



PREGAME QUOTES

GRIZZLIES vs. TIMBERWOLVES

October 26, 2016



TIMBERWOLVES HEAD COACH TOM THIBODEAU:

On if the nerves have kicked in for the season opener:

"We're looking forward to it. It's the start of the season so a lot of preparation has gone into it in terms of the guys coming in early and then you go into the preseason. This is the next step. Just be ready. We know that we're on the road and it's a tough opponent. We have to understand what goes into winning, don't get lost in the hype of opening night, understand that we have to get established defensively. We have to get established offensively, take care of the ball, play inside-out and do the things that are necessary to win."

On the feel of such a young team:

"You start off the preseason and that's what you're trying to build are your habits. What we did yesterday, what we did this morning, what we did in our meeting at lunch, then what you do pregame to have a routine in place. When the ball goes up we have to be ready to go. You can't ease into the game and then you have to play 48 minutes."

On if there is a home or road preference for season openers:

"Nope. You know you're playing 82 games, 41 at home, 41 on the road. Sometimes the schedule is going your way sometimes it's not. I like being on the road early. I loved our preseason schedule. I think you have to develop a toughness on the road and have an understanding of what goes into winning on the road."

On his defensive expectations:

"Just do the right things and play together. The big thing is, in this league, it's very hard to guard guys individually. You have to do it collectively. Everyone has to understand whether it's defensive transition, low post defense, pick and roll defense, isolation defense or catch-and-shoot defense. It is five guys working together. If one guy doesn't do their job, it's not going to look good."

On David Fizdale's first game as a head coach

"Well, I had a lot of battles with the Heat when I was in Chicago and Boston. I don't know David well, we have a lot of mutual friends. I know he has a lot of respect in the league. I know he has earned this opportunity. He was a big part of the success that Miami had. Whenever somebody gets an opportunity the way he has, I'm happy for them. I think he is well prepared, he has been around a lot of great coaches and he has really worked at it."

On his first game as a head coach:

"It was so many years ago, it's hard to remember. It was in Minnesota, and I believe it was a preseason game and it was against the Lakers. They had Magic (Johnson). It was in the Metrodome. There was an incredible crowd there and it was actually a pretty good game too. When you become a head coach, things change. It's a lot different. You go from making suggestions to making a final decision. Sometimes those things stick with you a little longer as an assistant. You're already on to the next game and are thinking of things that are coming. As a head coach, you probably sit on it a little longer than you do as an assistant. I'm very happy for David. He's a class guy and he has worked extremely hard."