

Washington Wizards Media Conference

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Justin Champagne

Media Conference



Wizards 125, Jazz 122

Q. Justin, what was your reaction to the extension?

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE: I was super happy, kind of a sense of relief. I've been working a long time for this, and just super happy. It gives me the opportunity to come in, be in Washington D.C. and hoop for the Wizards.

Q. What does it say about the organization that they reward a player who makes his way through the G-League, works really hard when he gets limited minutes for the Wizards and then ends up being a real contributor with a long-term contract like that?

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE: It just goes to show that they value the work you put in. They value hard work. They value guys that come in every day no matter what's going on and pour into the team. That's what I try to do, just come in here, be energy, be good for the team and do my job and excel in it.

Q. Can you talk about your journey? You've had a lot of stops. You were at Pitt, Boston, the Go-Go, now here. What were the biggest parts of your journey that led you to getting this ultimate reward and this contract?

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE: I think it -- man, that's a good question. I think I've always had aspirations and dreams of being in the NBA, and I've always believed that I could do it. I think that the turning point for me was when I got to Sioux Falls, when I got away from Toronto. I had a really good coach and good team out there, and they instilled a couple things in me that kind of stuck with me, like just the toughness, the grit, and always believe in myself.

Then once I got to D.C., it was just kind of the same thing; they kind of revamped it and told me, yo, we believe in what you can do and we think you're an NBA player. Kind of just the confidence just went up, and I just kept putting the work in. It's good to be around people that believe in me and let me be myself. I'm super grateful, super happy,

and I love it here.

Q. I think it might have been the last time you were sitting there, you said one of your goals was to take care of your family as an NBA player. Getting this contract and those terms, what does that mean to you?

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE: Man, it means a lot. Some people may look at it and be like, oh, it's not a crazy amount, but to me it is. Me and my peoples, we don't come from much, so being able to get this contract means a lot for my family, as well, and I want to do some things for them because without them I wouldn't be here, and they played a big part in who I am today and getting me here. So shout-out to my family for sure.

Q. Your brother tweeted, "proud" isn't even the word. I know he's been really proud of your journey. What's it be like sharing this moment with him?

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE: Oh, it's dope, man. We've dreamed of this since we were five years old, both of us playing in the NBA together. Now both on standard contracts. It's just dope. I'm glad I get to experience it with him. That's my boy, and put in a lot of pain for this.

Q. What advice would you give G-League players who are trying to get in the same position as you?

JUSTIN CHAMPAGNIE: First thing I would probably say is don't give up. The G-League can be a tough place to play sometimes. It's not always clear-cut. It's a lot of ups and downs that go with it. But never give up. Never stop believing in yourself.

The biggest thing for me that I can say is sometimes you've got to be a little bit delusional with how you approach things. You've got to have an undying belief in yourself, no matter what anybody says. I've been told from NBA personnel that I wasn't good enough to play. So just having an undying belief in yourself and always going out there and put in the work behind that undying belief in

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