

WNBA Draft

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Charli Collier



Q. Obviously this is a huge moment for you, something you've been looking forward to for a long time. What was this moment like when you finally heard that name?

CHARLI COLLIER: A dream come true. Amazing. I would say right about when they would start the call, when I heard Dallas Wings, I would get the butterflies, the nervousness started to kick in. But I just reacted how I felt. It was just amazing to know that your hard work pays off no matter what you do, and I feel like the best is still yet to come.

Q. You said that "my God is so good." Can you talk about your faith and how your faith has shaped you as a basketball player and as a Black woman on and off the court?

CHARLI COLLIER: Definitely. So I grew up always in a Christian household. It's always God first no matter what I do, before everything. I just know if I put my faith in him, my work is going to show for itself. I feel like you've got to have a foundation, and that's my foundation. Everybody has a different one, but that's what I believe in. I know that it's always been working for me. I pray. My mom, my family, we all are Christians, and that's what I do. My God has a big part in me being successful, almost all of it.

Q. I'd love to talk to you about your fit in Dallas, and obviously it is a system where having plenty of bigs who are capable of stretching, whether it's Bella Alarie, whether it's Satou Sabally, it seems to fit really well with your skill set. Can you take me through the conversations you've had about that, and just the level of excitement to not only do that, but to have the type of guards that are on the roster ready to be able to feed you?

CHARLI COLLIER: Definitely, it's so exciting. I can't wait to connect with my team and get it going. Just to have elite talent like that on the Dallas squad, it just makes it so much more fun. Like you said, I have similar a skill set as some of the players on the team, and it just makes it easier for everybody when you're all elite. But at the same time, I'm looking for building a good relationship with all the players and all the coaches and just getting ready to get to work.

Q. I know earlier this morning I think your mom tweeted out a picture of you snuggled up in the back of a car sleeping on a basketball. It's like this has always been what you've dreamed of. But now that you've realized it, how have you reflected on this? What would you tell that girl that's cuddled up next to a basketball that one day this is really going to happen, you're going to be that No. 1 pick?

CHARLI COLLIER: I mean, it's still surreal. I still can't put into words this feeling. I was 2 years old in that picture, laying on the basketball. I've loved basketball ever since. I feel like just this right here is just a testament to all of my hard work, all that I've worked for. It's just amazing as a basketball player in general to just see what you've been working for for so long come true.

Q. For those who have never seen you play before, who would people remind you of when you step on the court or who do you model your game after?

CHARLI COLLIER: I feel like you could definitely see me as like a stretch 5, somebody that could put the ball on the floor, somebody that can shoot the midrange, be in the post, a very hybrid, versatile basketball player. I would say a lot of people, especially in the league, you don't really have a specific position; you're just a basketball player. That's how I think.

Q. I just want to get into your draft day fashion look. How do you feel right now wearing Sergio Hudson?

CHARLI COLLIER: I mean, it's Sergio. I mean, wow. I was just so happy when (audio interruption) Beyoncé, Michelle Obama. So to know that, it's really crazy. Honestly, it's a blessing.

Q. Certainly No. 1 overall picks have a number of unique pressures and challenges. Do you think perhaps some of the stuff that you saw and heard when you were playing at Texas provides you with experience to deal with everything that's going to be coming ahead of you?

CHARLI COLLIER: Definitely, definitely. Everything that I



go through, my trials, tribulations or whatever, prepares me for the next step. That's always how it goes for me. I know when things like that start to happen, obviously something good has to come after that. That has a lot to do with my faith, as well.

Q. Dallas took Awak Kuier with the second pick. I was wondering your thoughts on getting to play with her?

CHARLI COLLIER: Oh, man, an elite, an elite basketball player. I'm so happy that that will be my teammate. I've been following her, watching her game, 6-5, long, versatile, similar. Can't really wait to get to play with her, get to know her as a basketball player and as a teammate.

Q. How do you feel about the opportunity to play alongside Arike Ogunbowale?

CHARLI COLLIER: Definitely. That's definitely something I'm looking forward to, an elite guard, one of the best guards in the W. I'm looking forward to learning from her, pick her brain a little bit, get some advice from her and soak all the information I can because I'm a rookie and they're vets and they have experience. So it doesn't hurt to always get some information from them of how I can be a better basketball player and teammate and help the Dallas Wings win.

Q. What do you think was the key learning from your college years to make an impact in the WNBA right now?

CHARLI COLLIER: I really think it's honestly consistency. I feel like when you're playing in such an advanced league like this, you can't afford to have up-and-down moments. I feel like now as a professional you're expected to always be on point. That's tough, but it's expected. I feel like that's the difference between college and the pros, that you really don't have room for mistakes. You've been through the learning stages. Now you're a professional and expected to play your best.

Q. You're walking into a team that is definitely going to be utilizing you, I think, sooner rather than later. Can you just talk about what you're bringing from your college to the Dallas Wings?

CHARLI COLLIER: Definitely going to be bringing my rebounding ability, first and foremost. My ability to attack the boards and be a force down low, and also expand on my range a little bit, shoot the three more. Just doing all that I can for my team in order to help them win is what I'll do.

Q. I know you talked about the butterflies you had

coming in, but everybody was talking about you were going to be the No. 1 pick. Was it still as exciting as you thought it would be? And my second part is, is there anybody in the WNBA that you're looking forward to playing against?

CHARLI COLLIER: It definitely was still exciting for me, even though people were saying I was No. 1 here or there. I feel like when you're actually in the moment, it's different. Your heart is racing. Cathy [Engelbert] is over there about to announce. It's just the whole atmosphere is definitely exciting, and I was just feeling excited at the time.

Definitely looking forward to playing against Candace Parker. Always wanted to model my game after her when I was little. I actually have her jersey. It's crazy. So looking forward to that.

Q. You have a lot of stars and players, some that you look up to like Candace Parker like you mentioned, and you have KD rooting for you. How does that feel to be able to speak to them? In college you played in KDs. Will you still be playing in them now in WNBA? Have you talked to KD about getting your own shoes?

CHARLI COLLIER: All great questions. No, I have not talked to him about shoes. I haven't made any decisions about any shoes or where I'll be going with that. But yeah, it's awesome having people like that by your side. Looking forward to playing against all the stars in the league because that's what it's about. Like I said earlier, just soaking up all the information I can from them and getting to learn because I am a rookie and I don't know anything about the WNBA yet. Just willing to learn and willing to work.

Q. You have said determination is a family trait. I wanted to know can you elaborate on that? What does that mean to you?

CHARLI COLLIER: Just throughout, me and my brother, my mom, my dad, we always focus on determination and finishing things out. I feel like consistency and persistent goals, determination, just willingness to win, that's what that means to me.

Q. Everyone is talking about how this draft is the year for Dallas. How does it feel to be that high up on their priority list, and who do you look forward to playing with the most on the Wings?

CHARLI COLLIER: It's awesome. It's an awesome feeling, a great feeling. It's always good to go No. 1. It just feels great. I'm excited to be a part of the Wings family. I'm looking forward to playing with everyone on the team,



not just one specific person. Looking forward to building a good relationship with the coaches.

Q. With the WNBA being on NBA2K, you're going to be on a video game. How do you feel about that?

CHARLI COLLIER: You know, you actually reminded me of that because I wasn't thinking about that at all during this whole draft process. But yeah, I'm going to be on a video game, so that's crazy. I might have to get 2K now and play my player or something. Yeah, that's cool.

Q. How do you feel about being coached by Vickie Johnson, who was a great player and is also the only Black woman coach in the league?

CHARLI COLLIER: It's an honor. It's a blessing. Talked to her a few times, got to know her a little bit. She's definitely a great coach, an amazing coach, someone I can go to for advice about my game. She'll definitely elevate my game and I'm just looking forward to being coached by her this season.

Q. Just wanted to ask about the Dallas Wings. They have a youthful roster already, but that frontcourt is a little crowded. Are you looking forward to mixing it up in training camp with the other players?

CHARLI COLLIER: Definitely looking forward to it. I feel like it's going to be fun getting to know everybody, practicing, working out. Just can't wait to get in the gym.

Q. Are you going to call KD and give him a little nudge about being the No. 1 pick from Texas? He was No. 2 in the NBA.

CHARLI COLLIER: Oh, man, he's still great, though. He's still dope. I'll probably call him later, though.

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