

WNBA Draft

Monday, April 14, 2025

Los Angeles Sparks

Sarah Ashlee Barker



Q. After having an amazing game in Maryland, setting a scoring record for Alabama, what clicked for you emotionally and mentally in that moment and how do you carry that same energy as you go into your pro career?

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: Yeah, I think it's just being so grateful that I even get to play the game of basketball. For me, every single time I step out on the floor, I just love basketball so much, and so I just try to go out there every single night and just play as hard as I can and try to do the little things.

For me for the next level, it's just about doing those little things. L.A. has such amazing players and I'm so lucky that I get to learn under all of them and just get there with the vets, understand how they do things. At the next level, it's doing the little things. It's the rebounding. It's the assists. It's how you can defend. That's what all goes into it, not just a 45-point performance. It's the other things, too.

Q. What is it that you're really looking forward to the most at the next level?

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: I think it's just learning from other people. Like I said, there's so many great players in the W. I'm so excited for the competition, for the athleticism, and just a new chapter in my life. I've been in college for five years, and so I'm just ready to start that next chapter.

Q. I had watched this video of you and you spoke about your teammate Claire and how you used to put up shots just to beat her and she gave you this great motivation. What would you say to that young Sarah in that gym today?

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: Yeah, I think it's just understanding that you never know what you can do, so if you just give it your all and give it your best shot that you can do anything in life. As long as I try my hardest, I'm not so much worried about the outcome because I know that I'm going to give it my all.

Q. I just want to know if there was a moment or in your

high school or college career when it went from a hobby or something you were passionate about to almost something you started treating like a full-time shot to where you got to where you are now or if it was just more gradual?

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: Yeah, I've loved basketball since I was six years old. So when I got to high school and started getting recruited by colleges, I knew I wanted to play at the next level and I knew I wanted to play basketball for as long as I could.

When I was in eighth grade I had a knee injury that could have taken me away from the game of basketball. So for me at 13 years old, I couldn't run for nine months and I was out for a whole year or over a year. So for me to even be able to step on the floor, it means the world to me. I'm just so grateful that I just have the opportunity to continue playing, and I just love it so much that I knew that I wanted to play as long as I could.

Q. You had a 45 piece in the NCAA Tournament. Now, obviously scoring 45 in any game is hard enough, but doing it at that level is even crazier. The average human being is not going to drop a 45-point game in their life. Describe what it was like being locked into that zone.

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: Yeah, it was surreal. That game, like I said in the press conference after that game, it was one of the best women's basketball games I think anyone has ever watched. It was so good for the sport. It was so good for just women's basketball itself.

So it was one of those moments where after the game I was like, wow. Like, I really didn't realize that I scored 45 points. I think one of my coaches came up to me after and said, I don't think you understand what you just put on and what you just did. It just made me kind of just be so grateful and grateful that I was even in that position and that I had the opportunity to have such a great game like that.

But 45 points doesn't come from me. I had to have people passing me the ball. I had to have people creating



opportunities like Aaliyah Nye. She's one of my teammates. She's the best shooter in the country in my opinion, and if people were to come off of her, I was going to hit her for the shot. So it gave me an ability to get downhill and get to the rim.

So if I didn't have teammates like that on my team, that 45 would never be there. If I didn't have coaches that loved me and support me and always encouraged me, that 45 would never be there.

Yes, it was in my name, that 45, but I take it as an Alabama thing for me.

Q. Can you top that in the W?

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: I'm not going to say. I don't know. That would be very hard. There's amazing defenders in the W, and I would just be so grateful to even be on the floor.

Q. Now that you're in L.A. you're going to be around a bunch of players that all have very interesting style and especially with sneakers. You have Kelsey with Under Armour and Curry, Cam with New Balance. What can we expect to see you wearing?

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: Yeah, I'll see what they wear and maybe try on some of their stuff and just go from there. I love the Kobe shoe. I've always worn it. But for me I think it's just, like you said, my new teammates, they have all these shoes that I'm lucky that I even get to be a part of that with them. I'm really looking forward to their style and seeing what kind of shoes they wear.

Q. Just talk about how excited you are to play alongside players like Dearica, Kelsey and Rickea in Los Angeles.

SARAH ASHLEE BARKER: Yeah, all three of those players are just amazing players. I'm so blessed and so lucky that I get to do that. I played against Rickea when I was in the SEC for about four years, and so I know how hard she works. I know how great of a player she is, and she's also just a great person.

The other two, I'm just really excited to get to know them, be around them. But it's just about learning from them because they're more experienced than me. So I'm just so grateful and lucky that I have those people to learn from.

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