

# Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Washington, DC, USA

## CJ McCollum

### Media Conference



Cavaliers 148, Wizards 114

**Q. CJ, did you feel like anything was different than it was the first few games or just shots weren't falling?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I think it was a combination, just working on my game, taking advantage of open opportunities. I've been missing wide-open shots the first probably five out of seven games. I've missed wide-open threes like nobody around, nobody in the picture. I'm just getting back to the basics. I work too hard to miss wide-open shots. I'm going to make shots, I'm not really worried about that throughout the year. I'm just worried about how we play. Obviously getting a lot of second-chance opportunities, and the game got out of hand midway through the third quarter with the second-chance and the fast break points. We're still worried about that stuff, but I've hit over 2,000 threes, so I'm going to make some.

**Q. It's been, like you said, a tough stretch of lately. Anything you're noticing is a consistent issue?**

CJ McCOLLUM: We just have lapses throughout, and I think that's a theme for young teams. 48 minutes is a long time. Being able to maintain composure, being able to maintain discipline throughout the game, the little things, all those things matter. Khristian talked about it; you've got to be able to move on to the next play. There's going to be plays that go well and plays that don't go so well offensively and defensively. You're going to have rotations where you miss, turn the ball over, miss shots. But the little stuff that really helps you take that next step, I think we've got a ways to go before we get there.

**Q. We all know how hard everyone on the team works. How does a team, even though it's working its butt off, ensure that losing doesn't become, not a habit but closer to accepted than it would normally be?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I mean, you're going to lose games in this league. I think it comes down to how you lose them and what's the intention behind how you're playing. Like are

you executing the game plan, are you getting your OTIs, your daily vitamins, you're lifting, taking care of your body, doing the little stuff to prepare for the games and consistently putting forward your best effort, understanding rotations, understanding defensive principles, understanding schemes. You can get better within the margins in those areas and still lose games, but I think it's about the effort, the focus, the ability to really lock into the game plan.

I think all those things matter, and that's what transitions into success individually and collectively.

**Q. What do you think this team can learn from a team like the Cavs?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I mean, just the ball movement, the crispness, the ability to rebound second-chance opportunities, how they spread for threes. I think all those things are important. They obviously have a very unique team with size and athleticism and skill, so I think you factor all of that in there, experienced team, they've been around, they've been to the Playoffs. There's a lot you can learn from the way they play and I'm sure the way they prepare and practice helps them translate to success in games.

**Q. What did you think about the opportunity that Jamir got and how he looked?**

CJ McCOLLUM: He looked good, man. He's been working behind the scenes every day, taking advantage of our staff, our facility, getting in early, staying late.

Defensively I think you already see the intangibles there, the long arms, the athleticism, the strength. He had a dawg block today that I thought was clean.

But he's just a pro. He's going to be ready, and he's taking steps in the right direction and growing and asking questions. He asked me a few weeks ago, he was like, what makes Herb such a good defender. He's curious about how to become better defensively. He's curious about how to stay in the league and kind of what it takes to

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make a name for himself.

**Q. CJ, with a night like tonight and the minutes that the young guys did get, how beneficial is it for them with the way you guys are trying to develop and learn as you talk about the right habits that lead to winning down the road?**

CJ McCOLLUM: Yeah, it's nice to work out and get better and practice, but you need game reps. You need to be able to get hit. You need to be able to execute a game plan, play against somebody in a different jersey. Although we didn't win tonight and we lost by a lot, I think a lot of guys got meaningful minutes. We obviously have a game tomorrow, and when you stack those days up and you stack those minutes up consistently over the course of the season, that's how you develop players.

**Q. BK in his postgame presser mentioned finding solutions to the things that you all are having issues with, especially when you talk about that third quarter with the turnovers and the paint attacks. With the schedule as tight as it is, and I know it's not an excuse because everyone has an NBA schedule, but how difficult can it be without full practice time to implement those solutions?**

CJ McCOLLUM: Yeah, I mean, you're learning on the fly. It's almost like the Playoffs where you don't practice a lot, you walk through things. We've got four in six, and coming off basically 12 in 22. The travel has been horrible. You've seen it. Land at 2:00, play a game, land at 2:00, back-to-backs. But it's just the way the game is, and you've got to be able to push through and take advantage of staff, get your body, get your treatment right, get your mind right, and we've got to do this all over again in 10 hours or whatever it is, 20 hours. 7:00 game? Yeah.

**Q. CJ, as a former Trail Blazer playing there for a decade, a Chinese player, Yang Hansen, was drafted by the Trail Blazers this year. What advice would you give him on how to quickly adjust to the Trail Blazers as a team?**

CJ McCOLLUM: Yeah, I think he's doing a good job. I think he has a great set of teammates around him, great organization, a good staff. I think he'll be fine in terms of his adjustment. Obviously there's a language barrier and stuff like that, and just being accustomed to being in the States, which is different than being in Asia.

But I think all in all, I think he's going to transition well, and I think the fans love him already. I think they're embracing him and his game.

**Q. It's been a tough start to the season for Bub. What are you noticing with him and his game?**

CJ McCOLLUM: Yeah, I think oftentimes the media gets caught up in makes and misses, and that's a part of the game, but it's development in terms of decision making, 11 assists, two turnovers. He's making the right plays, running the offense. He's guarding. The shots are going to come. He's going to make shots. He works too hard not to. But I think it's about taking strides in the right direction, like are you having command of the offense, are you understanding how to get people involved, are you understanding when to get in the paint versus when to pull up.

I think those things come with experience and time, and we're all adjusting to the season, to new rules, to new staff, new organization. It's new for a lot of people, and even though he was here last year, there's new players playing alongside him.

I think all of those things take time, and it's unfortunate that we don't have a lot of time. We've just got to continue to work and trust the process.

**Q. What do you notice about his confidence in the early season?**

CJ McCOLLUM: He has a great understanding of the game of basketball. You watch his film, he's always prepared, and he cares. I think the care factor, you want to be good. You want to contribute towards winning, you figure things out.

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