

# Washington Wizards Media Conference

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## Anthony Gill Media Conference



Lakers 142, Wizards 111

**Q. What do you think is the lesson that your team can take from tonight's game?**

ANTHONY GILL: I think the biggest thing we can learn is to stay neutral. Last night we had, in our minds, a big win. We celebrated, and we thought we were on top for a little bit, and then we were quickly humbled today. We didn't come out the way we should have, they jumped on us from the start, and we could never get it back. Just stay neutral.

I know people say the cliché "never get too high, never get too low" all the time, but for us, as a young team, it's really important to be able to learn how to do that, to be able to learn how to win and to be able to learn how to lose. That's probably it.

**Q. BK talked about the second unit group in that third quarter that was able to kind of start to navigate the solutions to some of the problems you all were running into. You were part of that group, as well. What were you guys seeing that was a little different that you were able to find the navigation points to get back into kind of what you guys have been doing as of late with the way you've been playing?**

ANTHONY GILL: We just got rid of the fear, like all of us. Even myself. We're going out there, playing the Lakers, playing LeBron James, and in your head they're all the way up here, and you have this expectation of who they are. When it comes down to it, they're just basketball players. So that group, we kind of put it aside. We just went out there and we played as hard as we could.

Again, going back to us having a young team, these guys grew up watching LeBron and Luka play. To be on the court with them now in heated moments, they have to play through those, and they have to learn and they have to grow. This is just part of it right now.

**Q. I know you're not one to talk about yourself, but**

**towards the end of the game you had that very great contest on LeBron in transition. Walk me through that moment, just to rise up -- most people would have made a business decision, but you made one and it ended up working in your favor with the coach's challenge, as well.**

ANTHONY GILL: Yeah, my business is to do what's best for the Wizards, and that's what I'm going to do every single time. But imagine if he would have made it. Oh, my goodness, that would have been all over the place, and it would have been pretty embarrassing. But the business decision was to do what's best for the team. I love to be an example for the young guys, and I never want them to shy away from anything, and I can't be that.

**Q. You've gotten some nice runs the last few games. You're part of that stay-ready group. It's who you are when it comes to being a professional, that you're ready no matter what. What has shifted, and how have you seen the game growing with your team, being both on the sideline and now being in that real extended game action, as well?**

ANTHONY GILL: Yeah, I can tell you there's a huge difference in both of those scenarios, right? When I'm on the sideline watching the team, I can see the growth, and now actually being on the court with them the last few games, I can feel the growth. In practice, it's just us playing against each other; you don't really know what that will look like against competition in a game. For me to actually be out on the court with them now, I can see where they were last year versus where they are now, and it's a huge leap. These guys have grown so much.

It's not so much their game, it's their mental. Tonight was not a great example of it in the first quarter, but they're not backing down from anybody. We've been in a lot of games like that, like what we were in tonight, and we fought back, whereas last year we would have kind of laid down a little bit.

I can't be more proud of them. Each and every player you can look at on this roster, one of these young guys, they've



grown. You as a fan and the people working with us on a daily basis, you can see it and you can point it out and how they've grown, and I can't be more proud of them.

**Q. When you talk about the continuity of the younger players and you have the moments like tonight, and I've asked the coach the question, in the third quarter you guys were down big in the third, but you closed the gap tremendously. Talk about the confidence builder that that helps restore and build for the younger players.**

ANTHONY GILL: Yeah, that's really important. These last few years have been the Washington Wizards taking lumps. It's going to feel so good when this team is on top. In order for us to really grow, we have to take these lumps. We have to know what it feels like to be on the bottom, and that's part of our process right now. We're here, we're on the bottom, and we're on our way up, and then when we finally get to the goal that we want to be at, it'll feel a lot better knowing that we've been through the bottom of the barrel, and now we can be on top together.

People always say the old thing, you have to know what it's like to lose with somebody; you find out their true character. We're going through that right now.

**Q. You mentioned you're at the bottom, and after this loss, what's one area you feel the team has made progress in tonight?**

ANTHONY GILL: In tonight? I think it's something we've been trying to grow in all year long is when we do get down, we're not just going to lay down. We're going to try to find a way to fight, and every single player on the team is going to contribute to that. Whether you get in the game or not, you're going to find a way to contribute to our success. It doesn't really always come in the wins and loss categories, but we feel it internally as far as wins and losses and success on our team.

So we're really trying to figure out how do we contribute and how do we get out of little ruts like we did tonight.

**Q. For you personally, what's your biggest point of emphasis heading into the next game?**

ANTHONY GILL: Into the next game, honestly, I would just say trying to figure out a way to learn from what we just went through. Again, we had a lot of fear coming into this game. We got over it. But trying to understand that we are a good team. We have good players. We have a lot of young talent on this team, and trying to get them to have the confidence and belief in themselves. For me, that's the biggest thing is trying to get them to understand that.

**Q. Do you really believe that the team was fearful heading into this, in the first quarter, or are you trying to find the right words for just the team not being at its best early?**

ANTHONY GILL: No, I think I used the right word, fear. We didn't come into the game with fear. Everybody had the expectation to win the game. That's what we come into every single game with. But as soon as they hit us in the mouth, as soon as they made a run, we had a little bit of the fear factor in us. So in order for us to get over that, we had to stick in it. We had to stay in the fight. That fear quickly went away, and I was proud of the guys, and I was included in that run that we did, and that was a lot of fun to be able to experience another hurdle that we were getting over, which was the celebrity or star factor of playing a team like the Lakers.

**Q. You had 10 rebounds and limited minutes. How much pride do you take in impacting the game through effort plays?**

ANTHONY GILL: I just want the team to be as good or even better when I step on the court. I want the guys to have extreme confidence, so if they hit a shot, I'm going to be the one yelling at them telling them, great shot. I believe in these guys. I think they're really talented young guys, and they're going to be very special. I want them to know that. I want them to feel confidence when they go on the court. That's my job is to speak life into them, and that's what I just try to do.

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