

2022 NHL Draft

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Shane Wright

Press Conference



Q. You wanted to go first; how are you feeling?

SHANE WRIGHT: I mean, I think that I was drafted by an NHL franchise. I was drafted by a team with a lot of potential and to a great city with a great fan base. Obviously you want to go first. It's definitely something every guy wants to do going into the draft. But I couldn't be happier being in Seattle. Couldn't be happier with being a Kraken, and really excited about the future ahead in Seattle.

Q. Does it give you a little more motivation?

SHANE WRIGHT: Yeah, definitely going to have a little chip on my shoulder from this for sure. Definitely, like you said, a little more motivation. I've always been self-motivated, always been pushing myself internally, but it's definitely going to give me a little more fire for sure.

Q. So you want to go first and it doesn't happen, then you want to go second and it doesn't happen. What were you thinking as the first three picks went through?

SHANE WRIGHT: I think that sometimes teams take the best guy they feel to fit. I think they take the best player available for their team. They take the best player that they think is going to fit their franchise, so at the end of the day, it's not my decision. Obviously you want to be picked as high as possible, but it's not my choice. I can't really impact the pick from sitting there in the stands.

It was all right. Yeah, it was fine.

Q. Had you prepared yourself for this kind of scenario? Had you said, there's a chance that Seattle is going to be the team I end up going to for various reasons?

SHANE WRIGHT: I think that you prepare for every situation. You prepare for whatever can happen. I think that personally for me, it's real important to never get too far ahead of yourself, never start thinking too far ahead in the future with stuff that you think is going to happen rather

than something that actually has happened. It's always important to prepare for every situation, prepare for wherever you may end up.

Q. There's always a feeling of excitement when you get drafted but I'm wondering if you also felt some relief when you heard your name called?

SHANE WRIGHT: I wouldn't say that, no. I think that I got drafted to the NHL. I achieved that lifelong goal of mine. I achieved that dream of being drafted and to an amazing team in Seattle with a great future ahead. I wouldn't really say it was a relief. I would say just more excitement, more proud, and just honored to be drafted.

Q. You look at this setup that's going on, you're going to have you and Matty Beniers as kind of a one-two there -- how much does that get you to know you and him are kind of where it's going to start?

SHANE WRIGHT: For sure, yeah, obviously like you said, to be part of that organization with obviously Matty Beniers is going to be the focal point, as well, and hopefully I can be part of that great franchise, a great future, as well, with the young talent coming up in the organization. So yeah, I think it's a great fit. I think I really fit in really well into Seattle's lineup, and hopefully next year I can make that jump to it.

Q. How much communication did you have with Seattle, if any, ahead of time, and how much do you know about what they're trying to do?

SHANE WRIGHT: Yeah, a good amount of communication. Went out for dinner with a couple of their scouts and obviously met them in the combine, as well, had a great conversation with them. Definitely I know their assistant coach, as well, Paul McFarland. He used to be kind of my head coach in Kingston. We didn't actually play any games under him, but I know him from past Zoom calls and all that, so got to build a relationship with him. I knew him pretty well.

Had a pretty good understanding of what they were about, and really liked everything about it, really liked what they



felt they were building and where I fit into their organization, so just super proud.

Q. Did you get a chance to meet with them yesterday or when was the last time you met with them prior to today?

SHANE WRIGHT: At the combine. That was the last time I talked to them. Leading up to this I didn't really talk to anyone a whole lot.

Q. Was it a long process for you, pandemic, everything? Are you just glad that you're done and now you can just go play hockey?

SHANE WRIGHT: A little bit, yeah. I think that obviously it's kind of nice to have it done and I can focus on development camp and learning how to -- and focusing on the training camp and getting prepared for training camp also soak all this in. I also think I want to soak all this in. I want to soak in the draft experience.

We're fortunate enough to actually have a draft in person unlike the last two years. I had friends of mine who were in that draft and we weren't able to get drafted in person.

It is maybe a little bit of a relief, but I think more so just trying to soak it all in, just trying to enjoy this experience, because it's something that isn't going to happen again for me.

Q. Did you wake up this morning thinking you were going to be a Montreal Canadien?

SHANE WRIGHT: I mean, obviously you picture that in your mind. You picture your name being called first and walking up on that stage and putting that jersey, especially with the draft being held in Montreal, with them as first, and like you said, definitely going to put a chip on my shoulder for sure and give me a little more motivation for sure.

Q. Do you foresee yourself playing for Team Canada in August?

SHANE WRIGHT: I think it's still a decision that has to be made. I think it's also a decision of Seattle and what they want to do with me. Obviously it's really something that's hard to pass up. Anytime you can represent your country, at the World Juniors nonetheless, it's a tournament that you dream of playing in as a kid and dream of representing your country. It's never something you can pass up too easily, so definitely going to be a tough decision for sure.

Q. Do you see it training advantage going into training

camp in September?

SHANE WRIGHT: For sure, yeah, a hundred percent. Being able to play a number of games there against high-level competition, and like you said, right before training camp is definitely -- give you a pretty good boost and able to get your legs under you a little bit and get used to the pace for training camp. That will definitely be a benefit for sure.

Q. It's been kind of a screwy last couple years with the pandemic, and your game probably maybe didn't get the showcase the way you would have liked it to. Have we seen the best of your game the last couple years?

SHANE WRIGHT: Not even close, no. This year was nowhere near my best. I believe that I can be a lot better. I believe that I haven't reached even close to my potential. I think that I've got a lot of work to do. I think that I made a lot of mistakes this year, had some failures and faced a lot of adversity with myself and my game, but I think I'm still growing as a player. I think I'm still learning a lot about myself and learning a lot about my game and how to be the best player I can be. I think that's definitely something that I want to improve on for sure.

Q. Is the disappointment of not being chosen first overall diminished somewhat by the fact that the Canadiens pulled off two big moves to acquire a right shooting center in Kirby Dach?

SHANE WRIGHT: I think a little bit, yeah. I think that those traits maybe led them to not pick a centerman, obviously Kirby Dach being a high-end centerman and someone who's established himself as a high-end NHL player. Maybe that played a little bit of a part.

I wouldn't say I was disappointed or anything or less disappointed because they did that, I just think that that's what Montreal felt was the best move for them, and that's what they did. That's just what kind of happened for them.

Q. Were you calm?

SHANE WRIGHT: I think so. Like I said, I was just trying to soak it in. I wasn't at that point -- it wasn't anything I could do to change the direction of the draft, change the direction of what the teams thought.

My mindset was and what I was thinking was there's no reason to be too nervous, no reason to be super nervous or anxious going into it because at the end of the day it's out of my control. It's not really something I can choose, not really a decision that's mine to be made. Just tried to stay as calm and cool as possible and just kind of soak it

all in.

Q. Have you gotten the chance to gauge your family's reaction?

SHANE WRIGHT: I think that in terms of playing in the NHL, I think that geography and where you play doesn't matter as much. I think at the end of the day it's a lot about the situation you're in and the organization and what fits best for you, and I feel like Seattle is a really good fit for me, I'm really excited to be there and excited for what's ahead in Seattle for sure.

Q. What was Ron Francis's message to you?

SHANE WRIGHT: Yeah, he said he's happy to have me. He said he's proud and really excited for me to be there, and I said the same thing. I was really proud and honored to be in Seattle and he said that was a really good fit, and he said he was really excited to have me there, and I feel the same way.

Q. Did you sense he was a little surprised, as well?

SHANE WRIGHT: Maybe a little bit, yeah. I think that at the end of the day that's their job. They have to adapt to those different situations. They have to adapt to maybe what they think is not normal or what might not happen or what does happen. So maybe a little bit, yeah, but I think that's his job to -- he's obviously smart enough and he's obviously an incredible hockey mind, so he can understand and make those adjustments pretty quick.

Q. How do you manage perspective in a moment like this? At the end of the day you were still a No. 4 pick, a franchise future cornerstone. How do you manage it knowing it's not the end of the world?

SHANE WRIGHT: Yeah, I think that at the end of the day it's maybe less about position, more about -- sorry, less about the number where you go and the position you're in and the best fit. Obviously it's a great situation for me. I think it's a great fit. I think it's something that I'm really excited to be a part of. Really excited to, like I said, build to the future in Seattle and hopefully be a big part of their future.

Q. I wanted to ask you about your development in Kingston and the impact it's had to your journey and your career and heading up to here?

SHANE WRIGHT: Yeah, I love it in Kingston. Kingston is a great city. Super fortunate to be there. Obviously it's an unbelievable city, and we had a great organization there, had a lot of high-end players go through there, as well, and

some great coaches, as well, like Paul McFarland, now assistant coach on Seattle. It really definitely helped my development for sure, helped shape me to where I am today and really happy to be part of that for sure.

Q. Do you see yourself as a NHL player?

SHANE WRIGHT: I do, yeah, I really do. I think that's where I can be. I think that I definitely have a little work to do. I definitely have a lot of things I've got to work on my game and obviously got to understand the game a little more and understand the pace and the physicality of the NHL, but I think with a lot of work this off-season and learning from the high-end coaches and other players on the team, I think I can get there.

Q. You've got a couple of Kingston teammates available in the draft; can you give me a quick scouting report on the ones that have been --

SHANE WRIGHT: Yeah, Luds, he's a hardworking guy, one of the hardest working guys. He's always competing, his motor is always going, and he's also skilled. He can make plays, he can score goals, and he's a guy that you really like playing with. He's always going in the corners and winning battles.

Then Eddie, he's obviously super skilled, super smart with the puck. He's so talented at making plays, in tight, and he can shoot the puck and he can score goals. Two guys I really loved playing with this year.

Q. (Indiscernible).

SHANE WRIGHT: It would be nice. I would like that, yeah.

Q. Looked like you and your dad were cracking a couple jokes, trying to keep things light.

SHANE WRIGHT: Yeah, I think that we were just trying to keep it light, just trying to stay in the moment, as well. No use getting too upset, no use getting too overwhelmed with what's going on and just trying to keep it light. That's always been my dad. My dad has always tried to keep it light with me, always tried to keep it fun, so just kind of keep a smile on my face a little bit and just try and enjoy the moment there.

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