

WNBA Draft

Monday, April 10, 2023

Dallas Wings

Stephanie Soares



Q. Now that this moment is here, how do you feel?

STEPHANIE SOARES: It's just really -- it's a lot of excitement. I think before it was a little more nervousness, now it's just pure excitement to get ready and get to Dallas.

Q. Can you take me through, it's obviously an unconventional journey to be here. At what point did this start to feel real to you, that the WNBA was not just something possible but something that was definitely going to happen for you?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, I think once I moved freshman year into college here in the U.S. and California it was a goal of mine, but then once I think I took that next step to Iowa State, I think the coaches kind of helped me see that view of being able to make it to the league.

Q. How would you describe the feeling of being drafted, let alone getting to play for the Dallas Wings led by Arike Ogunbowale?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, it's exciting. You watch them play and now you get to get meet them and be alongside them and watch them practice, and I think it's just a big learning curve that we'll get to have and develop as a player, but yeah, it's pure excitement for sure.

Q. Given your injury from a few months ago, how have you stayed positive, upbeat that you could still come back and fulfill your dreams of being drafted like you have been today?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, I think just the people that I've been around just at Iowa State have been so supportive. Even when I got injured, there was tears, and for every athlete it's hard getting injured but they were like, let's take the next step. What do we have to do next? So, they were always encouraging, supportive, getting me to start working out. We were in the gym pretty much all day, but yeah, it's just been all the people at Iowa State have been so great.

Q. How is your rehab coming along? And how does it feel to be drafted by one team and quickly go to

another one within a few minutes?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, the rehab is going really well. Iowa State, they have great resources that we have been using throughout these few couple months, and our trainers Meaghan Clark and Mercedes, they've been coming alongside me and helping me through every single part of the process, which is a long process, but it's been really great of them.

Yeah, it was a very interesting feeling. It's just like pure excitement of going to Washington but now getting to go to Dallas. I mean, yeah, it's going to be a great, great next step to the journey.

Q. Obviously a roller coaster of a year for you going from NAIA to Iowa State to the injury to now a top five pick. What has the last 12 months being like for you?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, they've been pretty crazy. We've still got school. So, it's just been working out, as well, getting all the workouts we need because we want to get better to 100 percent, so working out, school, and now getting ready for the draft. It's been a crazy last couple weeks, but I've been enjoying every moment of it.

Q. During this whole process, you have truly elevated yourself, so my thing is what are the intangibles the Dallas Wings should expect from you?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, just with my length and just being able to help defensively and offensively, spreading out the defense and the offense, playing inside and outside, just versatility, and yeah, all of that.

Q. What can we expect, if Wings fans aren't familiar with your game, what can they expect to see from you?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, very competitive, team player, just love to be -- every part of the game, I love to be around my teammates. But yeah, just competitiveness, my length, so hopefully lots of blocks, lots of help on defense.



Q. There has already been a few very good players from Brazil in the WNBA like Clarissa dos Santos or Damiris Dantas. In the NBA too with Leandro Barbosa and Anderson Varejao. Do those players inspire you or are you on your own path?

STEPHANIE SOARES: Oh, no, they for sure inspire me a lot. I started playing for the Brazil team five years ago. So I've been able to get to know Clarissa, Erika de Souza, Damiris Dantas. They've kind of helped me through my pathway too. I love them so much, and yeah, they've for sure been a part of my journey.

Q. Can you walk us through what was going through your head when they said you got traded to Dallas instead of being there with Washington? Dallas is a team that's on the other side of a rebuild and they're really just looking for one or two pieces.

STEPHANIE SOARES: Yeah, for sure surprised. Someone just tapped me, like you got traded. I was like, what? That happened so fast. Yeah, I think I'm just ready to get to Dallas now and start getting to work.

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