

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Juju Reese Media Conference



Jazz - 122, Wizards - 112

Q. I actually covered you in Maryland a few years ago when you guys were on the Terrapins Tournament team. How has your game changed since then? How have you evolved?

JUJU REESE: I feel like physically I've become more mature. I'm just growing my body and taking care of stuff off the court like dieting and getting in the weight room. I feel like I've elevated my game and locked it in a little bit more. My confidence has grown. I'm just becoming more confident. That comes with gaining more strength as well.

I feel like I'm just becoming more mature, and my feel for the game is growing as well. Just feeling for different things and making the next move and quick decisions and stuff like that.

Q. When you see that you have a backcourt that's now led by Trae Young, how does it open up opportunities for you to get your game on?

JUJU REESE: It opens up a lot. I like to start my game by rebounding. Trae throws a lot of threes up. Obviously gives me more opportunities to get a rebound. With a guy like that on the team, it's a great opportunity for me.

Q. As you mentioned, rebounding is a skill of yours. To have 20 in an NBA game, what do you attribute that to?

JUJU REESE: Just hustle, I'm not really the biggest guy out there. Just having heart and doing what you do best. I'm just trying to master and do things I'm already good at. Just trying not to do things they don't want me to do. Just trying to do my job.

Q. You told me you were trying to maximize your minutes with Raptors 905. Now you're with an NBA team getting a lot of minutes. What's been your approach in that regard?

JUJU REESE: First couple games, just getting my feet up underneath. Again, not used to playing that many minutes. I feel like now I'm a little bit more comfortable in the game. Just different opponents and different feels for the game. Everybody out there is a threat at the same time. Just taking that into account and doing my job at a high level. That's what I'm trying to go out there and do.

Q. The Wizards are a team that are willing to develop players. What about this situation has allowed you to kind of get comfortable? Does it help you play more freely knowing that that is their focus?

JUJU REESE: Yeah, definitely. I just talked about this with somebody else. It's just a great group of guys. Got a little bit of young guys on the team that I'm familiar with in Cam and Bub and stuff like that that; I played AAU with and stuff. Older guys like AD and Trae Young that can just really help me. I've been nothing but a sponge since I got here with both of those groups.

Q. How has it been reuniting with Bub? That's who I see you talk to the most? What has been his advice to you?

JUJU REESE: Just play my game. Him and Cam say the same thing. Just play my game and be aggressive and not be timid out there. I'm still going to make mistakes. I'm still a rookie. It's all about getting better right now.

Q. Going back to the rebounding. Big game tonight, congratulations on that. You talked about the want to behind it. Do you consider rebounding more of a skill or more of a mentality approach?

JUJU REESE: I feel like it's a little bit of both. It takes a lot of heart to do it. To do it at a high level, it's a lot of skill and want to do it and things like that. The other thing is it comes with experience. Knowing where the ball comes off the rim, knowing when guys are going to shoot and know when the shot is going up and just being able wedge guys under the rim. There's a lot of technique that comes with it.

I've been doing it since college, just trying to impact the game in any way. I feel like I haven't mastered it yet, but I'm working towards that. Trying to make it become my niche.

Q. For a guy that grew up locally in the area here, Wizards basketball had a pretty prosperous run when you were younger. Now you're kind of a part of this culmination of this team here rebuilding. Tonight was a big night for this franchise with the guy that was a four-time All-Star being brought in. What does it mean to you to have as big of a night on a night that's really big for this franchise's future?

JUJU REESE: It's great. All glory to God for this opportunity. Just playing like that with such a great guy on the court is a blessing, and I just give it all to God.

Q. I know you received some advice from some of the folks on the team today, but for young people that are paying attention to you right now, what is some advice that you can share for them after experiencing your first start this week as well and now having a career high after this game?

JUJU REESE: Yeah, just stay ready. Got the call about the opportunity with the Wizards on Thursday. Had to fly back to Canada and pack all my stuff on Friday, got here Saturday for a game. It's been all over the place.

Started on Monday and just trying to take advantage of everything I'm getting my head into. Just doing that, and if you do that and take care of business off the court as well, you'll be fine.

Q. Juju, you just described you haven't even been here a week yet. What's been the highlight?

JUJU REESE: The highlight, I'm not sure, there's just a lot going on right now. I guess being able -- I don't regret what's going on right now. It's just all moving fast. Just trying to play my game right now. Just get comfortable and get stated here in this new culture. And I'm just grateful.

Q. At what point in the game did you feel like you had it rolling, that you were at your best?

JUJU REESE: When I had got that dunk off the rebound, I was like, oh, yeah, I'm here now. I just dunked the hell out of the ball, and I just felt it. It was just great from there.

Q. What was it like running the pick-and-roll with Trae? You did that a few times this game. Being in the moment doing it, what was that like for you?

JUJU REESE: It was great. Trae is such a willing passer and also that's just a blessing and just a great attribute to his skills and whatever, just being that much of a threat being a scorer and also on the other hand being a willing passer. Not a lot of guards like that in this league. I'm trying to learn. Still got some kinks in our pick-and-roll offense, but we're just going to move up.

Q. What's your first overall impression of the Wizards so far now that you've been here a couple games?

JUJU REESE: Great team, great organization, great for developing guys. There's a lot of guys that came through here that become Max players or guys that make a lot of money. They told me that from the jump, just try to maximize your talents or whatever. I'm just trying to do that.

Q. You talked about a lot going on. Your sister has played at a high level for a while now. Has she been able to impart any wisdom on you as you're going through this process? I know you were thrust in kind of fast?

JUJU REESE: She hits me up before and after every game, just tells me what I need to do, watches the game, tries to text me at halftime, stuff like that. Sometimes I've got to get her off me a little bit to tell her let me do what I do.

It's great having a sister like that who's always on me and see the best for her brother especially when she's busy doing the stuff she's doing. Love her to death. She's great.

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