

WNBA Draft

Monday, April 15, 2024

Washington Mystics

Aaliyah Edwards



Q. What was the moment like? And I don't know how much you know about Shakira Austin, but how are you envisioning fitting in and playing besides her?

AALIYAH EDWARDS: For the first question, the moment, man, it was the moment for me. Right before the Commissioner said my name, I just looked down and thought to myself and said a little prayer, like it's your time, it's God's timing. She said my name, and that's when the water works started happening. Just super grateful for this moment and this opportunity.

Your second question with Shakira, great player. Followed her from D-I all the way to the W. I think I'm just happy to really get the opportunity to play alongside her. Such a great player. I think that she's going to elevate me. I can elevate her, too. But whatever impact I can take for this team and to this organization.

Q. You've talked about the evolution of your mid-range game, and you've talked about it in terms of thinking the way you would play at the next level and your conversation with Mike (Thibault) and across the league. How much did that come up and how rewarding was it to see that still be something that teams were interested in?

AALIYAH EDWARDS: Very rewarding, and I think one of the things going into this league that I want to do is just expand my game. Might be asked to play a different role, but I'm open to it. I see myself as a versatile player and impacting in any position that I'm asked to play in.

Yeah, it's going to be a tough league, tough first year, but I'm pumped and I'm ready for the challenge.

Q. Aliyah, can you take us through the past 10 days of coming back from Cleveland, got to go home for a little bit, and now that you're here?

AALIYAH EDWARDS: Oh, my gosh, it's been a lot. Long days, a lot of long days. But once I hit the weekend, once I was with my fellow draftees, that's when I started really sinking in the moment and just being appreciative for being a part of this.

The W is the W, and it's a great league. I'm just super excited to be a part of it, but the process is no joke, for sure.

Q. How does it feel to finally have your WNBA dream come to fruition, and what advice would you give young girls who also look forward to playing in the WNBA one day?

AALIYAH EDWARDS: Oh, my gosh, just to have a dream like this and to actually walk through it, I said this out there, it's just amazing. A lot of people have dreams, but a lot of people aren't able to achieve it. For me to be fortunate enough to say that and to keep going and to keep pushing my dreams, it's just amazing.

I would say my message for the younger girls is just be confident, be who you are, but know your worth. I mean, coming from Canada, wasn't given as many opportunities as, say, my fellow draftees, but I made the best out of it, and I earned everything that I was given. Stay humble but let them know.

Q. What has it been like to go through this experience of the last few days with Nika and also to have Paige and Azzi and all them?

AALIYAH EDWARDS: Oh, my gosh, it's great. The Bleed Blue bleeds all the way into the league. I'm just very fortunate to be given the opportunity to go to UConn and spend my four years there, but especially spend my four years there with Nika. We had a hug when my name was called. It's just a lot because the people and the relationships you build over this beautiful game that we play, it's amazing, and to share this moment with her and Coach and CD (Chris Dailey) and J (Janelle Elliott) and Mo (Morgan Valley), and Paige and Azzi were in the audience, too, it's a family. I'm hoping to make a new family in D.C.

Q. The game of basketball is growing internationally at such a rapid rate and girls like yourself are laying the foundation for that growth. How does it feel to be inspiring the next generation within Asia?



AALIYAH EDWARDS: It feels great. I feel like the platform that I was given, even though at first I wasn't really sure that I was able to step into it, but I've had to step into it. I've had to kind of live in my truth because I know that a lot of young girls are looking up to me and a lot of people who are inspired to be like me are watching. You're not only playing for yourself, you're playing for those following behind you, and you're also playing for those who laid the groundwork in front of you.

Coming into the W, I respect that. I appreciate, I'm not going to say elders because I don't want them getting on me, but I appreciate our vets, and I'm going to soak up all the experience, but also knowing that I have a huge impact across the border in Canada and across the border in Asia, too.

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