

# WNBA Media Conference

Sunday, October 10, 2021

New York, New York, USA

## Breanna Stewart

### Press Conference



**Q. I wanted to check on in how everything's going and if you could weigh in on what it's like to be a new mom. Diana [Taurasi] isn't a new mom but going through a newborn. Have you texted her and given her any congratulations?**

BREANNA STEWART: First off, obviously, certainly happy for D [Diana] and Penny to welcome another healthy baby into the world. Being a new mom, obviously, they've done it before with Leo [son], but the beginning is tough but also amazing at the same time. Ruby's at home waiting for me to come back, so looking forward to going back to her.

But as far as how I'm feeling, pretty good. Rest does wonders. So, to be able to have some time where I'm not rushing into another game or things like that is, I think, really good for my body. Unfortunately, we're not playing anymore, but it happens.

**Q. I wonder if you could weigh in on the frontcourt matchup we're going to see in the series and your opinion of the battle it's going to be between these two teams.**

BREANNA STEWART: Of the bigs? I think that with these two teams it's going to be a great series, and it's going to be really interesting because there are so many pieces where it's like who's going to match up with BG [Brittney Griner]? Who's going to match up with Candace Parker, D, Skylar [Diggins-Smith], the names go on and on, Sloat [Courtney Vandersloot], Allie [Quigley].

So really looking forward to being someone who's a spectator and watching. I think that both these teams are going to play their best in the biggest moment. I was just talking downstairs, but it's like this is the moment where home court advantage is like really, really important. So, we'll see if Chicago can get a win on the road or if Phoenix defends their home court.

**Q. Breanna, when you look at the W25, you're on the list of the W25. Do you kind of get like star struck or in awe of seeing the pioneers of women's basketball and people to consider you as one of the 25 greatest**

**players to put on a pair of sneakers and a jersey?**

BREANNA STEWART: I think that's the first thing is it's a huge honor for me to be part of the W25, having been in the league for six years, and especially looking at the former players that are a part of this group, the current players that are a part of this group just makes it even more special. To kind of be in the same company as Lisa [Leslie], Catch [Tamika Catchings], obviously D, Sue [Bird], Katie Smith, Ticha [Penicheiro], like the list goes on and on and on.

I just really appreciate the opportunity to be here and the opportunity to play in the WNBA and help continue to grow the game like the ones before us did.

**Q. I just wanted to ask you for somebody that's been to a WNBA Finals during your short period of time in your WNBA career, what advice do you have for players playing in the WNBA Finals this year for the first time and to actually put in the effort to win a championship?**

BREANNA STEWART: Advice for players in their first WNBA Finals is enjoy the moment and make sure you leave everything out on the court. You've gotten through the ups and downs, the good and the bad this season, for this moment. It's something where it's not one game. So, it needs to be repeated over a series of five or the winner of three.

Enjoy it. When I look back at 2018, especially because we had fans, 2020 in the bubble -- and Sue says it all the time, you never know when you're going to get back. So, don't overlook or overthink or miss your opportunity.

**Q. You were here for Commissioner's Cup. Your team was playing great right after the Olympics. Now neither of those teams is here in the finals. What does that say about the league, about the parity, and the elite status at the top? One injury, one little thing can sort of shift the power.**

BREANNA STEWART: I think that everyone has really realized this, maybe more so this year than any other year, is just how hard it is to play in this league and how many good teams that we have in this league. Like all 12 teams are capable of competing night in and night out.



For us to have a five versus six seed finals for the first time ever, I believe, just shows the versatility of the league, and I think that it's great for the WNBA. It's great for women's basketball.

Really credit to Chicago and Phoenix for getting through single eliminations and then the semifinals and not having much rest and still being here and proving that they are contending for a championship.

**Q. You actually just kind of mentioned it real quick, getting through single elimination. Commissioner earlier was talking about looking at the playoff format. From your perspective, what do you think of the playoff format? Do you like it, or would you like to see it retooled?**

BREANNA STEWART: I think from the players' standpoint we all would like the single elimination to be gone. Just because you work all season for an opportunity, and to have one game just kind of makes it over really quickly. Yeah, it's the format for college, but this isn't college. This is the WNBA.

Also, I think extending the playoffs and making series out of all the rounds just makes for more viewers, more eyes to watch us and more people to be a part of it.

**Q. I'm sure you just have an entire apartment dedicated to trophies and medals at this point, but what is the next thing that you're looking to accomplish just being it's incredible to be on the W25, but what's the next thing that Breanna Stewart can accomplish in basketball at this point?**

BREANNA STEWART: I think the next thing that I want to accomplish is continuing to obviously get better individually but getting us back into contention for a championship. I think the way we went out this year wasn't easy, and not being able to have much of a say in it wasn't very fun for me or great for me.

In Seattle we have the pieces, and hopefully have another shot at it.

**Q. I was wondering if I could ask you something a little bit more big picture. With these deals that college players can sign now, obviously Paige [Bueckers] and Azzi [Fudd] already have agents. What problems do you see that could bring up or do you see that mostly as a positive? I ask that because you have a lot of young people dealing with a completely different situation than you would have. One could assume if this had been there when you were there, you would**

**have been inundated with this.**

BREANNA STEWART: I think it's time for the NIL to be happening and for players to profit off their name, image, and likeness. I also think that it's going to be a tricky road just for the process of it and everything like that.

I think that guidance is going to be something that's really important for these players who are making tons and tons of money, but I also think that it's going to make things even more competitive because you're going to realize, if you're not excelling and you're not doing this and that and the other on the court, you're not going to get as many deals and opportunities as other players.

So, I think there's another competitive side to it, and giving people a sense of reality really quickly.

**Q. I got two for you: First is how's your foot feeling? The second one is I'm sure you've told Sue how you feel and want her to come back for another year, but how do you approach that? Do you try to every week send her a text and then come back, come back, come back, or do you just do it once and wait? How do you approach that with her?**

BREANNA STEWART: My foot is feeling pretty good. I think it's just something that will take time. To be honest, I haven't really gotten on the basketball court. Just been making sure that I've had enough rest leading up to it.

As far as Sue, I mean, she knows that I would love for her to be back and I would love to play with her again and have another opportunity. I know that she's got a lot going on, a lot on her mind as far as coming back, not coming back. No, I don't bug her, but she knows I would prefer her to be back playing because she can. She's more than capable of being out on the court and competing, no matter how old she is.

**Q. First, how is baby Ruby? Second, what do you think the league needs to do better going into next season from a player's perspective?**

BREANNA STEWART: Ruby's great. She is at home. She's 2 months. She's big. She was like 15 pounds the last time we went to the doctor. So, like I'm getting workouts all the time. And I just love to have the opportunity to kind of watch her change day in and day out. It's something that I've really never obviously been a part of before. But motherhood is amazing.

As far as things that we need to continue to improve on in the WNBA, I think just continuing to cater to the players and help us get as much as we can and show our values

and appreciate us and continue to get the eyes and the viewers.

I think that this year having the first year where the new CBA was really enforced, because last year we were in the bubble, just shows how exciting things are going to be, and I think that there's going to be a lot more opportunities for WNBA players. I mean, you see it now, but it's going to just continue to grow, and for the WNBA to have our back with that is really the main message point.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

