

Washington Mystics Media Conference

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JoJo Lacey

Media Conference



Q. With this opportunity that you have in front of you, what do you say to yourself when you lay your head on the pillow before you go to sleep at night in terms of dreams becoming a reality?

JOJO LACEY: I would say it's definitely surreal. I have been surprised by every little thing that I've been around just like by the players and hearing so much about them growing up and just being around every single person and being in the facility.

I'm just like, wow, this is amazing. Everyone is acting like it's so normal and I'm like wow, this is cool. Wow, I'm here. And I'm just definitely blessed to have the opportunity.

Q. Speaking of the opportunity, how have you kind of approached this on a day-to-day as you try to fight for a roster spot and show what you can do but still do it within the system? So it's a tricky balance there. How do you try to approach all of that?

JOJO LACEY: I would definitely say it's about mindset. I have come in every day saying obviously they see my talents, but there is obviously rookies ahead of me and they have proven themselves. I'm not expected to come in and take their spot.

So it's for me more of how can I play an all-around game by helping them look even better; and also showcasing that when they do count on me, I can hit the open shots. I would say along with that, it's just about really picking on -- picking up what they're putting down, watching people ahead of you, and once you get in not really messing up.

You really got to get everything perfect, especially right now and hopefully I can be a great teammate and I think just learn from them.

Q. JoJo, what have you learned from some of the veterans just about being a professional?

JOJO LACEY: I have learned a lot from them so far, and

it's only been about one day, but we've been here about a week. I would say just preparation and paying attention. Coaches, especially in the WNBA, don't like to repeat themselves, so I've learned to listen, obviously respect your vets, and just make sure that you have an open mind to everything and everything everybody has to say.

So I would say yeah.

Q. Can you kind of take us behind the scenes of when you found out the Mystics were offering you a training camp deal?

JOJO LACEY: I would definitely say it was an amazing experience. So I was in California actually training, and during that process I did not expect to come to Washington. I packed for California.

I was just there working out all day, so I would work out in the morning, 7:00 a.m., lift at 10:00, back in the gym by like 6:00. I flew to Arizona to work out with one the New York Liberty coaches, so I got the workout under my belt. Wanted the experience and to show them that I'm preparing for this moment and I hope that I just get -- someone takes a chance on me.

So after my workout I flew back to California from Arizona and I got a call. My agent got a call and was like, JoJo, what does this look like? I'm looking at his computer and I'm like, I don't know.

So it was actually the training camp contract. He was like, I think this is a WNBA training camp contract. I was in awe. I was with my boyfriend and he was just being weird and my trainer was being weird.

I'm like, what is up with you guys? It was very exciting I'm glad I'm here.

Q. When did becoming a WNBA player become a reality for you, this is an attainable goal you could reach?

JOJO LACEY: Yes, I would say my last year at Rutgers I was surrounded by great coaching staff. Coquese



Washington was my head coach at Rutgers; she had played in the WNBA. Also Tasha Pointer, who also played in the WNBA. She was my assistant coach at Rutgers.

So being around that program and being able to play with amazing stars at Rutgers I think it put in the perspective of like I can hang in the big leagues. I was overcoming injuries at the beginning of college, so at the end was kind of like I learned how to play into my role and just kind of become an all-around player.

I can be where you need me to be, and I hope you can count on me as much as I'm helping you guys.

Q. JoJo, when you look at jumping from college to the W, a lot of the ladies, especially from the guard perspective, have said the physicality and the speed; mainly the physicality. I know it's only been one real day of training camp, but would you say that's probably been the most surprising thing, of seeing that jump and having to deal with it?

JOJO LACEY: I would say yes, definitely. When I first had conversations with agencies and like college players, they were basically saying JoJo, you need to put on some weight. Hopefully since I've been here I've been looking a little bit bigger than I did in college.

But I would say, yes, the physicality. As a guard I would say it's not expected as much but it's -- when it comes to physicality, you being able to guard the players in front of you and also getting by the strongest players, I think that's one of the things.

Everyone is just as good as you are. It's now, is my first step quicker than yours? Am I able to post you up? Are you able to guard a guard when she's posting you up? I think that's definitely the biggest challenge.

Also might find yourself in the post where you're guard and big guard. I would say yes that's a big transition.

Q. How do you plan to contribute to the team's success, and how do you think your skills will fit into the Mystics' team strategy?

JOJO LACEY: I think right now, what I'm focusing on right now is kind of playing in the Mystics' playing style. I think that I can help in any way that is needed, whether that's knocking down threes. In college I was a three-point shooter. Also getting to the basket and rebounding and going for the loose balls.

As my years progress I'll become obviously more aggressive. I think right now my role is just to be a great

teammate and allow them though count on me even if my minutes are limited.

I think my playing style fits well. I love to run in transition. I'm a really good finisher at the basket. Also if I'm in the corner and they kick it I can knock down that three.

Just hoping I get a chance with this training camp.

Q. If I could speak to an offseason accomplishment back in February where you were named servant leader Kay Yow Cancer Fund. You were the first student from Rutgers to receive it for your participation in the American (indiscernible). Can you speak to that experience?

JOJO LACEY: Yes. It was an amazing experience. I think it shows to how much I've overcome as a college athlete, and that there is a lot of things that are going on in an athlete's life that a lot of people don't know about.

It was amazing that I was at Rutgers for only one year, and they chose me to be the one to wear the badge on my jersey was amazing. I was a leader from the jump when I got there, and I think that's the role I had to take talking to Coach Co.

It was an amazing accomplishment. I think that the point of that is you're someone who can lead no matter what you're going through, highs and lows, and I think I did a good job of doing that and representing Rutgers by wearing the patch.

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