

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Brian Keefe

Media Conference



Chicago-119, Washington-108

Q. Second quarter you guys seemingly did not turn the ball over. What kind of shifted in that third quarter that they made an adjustment that forced you guys kind of into the turnover game again?

BRIAN KEEFE: That's the story of both games, both nights. When we have ball security, we were pretty good. I thought we missed some chippies around the rim that we usually make, a lot of in-and-out layups that kind of rolled out.

I thought our process was pretty good on the passing. I thought we made good adjustments. We didn't shoot the ball as well as we would have liked, but I liked how the guys were getting off it quick. We didn't did on for 48, so we had a tough little stretch there, and that was probably the difference in the game.

Q. I'm curious, the technical on JuJu, did you get an explanation? If so, are you able to share it with us?

BRIAN KEEFE: I'm not going to comment on that one. Yeah, I'm just going to leave that one.

Q. Will Riley had about a month span where he was blossoming. Back-to-back rougher shooting nights from him. Have you seen anything different from him these past two nights, or do you think it's just a normal shooting slump?

BRIAN KEEFE: I don't even think about things like that. I liked his process tonight. I liked the shots he took. He also had, I believe, nine rebounds and seven assists. So he was playing right, because they were trapping him pretty much on every possession.

So I really liked -- we were putting him in situations where he has to learn to grow. He's seeing different coverages now. People are putting him No. 1 in the scouting report. I thought he handled it pretty well. If he hits two or those

threes, that was a monster night. I was actually pleased with how he played.

Q. To follow up on that, can you talk about how his play-making and his feel for the game has advanced for even just a rookie?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, that's obviously one of the things we really liked about him in the draft process. He's a great processor. He sees the game. The game is slow for him. He has a unique skill set with his size too to see over the defense, to attack, and then you can see when the passing is there too. We like where his development has gone this year.

Q. You've been very pleased with almost all elements of JuJu's game. What are the areas that you would like to see him improve on during the offseason, during the jump season?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think the hardest thing for any big in this league is going to be you're so much involved in the game defensively. I think he does a great job protecting in our shelf, but it's always like you're going to be involved in every possession, and that tests you. He's learning.

He's new to our coverages and our schemes. I think he's done pretty well, but that's obviously an area where he can continue to improve, because they're involved in the action so much. That would be the one thing that we would focus on that.

Q. Over these past few games it's been very youth-movement heavy. Who has impressed you the most?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think everybody. I think I've said this. Probably not mentioned everybody specific. I could probably go down the roster.

Everybody has had an opportunity here this later part of the season and has really grown and taken advantage of it. I've been really pleased with that.

We've got a couple more games to go, so we're going to continue to lean into that with the bodies we have and take advantage of their time. I've been really pleased with how our guys, how they've grown because of that.

Obviously some of the examples are, like, Will Riley and Julian, and obviously Sharife is getting some opportunity here. Leaky, I like what he's been doing. So guys have been given the opportunities; they've been taking advantage of them.

Q. It looked like you guys had Jamir initiating the offense a little bit tonight. What did you think about the way he looked in those situations? How are you trying to experiment with him?

BRIAN KEEFE: I saw that. I don't know. We played I think it was the Toronto game going back a little bit where he was handling versus some of their guys that could really guard, and I was impressed with how he handled that. He can do that. He can handle the ball. He can run the offense. He's a good secondary playmaker.

Obviously we're down on some numbers, but I wanted to see him initiate offense, and he's very calm and very controlled and very poised out there. I've been very pleased with that.

Q. You've mentioned twice now how Will Riley is atop the scouting report, getting different looks from the defense. Anything you can tell him before he goes into those situations? What's your advice to him?

BRIAN KEEFE: Yeah, the guys were showing him film and stuff obviously from the previous game. We didn't know he was going to get trapped. We were showing him the stuff in the game. That's part of the growth of the league. You're going to see different things.

Obviously the great players have seen all of it. You have to go through that, and I think it's good for him, a good test, and I thought he handled it well tonight.

Q. Justin, a plus-10 tonight. What about his presence on the floor impacts you guys so much in a positive manner?

BRIAN KEEFE: He just does winning stuff all the time, whether you are hitting offensive rebounds, cuts to the rim, you know, making a play defensively. You know, that's stuff that Justin always did does.

Q. I want to follow-up on Jamir. Just his ability to get in the passing lane, something that I think stuck out to me early on in the season. How have you seen him

grow in that department over the course of the year here?

BRIAN KEEFE: I think that's one of his things that he does naturally, but I think he's just gotten better at it, to be honest. That's some of learning the league, learning the guys he's guarding, learning our schemes.

That's one of the reasons he's here. He's an elite defender, and he's learning how to do that within the NBA, and he's grown because of that this year.

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