

NBA Draft

Wednesday, June 26, 2024

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Donovan Clingan



Q. Outside of your personal excitement with being drafted with the seventh pick, what did that just mean to you to hug your teammate?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: Yeah, I mean, I'm really proud of Steph, happy for Steph. As a freshman, for him to come in and do what he did, help lead that team to another national title, is something very hard to do as a freshman. I love that kid to death. I'm extremely happy for him, and I'll be his biggest fan this year.

Q. Can you talk about the excitement of going from the Big East Tournament to the NCAA championship to having your name called just now?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: Yeah, it's been a crazy two years, from winning one national title to winning the Big East regular season to the Big East Tournament and then winning another national title. A lot of winning, a lot of succeeding the past two years. I feel like I'm going to keep that chip on my shoulder and go into Portland with just a lot of confidence, with a willingness to learn and get better every single day.

I just want to have an impact and try to help this organization win and get to the top and try to win championships.

Q. You mentioned the national championships. You mentioned the collegiate success. You're joining a really young team with some really promising young players. How excited are you to play with some of these young guys and really grow together?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: I'm really excited. I feel the connection with some of these young guys I've watched since I was in high school. Scoot (Henderson), in particular. I feel like we have a chance to do something really special.

I'm young. Having a young team, just growing up around the same age, everyone learning and getting better every day, I'm really excited. I feel like I'm at a loss for words right now. I don't even know what else to say. I'm just excited and extremely blessed for this opportunity, and I'm really ready to get to Portland and get to work.

Q. What part of your skill set do you think will be most valuable in Portland?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: Being able to space the floor, knock down the three ball, playmake at a high level. I feel like I can handle the ball at the top of the key, pass the ball at a high level and I can shoot the ball at a high level.

One thing about me is I want to be a great teammate. I want to be the best teammate. I want to be the best player that Coach wants to coach every day. Coach is happy about coaching him because he gives his all. I want to be that guy. I'm just ready to get to work.

Q. What was this day like for you? I know a lot of anticipation. What was it like having your family and coaches here, being in the green room and then even waiting until seventh to get picked?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: It's a great feeling. You dream of this moment your whole life. You watch it on TV every single year. To have that moment here in front of you today and to hear my name called is something that I'll remember for the rest of my life.

That was a really special moment. Like I said, I'm extremely blessed and grateful for everyone that has helped me to get to this point. I'm ready to get to work and ready to learn and ready to try to impact winning.

Q. Have you spoken to Coach Billups yet?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: Yes, I just did.

Q. How was that?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: It was great. I like Coach a lot. When I went out there for my visit, he was a good dude, great dude. The whole staff, the whole organization, you can really tell people that want to learn and want to win and learn and get better. That's something -- that's what I'm about, and I'm really ready to go get going.

Q. Do you remember watching him when he was with the Pistons or are you too young?



DONOVAN CLINGAN: Too young.

Q. What does it say about the state of UConn right now that not only do you guys have a winning program but you're being recognized individually with draft picks up here in the top 10?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: Yeah, it just shows that we were the best program in college basketball and they still are right now. Coach Hurley is the best coach in college basketball, and he's producing players at a high level every single year.

I'm not sure the exact number of draft picks he's had these past five years, but Coach Hurley has been the top of the top in college for a couple years now. I love that man to death.

Q. Is there anything that you want to do or finish personally before you pick up and move across the country to Portland?

DONOVAN CLINGAN: No. Just spend some time with some family. Soak everything in. Realize my life is going to change forever.

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