

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Sunday, December 14, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Coach Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Wizards 108, Pacers 89

Q. You switched to a zone there at some point. What led you to that and why do you think it worked so well?

BRIAN KEEFE: We did that a little bit the last game. We've been working on it in practice this last week, something we revisited from training camp. Wanted to mix up our coverages, some different things to see how they would handle it. I thought our guys did a good job, and it helped change the rhythm of the game for us.

Q. With Tre coming back, it seemed like his off-ball movement was a little more pronounced than earlier in the season. What has changed for him?

BRIAN KEEFE: It's only two games back, but I thought he was really moving well off the ball coming off those high screens. He has the ability to shoot it or drive it and make plays off that. They have to go over him because of his ability to shoot, and if you don't he's capable of making it. I thought we had some great energy out there for us. It's really nice to have him back.

Q. How much of him being able to do that now is the past hip injury and how much of it is his integration into the offense?

BRIAN KEEFE: A little bit of both, yeah. I think it's a little bit of both.

Q. Third quarter, especially at the start, it seemed like you guys got a little stagnant offensively, called a time-out. They obviously got the message because the intensity picked back up on that end of the floor, but your defense was holding you. What was it that shifted for them mentally after that conversation that they got it and then were able to execute?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I think they came out with some good energy. They got physical with us. That made us a little bit stagnant, I thought. But that's the nature of the

game, too. They're going to make runs in this league, and I thought we responded really well after that time-out and pretty much the rest of the game we played good steady basketball, making the right simple play. But the most important thing tonight was by far our defense, the ability to keep them out of the paint. I think they only had 36 paint points. Our activity, our rebounding, especially in the second half, and I think they scored 15, 19 and 23 the last three quarters. That's why we won the game tonight. It was about our defense, and that was a great effort by everybody.

Q. Especially with the first matchup, Siakam kind of got what he wanted to get to. Obviously a concerted effort on showing him as many bodies as possible, getting that advantage there holding him to just 11 points. What was it about the defense, specifically with him, even if they weren't themselves tonight from an offensive output, that you liked in the way that the guys defended?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think we took an individual challenge, so Justin, Jamir, those guys took a challenge with Siakam for sure, but I think it was our ability to shrink the court, be tight with our shell, give support to each other. I think our guys were communicating where the help was. It was just our activity level for all five guys were engaged. That's what we were talking about this morning, and those guys went out and executed tonight, and that was terrific.

Q. Justin, plus 23 tonight, team high in rebounds. You talked about how with the injuries you guys have had that it opens up opportunities for guys like him. What has he shown you?

BRIAN KEEFE: Like he always does, every time he's had an opportunity, he's in the rotation, he always produces, and you know what he produces. He's going to give everything he has defensively. We know about the rebounding. Then obviously the open shot making. He just plays to his strength, and he knows what his strengths are, and he always helps us have a positive effect on the game when he's out there, and you saw that tonight.



Q. He talks about how he knows exactly what his role is, play defense, rebound, hit open threes. You talk about not wanting to put a ceiling on him, but is it helpful for players like him knowing their roles so clearly that they know what they need to get to?

BRIAN KEEFE: Everybody has strengths to their game, and we want our guys to play to their strengths. That's his strength. His strength is defensive versatility and his rebounding, and obviously he really improved from his shot making from last year from three, and he's a great cutter. All those things fit right into how we want to play. Same thing goes for Jamir. But everybody has different strengths and weaknesses to their game, and we try to help put them in the best possessions to be successful for our team, and I think those guys are two great examples of that.

Q. How have you seen the chemistry with Bub and Marvin grow over the course of the last five games, because it seems when the two of them get into the middle pick-and-roll together, it is quite exquisite how teams can't figure out exactly how to defend it?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I think Marvin did a great job tonight. They were putting two on the ball with all of our ball handlers, obviously starting with CJ and then Bub and then Kyshawn. They were just playing in the pocket and making simple reads. We were either hitting him or hitting opposites, skipping the wall to the corner, especially in the first half. We were really passing the ball well in the first half.

Marvin is doing a great job. You saw at the end he was playing quarterback in the middle, hit Justin on a cut on the baseline for a dunk. Again, still early, but these guys are working on their chemistry.

Q. For Bub, the last few games it feels like a great percentage of his shots have come from three. How do you want him to find that balance of taking shots from deep and making the defense respect him but also not wanting too much --

BRIAN KEEFE: I want him to shoot as many threes as possible because he's a really good shooter. Catch and shoot, teams go under, he can shoot them off the dribble. We want him to be aggressive because teams have to respond to that. That's why people put two on the ball, because of his ability to shoot, and that opens up the game for everybody else.

We want him to be aggressive against those opportunities.

Q. How did you see Kyshawn control the game with his passing?

BRIAN KEEFE: I saw that really in the first half. I think he had six assists in the first half. He was hitting the corner. They were putting a lot of attention on him, crowding the paint. He just played the game right. The game told him to make the pass, and he made it. I thought he had a really good rhythm and flow for our offense.

Q. Cam didn't play tonight. Do you have an idea of how long this stretch of games will last for?

BRIAN KEEFE: We're just focused on the guys who are in the rotation. He's been doing great, working his tail off. We'll just focus on the next one.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports