

NCAA Men's Basketball Championship: Second Round - Indiana vs Miami

Sunday, March 19, 2023

Albany, New York, USA

MVP Arena

Indiana Hoosiers

Mike Woodson

Trayce Jackson-Davis

Miller Kopp

Race Thompson

Media Conference

Miami - 85, Indiana - 69

THE MODERATOR: We're joined by Indiana University Coach Woodson and the three players, Trayce Jackson-Davis, Miller Kopp, Race Thompson. We'll start with opening comments.

MIKE WOODSON: You've got to give Miami a lot of credit. They played their butts off tonight. It was a well-coached game, and I thought they were the better team. They showed it first half and second half.

I thought when we got back in it, we didn't do the things to put us in position once we got the lead to win this game. So you've got to give Miami a lot of credit. They played their butts off.

Q. What got you back in the game, what got you the lead early in the second half, and what got away from you as Miami got back into it?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: What got us back in the game is we were playing hard on the defensive end of the floor and getting quick baskets, quick screen, quick points in the post, stuff of that nature. Our defense was leading the offense. Kind of got away from us. They hit a few tough shots. They hit some shots, got some rebounds on the offensive end of the floor that got them extra possessions.

When you get down eight to ten, you've got to press, and they're a really good team going in transition. So that's



when the game started getting out of hand.

Q. Miller and Race, you guys kind of had to struggle through the first half, but then Miller hit that big three at the end, and Trey came out and hit one. When you got ahead 42-40, where were you at in your mind? Did you feel you were back where you needed to be and could take it from there?

MILLER KOPP: Yeah, we were super confident. We came out and made a run, punched first. That's what we wanted to do coming out of halftime. So for us we were feeling really confident, putting Trayce in a good position to share the ball and attack.

We just didn't keep that up.

Q. For Trayce and Race, Miami had 20 offensive rebounds. I mean, how difficult was it to try to get that contained? Why do you think it was difficult to get it contained?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: They're a great offensive rebounding team. They've got athletes. They would shoot shots. Everyone was crashing. They didn't have guards getting back. Everyone was going to get the ball.

Omier played really well on the offensive glass to bring energy and wedging people under, myself included. They were playing relentless on the glass. So they punished us, and that's what they did honestly.

Q. Trayce, you were getting noticeably emotional as the end of the game came to a close. When you think about your last four years as a Hoosier, what kind of comes to your mind? What do you think about?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: I just think about just being part of the change really. Just two years ago, we were getting Booed in our home city, Indianapolis, off the court in the Big Ten Tournament.

Just being in this moment two years later, it's really special. It's really special to me to have the Indiana fans on your back and just cheering for you and giving them hope. It's



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something that this program hasn't had in a while. So I just thought it was really cool to be part of that and be part of that experience.

I know this guy right next to me is going to make sure that things stay in the right direction.

Q. The start of the second half was good. The start of the first half wasn't. You fell behind 13-3. I think in a sideline interview Coach Woodson said you guys were complaining too much and it was a big time basketball game and you needed to play harder. Did you feel like you didn't play hard enough early on?

TRAYCE JACKSON-DAVIS: Yeah, I just think that they got off to a quick start. We didn't play well to start the game. Then going into the second half, I think that we kind of punched first. I think at the end of the first half we got -- I think it was maybe a run of five, where we cut it to five. Then we punched first at the start of the second half and tried to carry that momentum off.

Then it kind of was back and forth, back and forth until they kind of sprung out again. There was definitely complaining, but we're just competitors. We're trying to compete. So it happens.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you to our student-athletes.

Q. What's the hardest part of the suddenness of this ending for you?

MIKE WOODSON: This one is tough to swallow because I truly believe that this team had a legitimate shot. As a coach, I put so much pressure and heat on myself to get teams over the hump, so I've got to take some responsibility for this one tonight.

Even though we didn't play nowhere near where I thought we should be playing, you've got to give Miami a lot of credit. They played extremely well tonight. When I look at the stat sheet and look at the paint points and the rebounding, that's just not Indiana basketball. That's where the game was won.

Yes, we were complaining a lot. You can't do that in big-time college basketball games. They let you play. And you should want to be in that position to be let to play. We didn't compete. They were the better team tonight.

Q. Coach, it's a new age of college basketball, and obviously this loss really stings. But how long do you take before you start hitting the transfer portal, roster building, and those kinds of things?

MIKE WOODSON: I'll sleep on this tonight and get up tomorrow and start a fresh day, start trying to figure out how we can get better for next season.

I'm not taking anything away from our season. I told the guys in the locker room how much I love them and respect them for playing for me this year. The kind of season we had was a promising season. We had a good year.

We made a step forward based on where we were a year ago, but it's not good enough as far as I'm concerned. It's not. We've got to get better from a personnel standpoint, and I've got to get better as a coach. I mean, it's just that simple.

Q. Since you've been here action you've played through Trayce Jackson-Davis, and it's obvious why you did that. I'm just curious looking forward, is it your intent to be more of a perimeter-focused team? What are your thoughts about kind of your preferred style going forward?

MIKE WOODSON: It depends on personnel. When I was in New York -- Trayce Jackson-Davis is the first center that I've ever coached in my career where I had to utilize my center as a post-up player.

Trayce has gotten so much better being a post-up player. I mean, he's a basketball player now. I'd like to think that my staff and I have had a lot to do with that. He has gotten so much better in so many different areas.

But it's the first time in my coaching career that I've had to coach a young man starting out on the block and expanding his game. I don't know where we're going to be next season in terms of how our style of play will be. But we've got to get better. I do know that.

Q. I know you've talked about what it is that freshmen have to go through during the course of a season. Even 34 games in, Jalen really struggled early coming out of the gate tonight. How much of that was nerves and him just not getting comfortable early enough?

MIKE WOODSON: I don't know if I'd call it nerves. We just didn't play well. We did a lot of things tonight that from an offensive standpoint, we didn't sacrifice the next pass. It was like individually I had to beat you. I got to do it myself instead of doing it as a team.

There were a number of times we could have made the next pass, and we didn't do that. And then defensively, I told them at halftime we gave up 40 points, and we hadn't done that a whole lot this season. Normally we're sitting on top.

I told them, if we gave up 80 points, you would have a tough time beating this team, and we gave up 80-some points. Which wasn't good.

Q. The UM team feels that sometimes they're underrated, underappreciated. What do you think is the national perception of that team? What kind of respect do they have? Do you think they're a little bit underrated?

MIKE WOODSON: Ma'am, I'll tell you this: I never go into a game looking at a team that you might think or somebody might think is underrated. I respect all coaches and all teams. You go in with that attitude, you won't be very successful in this sport.

That coach has done a helluva job with that team for many, many years, and that team tonight competed and played their asses off, and that's why I'm sitting here going home and they're moving forward. So I have nothing but respect for every team that we play. That team was pretty damn good tonight.

Q. Coach, Trayce Jackson-Davis' final game tonight. What does he mean to you and this program?

MIKE WOODSON: Well, he's meant a lot to this program. I don't think we're sitting here today if it wasn't for Trayce Jackson-Davis. He could have left two days after I got the job, but he decided to stay on board. He worked his butt off. I pushed him on and off the court. A lot of nights and days, it wasn't pretty for him, but he got better. He benefited from it, and our team benefited from it.

I wish him nothing but the best moving forward -- him, Miller, and Race, who gave us all they could give us. It was fun times coaching those guys this season, but they're going to move on, and I've got to figure out our next move as far as our program and moving this program forward.

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