

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Monday, December 1, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Bilal Coulibaly

Marvin Bagley III

Media Conference



Wizards 129, Hawks 126

Q. Bilal, it seemed like all night you were trying to make Giannis uncomfortable when you were trying to get those passes. Eventually you were able to break through and take one cross court and seal the game. Take us through what the strategy was against Giannis and what it was like to see it flourish.

BILAL COULIBALY: Basically this morning they just told me do whatever you want but just stop him, so I did whatever I wanted. It was easy. It was easy to do my thing. Yeah, good communication from the guys. Marvin been doing a great job, too. We've been switching, he was guarding him, too, and he did great.

Q. How would you describe your game plan against Giannis?

BILAL COULIBALY: It was just a feeling, you know. Yeah, it was just a feel for the game. When the screens were high I was trying to go under. Sometimes I was acting like I was about to go under but I was pressing him and was able to get some steals. Yeah, I had to be really physical because he was.

Q. Marvin, I have a question about being a free agent all season, spending half of last season with Washington. What brought you back to Washington?

MARVIN BAGLEY III: This group. The group of guys that we have in this locker room, what we're trying to build and the steps that we took last year. I think when the opportunity presented itself for me to come back here, it was a no-brainer. I'm familiar with the system, familiar with these guys, and I just wanted to continue to build on what we were doing last year and what we're trying to do moving forward.

I'm happy to be here, enjoying it. Just trying to do

whatever I can to help the team win.

Q. Bilal, you guys didn't see your three-point shots fall in the first half. What was it like overcoming that to get the win?

BILAL COULIBALY: Yeah, we knew we had a bad first half shooting the ball, but we were not worried about it. We was trying to get in there and just fight defensively. That was the main thing, the main focus, and we did it good, and then the shots started falling.

Q. Marvin, the bench came up huge tonight. Justin, Cam, Tristan. What can you say about the way they gave you guys a lift?

MARVIN BAGLEY III: You know, it just goes to show the work that we all put in. Days where you might have different lineups out there and different things going on, some guys might play this next game, some guys might not play the next game, and the mindset to stay ready and go out there and compete and do what they did tonight shows a lot to their mindsets and the work that they put in.

I'm super happy to see that. They definitely gave the team a lift, and it in turn gave us a W tonight.

Q. This question is for both of you. Where do you see progress so far this season from a team perspective?

MARVIN BAGLEY III: I feel like when we -- I say this all the time. When we do what we're capable of doing, especially on the defensive end, a lot of things open up for us. I feel like doing that more consistently and game in and game out knowing what we're doing, sticking to that, I think the last few games have been a lot of progress in that area.

We focus on those things, it'll put us in position to win these games. That's where I see the growth. That's where I see the progress. We've still got a lot of work to do, but it was definitely good to see progress in those areas.

BILAL COULIBALY: Yeah, I'd say defensively, yeah,

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we've been a lot better. We've been locked in. Everybody is playing defense together. Everybody is in the right spots. It's been a lot better lately.

Offensively we're moving the ball well except for last game. This game was a lot better. But the other ones were really good, too. That's what gets us easy baskets.

Q. Last week you guys started the week off with a win and then you went on the road and unfortunately there was a loss, so this week it's kind of the same situation. You have a win tonight and now you're going on the road. What can you change about what happened last week to improve better this week?

MARVIN BAGLEY III: First, we can't worry about it. It's a next-play mentality in this league. Even when we play well, we played well tonight, we did a lot of great things, but the beauty of it, we have another one tomorrow. So enjoy it for the rest of the night or however long you need to, and wake up and focus on Philly and just go out there and try to do the same thing we did tonight, same mindset. Whatever the game plan is, stick to it and just do our best to go out there and execute.

Yeah, having a next-play mentality and just trying to do it more consistent at a high level.

Q. Obviously it was a hard-fought win. Even at the beginning of the game, it was a case where Milwaukee had the lead but you were keeping it close, and at a certain point it did seem that the game did plateau. What do you believe kicked in at the time the Wizards started making that run? How much do you think preparation had to do with that mentality and just took over for the rest of the game?

BILAL COULIBALY: I'd say it was the defense first. Being really physical -- we were a lot better, I thought, in the second half, even when we were switching and all of that. We've been doing a really good job.

Defense just gave us easy baskets, easy transition baskets, and then the vets at the end, they did a great job. Like CJ and Khrist, their poise was crazy. It was impressive. Yeah, shout-out to them.

Q. Bilal, Coach earlier mentioned that you're starting to get your rhythm back just from missing the preseason and such. What's your perspective on that, and what's that process been like for you?

BILAL COULIBALY: Yeah, it's been a little up and down, but I feel like I'm getting there. I think I needed a game like that defensively, being able to offensively get pretty easy

baskets. I missed a lot today, but I felt really good about it. Yeah, I'd say I'm getting my rhythm back, and on to the next one tomorrow now.

Q. Marvin, fourth quarter execution has been something that all of your teammates have stressed, especially finishing down the stretch, and we've been seeing that come together. What would you say has contributed to how you guys are starting to finish the games?

MARVIN BAGLEY III: Staying locked in. End of the game, every possession matters. The whole game, but especially when you get down to the end of the game when you're trying to win a game, every single possession matters.

We did a great job of being locked into every possession, doing what we are capable of doing, and we just try to stay locked into that and do it every possession in clutch time, in crunch time, and we came out with the W tonight, and it's just a great feeling.

Like I say, we've got to go watch the film and enjoy this win and be ready to go tomorrow.

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