

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Trae Young Media Conference



Q. Small sample size with the guys on the court, but overall your thoughts about what you guys were able to accomplish as far as team building, chemistry, how that can impact next season?

TRAE YOUNG: I think it's been great. I think it's been great since we've been here, since I've been here. Just getting to meet everybody, for everybody to get to know me, for me to get to know everybody vice versa. It's been great building that chemistry on and off the court.

Even those few games I got to play, it's been great. So for me, it's just the start of something special. For me, I'm just happy that I'm here right now.

Q. To start your career somewhere else and build the portfolio you did in Atlanta, that that abruptly come to an end, you find yourself here, the way the city has embraced you, the organization has tried to buy into what you can bring to the table, how different is it for you just to kind of go from being embraced in one city to another in a flash? Has it been a weird adjustment for you at all?

TRAE YOUNG: Yeah, for sure, it's definitely been an adjustment. Not something that I thought, to be honest, I would ever have to do. Now that I've done it, it's been like a breath of fresh air. Just being here now, being around here, now it's starting to get warm, so being able to see the city.

It kind of hurts that we couldn't get that experience of playing in April in the Playoffs this year. Just to get to see what it's like, the weather, see everybody out walking around.

I definitely want to have that feeling, have people have that feeling, of seeing the Wizards play in these coming months. I think it's just been great since I've been here. That's what I'm looking forward to.

Q. How confident are you this could be a Playoff team

next year?

TRAE YOUNG: Very confident.

Q. With Anthony Davis, I'm sure you guys have been able to spend some time together, what have those conversations been like? What has it been like developing off-court chemistry?

TRAE YOUNG: It's been great. It's been great. I mean, obviously I never got to play with a player as talented or as special as A.D. is. We haven't got to play on the court with each other yet.

But we talked about a lot of things. Talked about what it would look like when we do get on the court together. I mean, for me, I just want to go out there and make his life easier. I already know he's going to make my life easier. Having someone that can demand a double-team like that is honestly the first I've had since I've played in the NBA.

Being able to have that type of engine on your team is going to unlock everybody's game even more. Even mine. That's something I'm excited about.

Q. You know how this league works and how tough it is to kind of flip from a team that loses a lot of games to one that wins more than it loses. How does this team go about flipping that switch?

TRAE YOUNG: Yeah, I mean, obviously it started this year with the daily habits that we brought every day, starting with BK and the coaching staff. Everybody focusing on getting better, keeping that the main goal right now.

Understand that flip can switch and teams can start winning very quick. But it's all about how you go about it. If you're going to be the ones that do it, make the sacrifices, make the sacrifices of putting the team over yourself. Especially being a young team, that's why most young teams aren't very successful, because you're very focused on yourself individually, getting to that next step in your own development, that you kind of lose track of the



team's success and team function about it.

That's the main goal. That's what helps everybody succeed. I think going into next year obviously that's more of what the mindset is. It's not necessarily as much focus on your individual development and how you can get better, it's how can you get better each and every day to help this team win.

If we have that mindset, I don't care what anybody says on the outside, we control our own destiny, have the last laugh.

Q. Curious as to how focused you were upon making the move to DC about going in wanting to be a leader. Seems like you were pretty direct. Even though you were objectively the new guy, the presence was felt.

TRAE YOUNG: What part?

Q. Trying to come in and use your experience to your benefit, be that kind of different presence.

TRAE YOUNG: Yeah, that was definitely on the top of my mind when I came here or even decided that I want this to be a possibility for me.

I mean, obviously I wanted to go somewhere that I could be myself but also be a part of something special. Like, there's a bunch of different routes I could take. For me, I wanted to be a part of something that is special. For me it's all about legacy. Ever since I started playing, I want to leave a lasting legacy. For me going somewhere that has had success before, but hasn't had it in a long time, understanding what I can do if I can help bring that team back to their winning ways, what that can do for my legacy.

I just think this is an unbelievable opportunity with unbelievable people around here that give me a good shot at doing that.

Q. About that presence, I couldn't help but notice for most of the games you were in attendance for, you and Cam Whitmore were sitting side by side. Was that a point of effort of yours, to sit next to him while going through joint rehabs?

TRAE YOUNG: That wasn't -- me sitting by Cam, that wasn't the main thing. Sitting by him, I was able to talk to him a lot. That's my guy obviously now. When I play, I like going and sitting at the end of the bench so I can debrief, take a little exhale. That's the short little time I can sit down and take some deep breaths.

As I was not playing, I wanted to be involved, the team to

feel me that my presence was there. Sitting right next to the coaching staff is what I wanted to do, especially while I wasn't playing, so every time they made a three or there was a defensive stop, somebody fell on the baseline, I could get up and help them real quick.

That was more my reason why I sat where I sat.

Q. What habits have you seen from the young guys specifically that you think will help this team win moving forward?

TRAE YOUNG: I mean, I know it may sound cliché, man, but not everybody in the NBA works. A lot of guys in this league are very talented, have been blessed with God-given abilities. A lot of people when you get here, it's easy to feel satisfied and give up on the work that's gotten you here.

Around these guys, man, that's not what I see. I see a lot of young guys that obviously have been thrown into the fire, just thrown into a lot of things their way, a lot of things have been thrown their way. They just kind of have to make things up on the fly.

They're always in the gym. I've come here at night, seen Bub with his friends, seen Kyshawn in the morning, late at night, too. You see guys in the gym.

For a team that's not winning right now, like, I know it's so, so easy to get away from your habits that's gotten you to this point, especially when you're not seeing the results.

For us to not have the results, I mean, that we want, we're still doing the daily habits, that gives me a good sign that we can be a really good team going forward.

Q. What's one piece of advice that sticks out to you that you've given the young guys so far?

TRAE YOUNG: Uhm... I would probably say, I don't know, I tell them not to get used to this. For me, like, that's my advice to these young guys, is not get used to this. As satisfying and as rewarding and as easy as it is to feel like you can win a lot, you can feel that same type of comfort and easiness in losing, too, whenever you do it enough times.

For me, just reminding them this ain't the feeling that you want, to not get used to it.

Q. We don't know how you typically structure your off-season. What are your plans in terms of where you're going to be for most of it, how often you'll be in contact with your still new teammates?



TRAE YOUNG: Oh, yeah, I'll be in contact with them, I mean, nonstop, 24/7. That starts today. What is today, April 11th, 12th? Yeah, I'm going to continue to talk to them all throughout the summer. I'm going to take a little time off, a little break. Y'all probably think I've taken a break all season (smiling). Trust me, I feel the same way.

Yeah, I'm going to get a little break here and get my mind right. For me, I'm ready to come back and play. I wish we could play tomorrow or soon. We have to wait 168 days, like Will said. For me personally, I know everybody else in here is counting down those days.

I'm going to go out to Oklahoma, then I'll be in L.A. doing a lot of my training. You'll see me out there playing in runs. My guys will be with me.

Q. You mentioned maybe going out, having some of the guys come out to do reco next summer. Is that in the cards? If so, will that be part of bonding over the summer, will there be other bonding things?

TRAE YOUNG: For sure. For sure. I mean, yes to both of those. Those are definitely still in the cards. I'm the type of guy, I just love to hoop. I feel the best way to get better is playing. Playing fives, playing threes.

So definitely. When I bring those guys out to L.A. with me, there will be some videos y'all may see, but there will be a lot of videos y'all don't. There's going to be a lot of stuff that y'all don't see that we're going to be able to build chemistry on, get to know each other even more.

It's been refreshing being able to have flights that we're just talking nonstop the whole flight, playing cards, playing dice, shooting dice, whatever. We're building that chemistry now. No matter what our record was, we're focused on the future now. No matter what it's been in the past, these previous years, whatever everybody has looked at it as, that's the past. We're focused on the future, what we got to do to start winning.

Q. Specifically what do you see at the defensive end that makes you feel like a turnaround is possible?

TRAE YOUNG: I mean, you look at the size we have on this team. You look at the size of Alex, obviously A.D. is an elite rim protector, elite defender. You have Bilal. You have Kyshawn who is obviously a tall, long wing defender. You have so many different pieces.

You never know what the roster looks like even going into next season, what other players we've added who are on this roster that can add to that defensive team, too.

You can look at me and say I'm the weak link on the team. That's fine. I'll make sure that is not as loud as what it's been. Obviously defensively the team thing, too. You have to have a full team around you to have a really good defense. I've never seen a good defensive team have one good defender and everybody else be terrible. We have a really good defensive team. This is something that, frankly, I've never had before, this type of talent, length with the bigs.

I'm looking forward to it. Like I say, I wish we could play soon. Got to wait those 168.

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