

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Coach Brian Keefe Media Conference



Lakers 142, Wizards 111

Q. What was your message to your team after this one?

BRIAN KEEFE: Start better. We only lost the second half by two. They obviously came out and made some tough shots, but we didn't have our -- what we've been doing a lot lately, with the force, physicality to make people miss shots. We made some execution errors on some of our coverages, and that kind of spiraled into some tough runs. But great credit to the crew that came into the second half. Anthony Gill, Malaki, Will Riley, Jamir was with that group, I'm sure some other guys with that, but those guys came in and gave us a good spark, good fight, but too little, too late on that.

Q. I know you don't expect perfection, but was tonight a step backward considering the strides your team had made in the last couple weeks?

BRIAN KEEFE: No, I don't believe so. We've played pretty consistent basketball here since the middle of December. No one wants that stuff to happen. We have competitive guys in our locker room. We're looking forward to the response on Sunday.

Q. In a situation like this after that first quarter where things go left, how do you maintain the guys' composure, their focus, making sure that they don't drop the heads and kind of just sulk the rest of the game but continue to try to stack the habits the next three quarters because there is something you can learn from this?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I thought we played the right way in the third quarter going into the fourth. Our passing got better. Obviously we started turning them over, started getting out in transition. We started executing some of the things that we wanted to do well.

You always play throughout the game. You can build

momentum in games like this that carry on to the next. You go to the very end, and you keep fighting.

Q. When you look at in real time, was it just that first quarter, the way that things started that you can assess kind of where things went wrong and you can be happy with the way things went the next three, or was there more throughout the game as well?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think the second quarter wasn't probably as great either. I liked our response in the second half. Like I said, we won the third quarter, we lost the second half by two. But you've got to start off with the way that we've been playing. Give the credit to those guys who came back in and gave us some resilience there in the second half.

Q. You did mention that five-man group and the way they were able to right the ship a little bit, get back to the way you guys have been playing as of late. What else did you see from them aside from the resiliency in the way that they were playing? What shifted for them that they were finding the solutions to some of the problems?

BRIAN KEEFE: First of all, they got stops, and then they were the ones who really got into the paint, were kicking, penetrating, some hustle points on some offensive rebounds that you saw to kick-out threes. All the stuff that we've been doing really well lately was just a continuation for that group, and that was a good showing by them.

Q. When you believe that you called a pair of time-outs when you saw some things you saw early in the fourth, what are you trying to accomplish when you call those time-outs, given how wide the margin was in that game?

BRIAN KEEFE: We keep coaching and teaching. We've got a lot of lessons to learn throughout that game. Some of those time-outs are about a shared standard that the group should be playing at, a quick thing we need to make an adjustment at. We always go to the end, so we're going to coach to the end. I expect our players to play to the

end. Nothing changes with that.

Q. Despite being down big in the third, they showed fight. What positives can you take away from the way they executed going from the third into the fourth?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, I always think you can build momentum in any game you're playing in. You can stack things that you think maybe that doesn't happen. It does. Those things will carry over, and especially for that group that was out there. Some great habits, right; talking about pressure defense, turning people over, the ball movement, sharing, our pace. That stuff can carry over. So it was good.

Q. In addition, how exciting was that to see that young group continue to fight despite the score?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, that's what I expect. That's what we've been doing and the standard stays the same. That's what our group has been doing for a very long time. I expect our guys when they have an opportunity to step up that they will, and they always have.

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