

Washington Wizards Media Conference

Saturday, June 28, 2025

Washington, DC, USA

Will Dawkins

Tre Johnson

Will Riley

Jamir Watkins

Media Conference



THE MODERATOR: Good morning, everybody. We want to welcome you to the official press conference to say hello and greetings to the Wizards Draft Class of 2025.

(Applause.)

We appreciate all of you joining us here today in person and want to say hello to everyone watching us on Monumental Sports Network.

Joining us on the stage is Wizards general manager Will Dawkins.

The sixth overall pick in the Draft, Tre Johnson from the University of Texas. The SEC Freshman of the Year, Tre led the SEC in scoring and really impressive minutes played in the conference.

Will Riley, selected 21st overall from the University of Illinois. Will earned Big Ten Sixth Man of the Year honors. He's a multi- sport athlete and had a massive growth spurt. We'll get to that in a moment.

And the second round pick and 43rd overall selection, Jamir Watkins from Florida State. Jamir was a Second Team All-ACC player and recently graduated.

Will, we'll get it started with you. Just your opening thoughts as we get set for a new era of Wizards basketball with these three young men.

WILL DAWKINS: Thank you. First off, thank you all for coming as we usher in this next wave of Washington Wizards basketball. We are very excited and very fortunate to have the three young men next to me. I'll touch on them in a little bit here in a moment.

First, I want to acknowledge this venue. Cisco has been able to give us this venue. These guys saw the draft room and the people working behind it, but to start your career with this beautiful venue and take these pictures on top of D.C. is a pretty cool spot. Thank you guys for that.

Second, our fans. Ever since draft night and the draft party, we've been checking and monitoring, and you guys have really welcomed these guys and got behind them and gave them support and energy. Please continue to support them, their teammates, and you guys do a really good job for all of us.

Third, it's a really, really long draft process. Last few nights, when I got up to speak, I was able to thank strategy, thank evaluation, but there's so many more hands that go behind this, the really helping hands that allow us to put everything together so they can get here, go through their draft process, whether that's equipment, whether that's travel, logistics, clearing pathways into Richmond, making sure they get here, the crew do a tremendous job. I want to thank everybody that plays a part in getting them here and getting the draft process going for us and sustaining all the way through.

Lastly, probably most importantly, I want to thank the people who support these young men. The friends, the families, the coaches, the representation, those who aren't here as well and couldn't make it, let's give them a round of applause for helping them start their journey.

(Applause.)

I think the Wizards got better. We got better the last couple nights. You guys know we seek people, we seek professionals, and we seek basketball players. We feel like we got that in these three young men, in Tre, in Will, in Jamir. They all bring a serious competitiveness. They all bring a workmanlike mentality. They all have a passion to improve, and they bring a scoring ability with upside to our basketball team. We're super excited to have that.

We go through the draft process and spend a lot of time with them. We go to meals. We watch film sessions.

ASAP sports . . . when all is said, we're done.®

Obviously they go through the workouts. They have legitimate interviews where we're asking questions, and we really just learn as much about them as we can. We pick their brain and try to figure out what motivates them. These three gentlemen align with our core values as people and as players.

We're really, really excited to add them. As Chris talked about, they've each had individual success within a team setting, and that's what we're looking to get here.

Without further ado, I would like to really welcome you guys, get you in the red, white, and blue, get you in the Wizards colors. Before that, let's hand you your jerseys so you guys can at least get your first look.

THE MODERATOR: Will, a quick question about all three of these young men and maybe just a collective question. The character part of it, we all know that they can play basketball, but when you were doing your evaluation of really all three of them, where did that fit in terms of what you wanted out of these players?

WILL DAWKINS: I think we've done a really good job as an organization targeting people, like we talked about, and we have the attributes that we look for in the 94 by 50, what happens on the court, and they obviously have those, but we also talk about environment and our environmental habits and things we look for.

Travis Schlenk, Amber Nichols make sure our group of evaluators are out there asking questions, and it's not just high school, it is not just college, we're digging deeper and finding as many sources as possible. When they come in, they usually just confirm who they are, and that's what these three did during their visit.

THE MODERATOR: Tre, I want to ask you what the last 48 hours have been like.

Before I do that, your dad, love the glasses. We have to talk afterwards.

Tre, what's it been like to leave Brooklyn an NBA player and then spending the last couple of days here in D.C.?

TRE JOHNSON: It's just been great, especially having my family down here, getting to tour around the city, and then just to meet these guys for sure. It's just been great leaving Brooklyn, high emotions, and getting here still with high emotions and happy about being in the city.

THE MODERATOR: Will, I talked to your basketball coach draft night at Illinois. Two things that really kind of stood out to me. One was you had a significant growth spurt

during COVID. Can you confirm or deny that you went from 5'9" to 6'5"?

WILL RILEY: I can confirm, yeah.

WILL DAWKINS: COVID was a little longer in Kansas.

THE MODERATOR: I would say so. Also, the fact you're very versatile in your game. I think that's because you were a soccer player and also a high jumper. Those two sports, how do they correlate with being a basketball player?

WILL RILEY: I feel like with high jump there's a lot of technicals. You've got to be quick off your feet, you've got to come at an angle, jump off one foot. I feel like that comes in a lot of things in basketball.

Also with soccer, I was also a goalkeeper, so a lot of hand-eye coordination. You've just got to stay sharp in all your positions. Yeah, I feel like --

THE MODERATOR: Goalkeeper?

WILL RILEY: Yeah.

THE MODERATOR: That means you're a good defender. Coach Keefe, are you hearing that?

Jamir, first of all, congratulations on graduating from Florida State University. You went through a lot in college time. There was COVID, NIL, the transfer portal -- a lot of things you went through as a college student. What did you learn from those experiences?

JAMIR WATKINS: I think it was a roller coaster ride throughout college but just staying blessed and going day by day with it. I learned a lot.

THE MODERATOR: Appreciate all you guys being here. We cannot wait to see you put on that Wizards jersey out in Las Vegas. We'll open it up for the media, if you please.

Q. Hello, everybody. Jamir, I'll stick with you. Your tough defense, obviously playing for some schools that are known for that, can you describe the type of defender you are and your approach on that end of the court?

JAMIR WATKINS: I believe I'm a gritty defender, somebody that's going to do whatever I got to do to help the team win. I believe it starts on defense. I think that's what's going to get me on the court faster, being able to guard multiple positions.



I'm just going to do whatever I got to do to get on the floor.

Q. For all three of you guys, what do you think you said or did in your interviews or meetings with the team that really made a good impression?

TRE JOHNSON: I think me just being myself helped confirm what everybody else was saying about me. So I feel like that helped me out.

WILL RILEY: Yeah, like just leading off that, just being myself, just being open to everybody, just showing my true character, I feel like that really helped.

JAMIR WATKINS: I would piggy-back off that. Just coming in, being myself, showing the organization that I am who I said I am, and coming in doing what I do.

WILL DAWKINS: I'll add to that. There's not a lot of fluff with these guys. They're serious. They are who they are. When we brought them in and put them in competitive situations, they answered the bell. They were true to who they are like they're saying, and there's no fluff to them.

Q. My question is for the young men collectively. What part of your game are you looking forward to showcasing in the NBA?

JAMIR WATKINS: For me, I would just say being versatile, being able to space the floor, and being easy to play with.

WILL RILEY: Yeah, I'd say also just being versatile, being able to make the right reads, also showing my intelligence and my coachability.

TRE JOHNSON: I like what they said about being versatile, really just doing whatever the team needs, showcasing what's needed to win.

Q. Just a quick follow-up. Will, for you, you mentioned that the team got better. How did these guys that you drafted complement the current roster that you have?

WILL DAWKINS: I think a lot's to be determined on how well they blend and how quick they blend, but the things that we look for in terms of versatility, positional size, willingness to make the right play and compete, and hunger to work, I think that blends really well with the guys that we have.

Coach Keefe and his guys do a tremendous job of blending, giving some of our veteran guys opportunity, our younger guys opportunity throughout the year. It all won't come at once; they've got a lot of work to put in.

But knowing these guys they're not afraid to put their time in, and they'll get their opportunity, and we look forward to them doing that early in Las Vegas.

Q. You all have been at the top of the scouting report for a while. I just wonder how you have handled that over the last couple of years, whether it was high school going into college and in college, just understanding that you are the focus of other teams' attention and what you try to do not only to win the game, but to incorporate teammates into what you were trying to do.

WILL RILEY: I think a lot of it comes into a lot of film work, like studying other players' tendencies, studying what they like to do on the defensive end, just talking to coaches in a lot of ways, seeing what different type of defensive ball screen styles they like to do. I feel like it comes hand in hand with that.

TRE JOHNSON: It's most definitely film work that goes into it, and also just picking up on the fly because especially at halftime, teams do change defensive schemes and stuff like that. So just being aware of what's going on, how you're being guarded, and what everybody else is doing, it makes it easier to get teammates involved.

JAMIR WATKINS: I would say that's where being versatile comes into play, knowing who you're playing with, just being able to play off your teammates and the way the other team's playing.

Q. Tre, for you, during Texas games, a lot of the time, you could hear the broadcasters talking about how the coaches had told them you excelled as a leader, which was impressive considering you had a lot of four-year, five-year guys on your team. I was wondering how do you see yourself as a leader, and how do you think it will translate to the next level?

TRE JOHNSON: I see myself as a pretty good leader, still learning and still getting better at being a leader. Clearly there's steps I've still got to take to become a great leader.

But lead different ways, by example, vocally. I'm more of a by example type of guy, but it's however it needs to be to help the team, I would say.

Q. Will, this question is for you. I believe your Illinois head coach Brad Underwood told our very own Chris Miller that the Wizards had more people tapped in to watch you play and scout you than any other NBA team did to Illinois. What does that say about an organization that they were so tapped in and wanting



to see you closely over the course of the last year?

WILL RILEY: Yeah, just coming here for the visit, like the predraft, you could see how much they knew about my game and how tapped in they were with me. It speaks volumes of how they are as a program. They just are really tapped in with our guys, and they know each and every one of them for sure.

Q. This one goes for all three of you. How much do you know about the Wizards roster, and is there anybody you're excited to go up against in practice?

TRE JOHNSON: I know a little bit about the roster just from watching games and then seeing it on paper. I'm really excited to go against everybody in practice and make everybody better.

WILL RILEY: I know a good amount about the roster. I feel like it's a very young group, so I'm just super excited to grow all together, just knowing that we're all young guys coming in. I'm super excited for that.

JAMIR WATKINS: I would say it's a young group. I think it's a mixture of vets and young guys. So I'll be able to learn from both and pick everybody's brain, get out there in practice.

Q. For all three of you, your work ethic has been touted a lot, both by Will, by your college coaches, by folks around you. Was there a moment during your youth career that you remember realizing, oh, I'm doing this a little bit differently than my friends, I'm doing this a little bit differently than my teammates?

WILL RILEY: I think I realized that when I'd be in the gym and I'd always be the last one there. I think that's when I really realized that.

JAMIR WATKINS: I would say just like in high school and stuff, leading up to it, the amount of hours you put in. You see yourself in the gym by yourself or working out a bunch of times during the day, you kind of see people wanting to go home and things like that. All the work you put in, it kind of pays off.

TRE JOHNSON: Kind of like what Will said, like you're the last one in the gym, you're the first one in the gym. Also, as I got older, I started to think about it more differently, started to be more detailed about it, especially about basketball just in general. So I feel like that part was more different.

WILL DAWKINS: When we do our work, we say these guys work hard, but these college coaches are telling us,

no, they're in the gym at 5:30, 6:00 in the morning before we even do their individuals at 10:00, before we start practice at 11:00. That's when you know it's real and authentic because they're putting the time in by themselves, and that was pretty consistent with this entire group.

Q. Will specifically -- I guess Brad talked to a lot of people, your college coach, because I talked to him too. He said you took 70,000 threes last year. Was there a point in that work where you felt you had any breakthrough with your shot, where very specifically to that skill you felt that hard work was really paying off?

WILL RILEY: I feel like it showed a lot during the end of the season, just staying consistent through it all. I was able to show my talents through that, and I just accepted the work and accepted that this is what I need to do to get better.

Q. This question is for all three of you. You talked about what you want to bring to the team, but also where do you see improvement for yourself going from college to the pros?

WILL DAWKINS: Defensively.

(Laughter).

TRE JOHNSON: I can most definitely see myself improving defensively (laughter).

WILL RILEY: I would say the same for sure (laughter).

JAMIR WATKINS: I would say the same thing, all around I think I can improve my game.

Q. Why did you guys pick the numbers that you guys did?

JAMIR WATKINS: 30, I would say just because getting off to a new start, I never wore No. 30 before. It's a new journey that we're stepping into, so I wanted to start off fresh.

WILL RILEY: I was always No. 7 growing up, and my family, like especially my dad, who was always No. 2, I just felt I'm going to combine the two and make 27.

TRE JOHNSON: I kind of just stared at the list and see which one grew on me.

(Laughter).

WILL DAWKINS: How did it feel? All right?



THE MODERATOR: Thank everyone for the questions.

Real quick, the parents. I think we saw it during the draft this year more than any other year I can remember. Just the emotion and the journey it takes to get these young people up on the podium. So for the parents, thank you. Thank you for raising these young men who just so happen to put a ball in the hoop. We got quality young men, which is really important for this organization and this city. So a round of applause for the families.

(Applause.)

FastScripts by ASAP Sports