

I think he's going to be actually a great leader for this team going forward. I think that's going to be his role.

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