

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Kyshawn George

Media Conference



KYSHAWN GEORGE: -- I would say the evolution of my game individually and what it means to be a Wizard as an organization, being able to work every single day and care for each other, put in the effort, and also developing the young guys. I think that's the biggest accomplishment for us this season.

What was your first question?

Q. Negatives, as well.

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Obviously, me as a competitor. My record is not where I want it to be individually. But yeah, I think overall it was just a great experience. I take way more positive than negative out of the season.

Q. You mentioned the evolution of your game. From when you got here in June till now, what has been the biggest thing that has evolved?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I think just my confidence, my mindset in the way I approach games. Kind of observant the first part of the season. As it went on, just knowing, having more experience about it, attacking it with a better mindset, just going out there and doing what I learned how to do.

Q. You grew a lot defensively this season. What went into that? How were you able to get so much better on that end of the floor?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I watched film, whether it was by myself at home, with coaches. Just being able to learn players' tendencies and experiencing them firsthand, as well, just gives you the opportunity to know what's coming, anticipate. Work at it every single day, you'll get better.

Q. BK talked about the film work you did, trying to cut down on your fouls. What were you looking for? What did you apply from the film work?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Mostly it was my hand placement, swiping down, where it put my arm, how to use my length,

stuff like that that I've gotten better at.

Also learning the tendencies of the players I was guarding visually and the teams, so you anticipate and you know what's coming.

Q. What was the biggest technique change you made with your hand placement?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I'd say two things. Instead of swiping down close to the bodies, swiping down away from the body. Players extend. They're very good at looking for these arms. As the extension goes, if you swipe, which I was doing in college and people weren't using that skill set. Also swiping down, putting my arms up. If they want to shoot in your hands, you're going to get the ball.

Q. What were the two to three things the organization wanted you to focus on heading into the break?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Just continuing to put on the point about what it means to be a Wizard. Like I said, caring for each other, working hard, defensive mindset, all that type of stuff that we touched on in the beginning of the season we need to get better at. Although we set some type of foundation, keep on raising the bar every single day. Yeah, evolving my mindset and get ready for next season.

Q. When you analyze your game, things that probably pop out the easiest, you can defend, you have shots, knock down a shot. What other aspects of your game do you think are your biggest strengths?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: The way I process the game, the way I understand it, study it and apply it on the court. Just being able to get in the paint and create for myself or dish it out to somebody else. Yeah, just being able to create for others.

Q. When you say you study it and you apply it on the court, is it film study...

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Whether it's at home watching a



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game, whether it's us playing or somebody else, just seeing the tendencies, seeing the actions over and over, just trying to not make the same mistake twice, or recognize a situation where you could have done something better and just applying it next time.

Q. How much of your feel for the game do you attribute to your dad and your dad teaching you at an early age?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: A lot. I mean, he hooped. He was my coach for the first 15 years of me playing basketball. He's kind of laid all the foundation and stuff.

But also my path going from Switzerland to France, playing up under 21 when I was 16, then playing with pros, then going to Miami. I think all those stuff lead to just seeing a lot in the basketball world, just being able to learn from it as much as possible.

Q. Compared to where you were in June when you were drafted to now, how much more positive do you feel about your potential to make an impact in this league?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Well, I knew I was going to be able to make an impact once I got drafted, for sure, when I got drafted. It was just a matter of when and how.

I just think after this rookie year, the 'when' is shorter than I thought it was going to be. The 'when' I will be able to make an impact.

Q. There are a million draft analysts. Heading into the draft, defense was not said to be one of your strengths. Now it clearly is. How much joy do you take proving people wrong?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: For me, it's me. I look at myself. I know I was a willing defender. I know I had a lot to learn, I still have. It's about my individual progress.

Yes, it's fun to see that, Oh, Kyshawn doesn't play defense. I look at myself first and how I progress. That's my real motivation.

Q. What allows you to process and see the game the way that you do at such a very young age, but seeing it at such a high level, being able to take that and implement it so quickly?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: A good question. I think it's a part I don't necessarily control, just how I am, which I'm pretty lucky. Also, like I said before, kind of my path. I know a lot of high recruits are always the best player on a great team,

they rely on their physicality, offensive talents.

Me being in France, having to play up my age, playing against pros, you just learn a whole lot. You have to find ways to compensate for the physical attributes I didn't have before.

So yeah, just learning and trying to find ways to differentiate yourself even though you're not scoring 40. I think I found a way to do that in my younger age, and I think that carried over.

Q. Which players in the NBA inspired you the most growing up and now? How did they influence you?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I used to have highlight tapes at home. It was Tracy McGrady, Vince Carter, Allen Iverson. Those are the guys I used to look at in highlight tapes.

Currently you said?

Q. Uh-huh.

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I think my view has changed a little bit. It's more I look at every superstar or go-to guy on each team. I try to understand what makes them great. I try to learn from that.

I think everybody has their own way of distinguishing themselves. I just try to pick up from that.

Q. When you became more of an on-ball play-maker, what did you learn this season about pacing, slowing down, controlling your pace?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Yeah, it's how you control your defense with your pace, with your eyes, your deceptiveness. I think that's something that's very under-looked. Yes, athleticism is super impressive. That's what people come to see. Also being able to be under control and deceptive is very efficient, as well.

Q. You improved your shooting from deep later in the season. What led to the improvement? Based on the types of shots you take and the amount you take, what is the target shooting percentage you aim for?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Individually, I try to make all my shots, every single one of them (smiling). I know it's not necessarily realistic, but that's how I approach it every time.

I will be happy with 38 and more. No, I'm lying. I won't be happy with a 38. 39 or more, closer to 40 to be honest.

But yeah, just reps, work, being disciplined. Working off the court, as well. The way you shoot the ball in your workouts, how you're going to shoot it in the game. The more disciplined and focused you are in practice, individual workouts, that's going to translate to the game.

Q. You talked about the team culture and foundation being laid. What does the Wizards culture feel like after one year?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I would like to answer that question. But I'll take first of all, people that care for each other, whether it's somebody slipping and falling on the court, three, four guys, everybody else going and picking him up. There's a scuffle, everybody jumping making sure our guy's all right. Then giving it all on the court and being competitive.

I mean, every possession matters. Go and get it. Being intentional with everything we do.

Q. When we talk to you, you're very calm, considerate. How much different is this Kyshawn from the Kyshawn who is on the court and is a competitor, a battler, exudes the toughness that you show?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I have a lot of fun on the court, so sometimes my emotions show more. I care so much that sometimes I get carried over with my emotions.

Overall I'm always a competitor. I don't know. I just enjoy and take pride in going out there and competing, doing my best for myself and my team.

Q. Why do you think it was that even as a rookie you had very little fear, if any, on the court?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I don't see the reason why I should have fear. Play a game, a sport, basketball. I think I credit also the organization for that 'cause they always pushed us and give us confidence to say, Yeah, y'all are here to do this, to get better and to learn. It's not always going to be easy, but you got to just keep going, believe in yourself that you're going to do it.

I think it relieves a lot of the pressure you could have if you were playing for, I don't know, a contending team or something like that. I think the situation we are in as rookies is ideal. Just go out there and hoop.

Q. Some of the questions, analysis of your game this year is you taking people by surprise. Was that the case at all from opponents? Did you hear anything from opposing players, props you got? Any examples you can share?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: Not really. It's usually, Good game, keep going, stay healthy. I would say, though, DeMar DeRozan told my assistant coach that I was taller and longer than he expected. I blocked his baseline jumper in Sacramento (smiling).

Q. Can you speak about growth amongst the rookies, especially Alex?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I think I was kind of expecting it in the sense that it was just a matter of him finding his groove, finding his rhythm, finding his shot, being able to find that rhythm, and also get the connections with the players on the court. You need to learn how to play with each other. Once we knew that, we was able to find him and put him in situations where he was super comfortable doing what he was doing.

Yeah, he just got into his groove and exploded.

Q. What assistant coach did he say that to?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: DB. I mean, DB told me (smiling).

Q. Where do you intend to spend much of your off-season? Overseas over here?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I'm going home actually, then after that I'm coming here to work out and get better.

Q. Can you speak about how the vets have helped you?

KYSHAWN GEORGE: I would say the first thing that stand out to me is their willingness to share. I remember it was the first game Marcus got here, at halftime, took me aside and just told me the hand placement I was talking about and stuff like that.

I never had a conversation with him. I dapped him up, said, What's up? The first thing he's directly giving me knowledge about basketball. Same thing with K Mid on offensive stuff, his poise and stuff like that. Just keeping the game simple.

It just shows how willing they are to share what they know. Yeah, it's just super great. It's the best position to be in as a rookie, to have that all that type of knowledge around you, and they're willing to share it.

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