

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Washington, DC, USA

Coach Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Pistons 137, Wizards 135 (OT)

Q. What did you see during the final minute of regulation?

BRIAN KEEFE: First of all, to start off, really proud of our guys tonight. We played a full game tonight. Obviously got us there at the end, but the competitiveness stayed through all the way to the end. We fought. We had some good learning moments there at the end, but really proud of our guys, the intensity that we brought for the full game.

Their players made some big plays down the stretch; give them credit. Something we can learn from, execution down the stretch, both sides of the ball. But incredibly proud of our group on how we stepped into the arena tonight and how we competed as a unit and how we did it together.

Q. In terms of one of the concerns heading into this, given Detroit's strengths, was their offensive rebounding. How much did their offensive rebounding hurt in those final 15, 20 seconds?

BRIAN KEEFE: The boards definitely was a big factor in the first half. I thought when we got the lead really in that third quarter, we did a pretty good job on the boards that led to some transition baskets. But obviously the number was a big number. That's something we can look to dig into, how do we get better in that area.

But when we did it consistently, we were able to get stops and get out in transition. Fourth quarter they got us.

Q. What did you see on the game-time three at the end of regulation from Jenkins just in terms of the defense and how well that shot was contested, given the difficulty -- you don't want to foul up three --

BRIAN KEEFE: Give the kid -- tough shot. Contested in the corner. It was a little bit of a weird play because multiple people fell down on it and got knocked down,

which there could have been some calls on some of that stuff. But hey, we stick together as a group. Stuff we can learn from. Get ready to dig in for Houston next.

Q. What are some of the lessons you will reiterate to your players from the final quarter and OT?

BRIAN KEEFE: To me it's the whole game. There's great lessons the whole game. When you're playing high-level teams like this, every possession matters. It's not just the last possession. Everybody obviously focuses on that and you need to execute in those situations, and those are great learning experiences for us.

But every possession matters. I thought we did a good job of moving on to the next possession, staying in the moment, staying present. They made some runs, we made some runs back. We even made the little push in overtime. We didn't get down after they hit that shot. These are things that are going to make us mentally tougher, and we'll keep working on the execution, but for our guys, unbelievable to be in these experiences.

We're all disappointed because we're competitors, but we're doing it together, and that's the best thing.

Q. You out-scored them 35-20, held them to 20 points on their home floor in the third quarter. Was that one of your best quarters of the season? Whether it was or wasn't, what did your team do well in that quarter?

BRIAN KEEFE: Defense, finished possessions, and we really shared the ball. That's our recipe, something we can lean into more and more. That's what I'm liking about our group is we're growing from game to game. When we share the ball like that, we're really tough to guard.

But it starts with our defense. When we're able to finish possessions, we're pretty good.

Q. I think you were either ahead or the score was tied when Marvin belly flopped trying to -- he dove basically head first to try and save the ball from going out of bounds and then on the ensuing play Bub



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forced the backcourt. Were those tone setters or did they simply reflect what you guys brought to that game to begin with?

BRIAN KEEFE: I thought we did it the whole game, but those were great examples, obviously. Guys getting on the floor, guys pulling for each other, diving for things. I liked our competitive response. Those are things that you want from your group, and our group is growing with those things.

Q. How did your team force Cade into -- I know he scored a ton of points, but they were pretty inefficient. What was the game plan defensively to try to at least slow him up?

BRIAN KEEFE: Put bodies on him. Put him in space, try to keep him off the three-point line. You're never going to stop great players in this league from scoring. I thought we had multiple guys guard him tonight. We had Kyshawn, we had Khris, Cam Whitmore, Alex switching on to him. We were mixing up coverages. You have to do that with the great players in this league. We tried to make him as inefficient as possible, but he's a great player.

Q. I know you've seen everything in the league; how disappointed are you guys in there, and given the importance of maintaining an even keel, given the fact that they're human beings, how tough is it after a hard-fought tough --

BRIAN KEEFE: It should be. Like this is competition. This is what we all sign up for in sports. We all want to win. You want to get in the arena and play and compete as a unit and get the W. I want our guys upset. That shows the character which they are.

But the one thing I know about this, this will make them tougher because this is a resilient group. They'll get ready to play the next game and there's lessons to be learned, but yeah, we should be mad. We should be disappointed. We want to win. That's a good thing. That's the stuff I want from my group.

Q. What did you see from Bub's night, because it seemed like he got some juice that he felt like he needed, and then obviously CJ's --

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, CJ obviously made some tough shots tonight. Great. But Bub is our guy. That's one of our guys. I thought he played a really steady game. Obviously made some of his threes, but I thought he played a good overall floor game. Defense was good. This is the Bub we love to have, and he's getting better. That's what I like about him. He's a competitor.

Q. You talked about the lessons and learning from this one. When you get a game like this where you've seen the guys put it together for a majority of the game, how do you get them to get that consistency because they've shown their hand, you kind of see where their cards are, now how do we get it for three quarters and a half in Houston and keep building and stacking those because they've showed you when we're willing to do it, we can do it?

BRIAN KEEFE: You get up tomorrow and you go to work. You look at the film, go and practice. All the things that we think matter, like all this consistency of how you prepare and how you train, we look at the film, we do it as a group, we challenge each other to improve, and I think that's how you face anything. I think that's how we've always done that here. I'm really proud of that group that we do that. We're going to continue to do that. Looking forward to practice already for tomorrow.

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