

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Monday, September 29, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Khris Middleton

Media Conference



Q. This is going to be your first full season in D.C. How do you think having a full off-season here going into what will hopefully be a full season will hopefully acclimate you and get to know the guys a little bit better?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: Just being a little bit more comfortable. I thought we finished the season looking strong, got to know a lot of guys, how they operate, what they're looking for here. So spending a full summer with them, having the coaches visit, I'm ready. I feel like this will be a great year.

To have a full off-season with them going into the season makes me look forward to it.

Q. You mentioned getting to know the guys. I know you went to Vegas for a little bit during Summer League to see everyone. What were your first impressions of the newcomers to the team, mainly the draft picks, Tre Johnson and also Cam Whitmore?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: First off, they're very nice. They're extremely talented, willing to work, and I've seen them work in Summer League, saw how they expected a lot of themselves in games and working out with them before training camp and whatnot, just the fire that they have. So I'm excited to see what they do this season, knowing that's going to be a lot of ups and downs. I think they're ready, they're prepared for it, and they've been waiting for this their whole life.

Q. We talked the other day. Obviously youth and development has been a recurring theme. You've been in this league so many years and the accomplishments you've had. How do you find that balance between you still doing yours and accomplishing things that you need as well as helping developing the young guys that are trying to come up and accomplish what you did?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: I think it's easy. I think it's just coming in and working on your game, doing things the right

way every single day, no matter who you are, no matter if you're 14, a 20-year vet or a rookie. I think that's just the way we all have to go about it in order to accomplish the things that we want to accomplish.

I truly believe in playing the right way. I'm not really big on numbers. Sometimes it portrays that way. But I'm a big believer you train the right way, you play the right way, good things will happen and you will win eventually.

Hopefully we can get to that point.

Q. For a little bit of specificity, you mentioned you saw the work ethic. Is there anything specific thing that you saw that let it land for you that yes, this is a good environment for me to be a part of?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: Just their daily habits and what they preach. I've been a part of an organization that preached those same things and we eventually got to the top. After winning 14 games my first year there. I've seen the process. I've seen how long it can take. I've seen how quick it can take sometimes. One thing that never changes is your daily habits.

Q. You mentioned the younger guys a second ago. What have you noticed specifically from Bub, Ky and Alex in the short time you were with them last year to now ahead of training camp, the steps they've taken, and what has surprised you about the work they've done in the off-season?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: Yeah, I think one is their bodies. They realize how strong they need to be or stronger they need to get just for their games to flourish, and also their leadership. You could tell when they were rookies last year they were a little timid to speak up a times. I think this summer so far heading into training camp, they've been doing a great job putting themselves out there, holding guys accountable, and that's huge for a young team, for the young players to step up and hold each and every player accountable.

Q. How having this off-season and obviously getting

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

set for training camp, your leadership is one thing, but how do you want to try to also acclimate a guy who can be a vet and a leader in CJ to kind of guide this team in the right direction, picking up on the building blocks that you've spoken about, moving in the right direction here?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: Yeah, he's another guy that's had a great career. He's a guy that goes about doing things the right way also. Guys can watch him and see how hard he's working, the attention to detail that he pays attention to in his game, but then also what he does off the court, how he holds himself, how he's building his businesses and stuff like that. I think he's another great veteran to have around the guys to learn from.

Q. Everybody that comes into this league has a moment where they realize, oh, everything I thought I knew I don't know. I was just wondering, how did that come about for you when you were young, realizing, oh, I need to do more of everything to be good in this league?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: Yeah, just my rookie year in Detroit. A lot of people forget about that year, but it's a year that I really didn't play. I just got to sit back and observe, and you watched. You watched why a lot of guys are successful and why a lot of guys aren't. Thankfully I wasn't really thrown into the fire where I wasn't ready. I got to just sit back and learn, and then when I got my chance I was ready because of the great veterans that I had that showed me the way.

Q. Who were some of those veterans?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: I had Tayshaun Prince, Corey Maggette, Greg Monroe also there, so I seen some great guys that showed me the right way to do things.

Q. You weren't here for all of last season, but the end result was the team ranked 30th in offense. With a young roster and you being here all season, how can you guys improve on that number?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: It's just about being better, experience. You have to fit your game into a team offense without necessarily going crazy, just playing fast. That just comes with experience. But I think a lot of guys are starting to understand that. Hopefully BK can (indiscernible) of playing the right way. You can't really put too much pressure on our young guys for making shots. I feel like that's hard to do. I've been in that situation before. But the more we encourage them just to play the right way, things are going to happen.

Q. Speaking of what you want to do schematically, on the defensive end, let's take a look at that, and BK was talking about how tomorrow is going to be a huge emphasis on the defensive side after being 15th, 16th in defensive effectiveness last season. What are the key components defensively for the team that you want to see build and grow starting tomorrow?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: I mean, I think we'll get a collective idea of what that is, but I think with starts with having pride and competing. I think those are two personal things that you can do yourself without anybody asking you to do. It's just having pride in keeping your man in front or helping your man in backside and just competing. I think those two things take care of all the initial things once you start thinking about schemes and all the other different things.

Q. With regards to what you said about the rookies and maybe the second-year players from last year being a little shy in terms of speaking up and utilizing their voices, how as a vet can you help unlock that for them?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: You give them the floor. You give them an opportunity to say what they want, even if it's to me or not, whether I agree with it or not. I think that's what it's all about, being able to take criticism or give it out. But definitely give them their space and let them figure it out, too. I got to figure out a lot on my own. I thought it was great. But definitely do the same.

Q. I want to know, you were in Milwaukee for that decade. You got traded here last year and really a lot of what you've answered today is about bringing the young guys along and stuff like that. For you at this stage of your career, what do you want out of it? What are your goals at this point just for you personally?

KHRIS MIDDLETON: The goal is to try basketball as long as I can in the NBA. It's always been a dream. I don't think it necessarily matters where it is. I just want to be around a great organization and great people.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports