

# Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Washington, DC, USA

## CJ McCollum

Media Conference



Celtics 146, Wizards 101

**Q. CJ, it's a seven-point game entering halftime, and then the third and fourth quarter looked the way they do. What stood out to you in the second half, particularly on defense?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I mean, I think transition was huge. They scored 43 points in the third quarter. I think transition was a problem. I had four turnovers, so the turnovers were also a problem. A lot of our turnovers led to transition, fast break threes, fast break lay-ups, and just opportunities where it was just hard to defend.

I think we did a pretty decent job in the half court making it tough. Obviously they took 47 threes and a lot of them were open in transition, a lot of them were offensive rebounds, things like that that we can kind of prevent just by taking care of the ball and making smarter sound decisions.

**Q. With a deficit as large as tonight's game, what should be the feeling, the mood in the locker room from players?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I mean, this is the second time that the Celtics have blown us out. I think it's about really looking from within, figuring out how you can be better individually. Obviously this is a team that switches. They shot a lot of threes. They play physical. They play a different brand of basketball where they go small, obviously, and they switch a lot. I think it's about looking from within and figuring out how to improve our mindset, how to improve our approach and then how to be consistent throughout the game. A seven-point game shouldn't have ballooned the way it did tonight.

**Q. CJ, did you feel like the defensive effort team-wide was where it needed to be?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I think we've all got to do a better job of communicating. I missed the read on one of the switches

with Hauser. I think we've just got to be more physical. It starts with that. J.C. was great in terms of his physicality, and I think he changed the game, brought energy. Obviously big play offensively, but I think we have to have more of a physical presence defensively. That means just active hands. That means you're going to get fouls and things like that. But I think we need more aggressive behavior on that side of the ball, and I think that will transition to us player better on offense.

**Q. What kind of growth have you seen out of Will Riley this season?**

CJ McCOLLUM: Yeah, Will can hoop. We saw that right away when we seen him in camp. He's aggressive. He can get downhill. He's got good pivots, good feet, good basketball IQ. Obviously you guys have done what he's done in the G-League and what he's done in college, but I think his game obviously translates to the NBA, and as he gets more comfortable, gets more experience, I think a lot of people will be able to see his development and growth, too.

**Q. Is there any advice that you've given so far in the locker room to any of the young guys just coming off a loss like this?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I mean, it just happened a little bit ago. I think it's just about watch the film, digest it, and then continue to stack your days with your approach, watching film, getting your daily vitamins, getting your work in. I get my lift in after the game and then the cool tub, doing what I need to do to recover. I think it's about breaking down your day and just kind of checking your boxes and making sure you're doing what you're supposed to do each day. You bring that to the team collectively so that as long as you're focusing on your approach, focusing on your consistency, focusing on your work ethic, I think the results will come, and there won't be as many nights like tonight.

**Q. You mentioned just staying consistent. When it comes to practice, as one of the vets, are you just kind of practicing that physicality, just trying to make it more gamelike for them, especially after tough nights**



**like this?**

CJ McCOLLUM: Yeah, I think we've got to work on our switches defensively. We've got to work on how to separate against switches. I think that's something that we can all do and something that will be helpful for us as we need to get better defensively at it, need to get better offensively at it, and I'm sure that will be a point of focus, along with transition, along with boxing out and just the overall way we have to start halves.

We started the game kind of slow and had a turnover early at half court, and then we got back into the game and then we started the second half slow. The starters got to do a better job, including myself, of getting off to better starts at the beginning of the game and then at halftime, after halftime, as well.

**Q. You guys had 21 assists and 18 turnovers. Was that a matter of ball movement? What do you think was the issue there?**

CJ McCOLLUM: I think it was both. I think individually defensively being aggressive and physical, and then I think we just made some poor passes. Had a couple turnovers. We had some where we were actually trying to make the right play and just turned it over, but I think overall we've got to be more aggressive with our cuts, fighting for our space, screens. When they're in a switching defense, you've got to screen your own sometimes, got to be slips, things like that.

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