

# Washington Mystics Media Conference

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## Sonia Citron

Media Conference



**Q. Kind of starting overall as you look back through the season, getting your feet wet and all the accolades and everything, when you kind of look back and kind of evaluate your first year, what's going to stand out to you and a few things that you're just going to remember about the journey and your growth over the last five months, over the summer?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, I think I'm mostly going to remember the people. The people in this organization, the team, the players, the coaching staff, the performance staff. Everybody around this team is what made the year so -- the season so memorable and so special, so I think that's definitely the most important thing that I'm definitely going to remember.

But yeah, I mean, the season has been great. I have so much gratitude for how it all went down. Just being able to play this season, being healthy, being able to play alongside my friends, people I love. It's been just -- it's been a blessing, and I'm extremely grateful for it all.

**Q. You're not a rookie anymore, so as you look into your second year and how you played in year one, are there things that you've already identified yet as, okay, during this off-season, I want to work on X, Y and Z, or -- it's year one, so I'm sure you want to work on everything, but is there anything specific that you say, okay, I would like to come back in 2026 with this as part of my game?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, I mean, you definitely said it. I do -- I don't think there's any part of my game that I'm satisfied with, so I really do want to get better at everything. But a few things I would say is just getting stronger, faster, be in better shape next year, work on ball handling, being comfortable with handling the ball under physicality, quicker release, working on mid-range game, just tools to help me get my shot off. Yeah, honestly, everything.

**Q. It's going to be a weird off-season across the league with the CBA stuff and so many people as**

unrestricted free agents, but you're one of the pillars of this team, this young core moving forward. How do you approach that as a member of the organization? I don't know if you feel like -- some people like to go out there and recruit and say, hey, come to Washington and be part of this thing that we're putting together. As a young leader in this organization that will be going into year two of the transition, how do you see your role as trying to help this thing be put together, or how much input do you want to have on that?

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, honestly, I have no idea. This is my first off-season, and like you said, it's a unique one, so I really have no clue how everything is going to go down or even what happens or how it happens.

In terms of input, I'll have as much as the coaches and the GM and everybody wants me to have. But yeah, I honestly don't have an answer. I'm not really sure. I think I'm just going to -- whatever happens happens. I'm going to go with the flow and see where that takes me.

But yeah, I really have no preconceived notions of what that's going to look like because I have no clue.

**Q. Do you have any off-season plans? Has Unrivald reached out to you or do you plan on playing in any sort of leagues?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, Unrivald has reached out, so most likely that. But for right now, I'm just focusing on the next couple months and just really taking care of my body and resting.

**Q. We've seen you be put on the ball more much in this last month of the season. Sydney says he wants that to be a part of your development going forward and getting you those opportunities. How has that process gone for you in taking on that type of role this season?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, it's definitely been different, something I'm not used to. I didn't really do it too much at Notre Dame, so I would say the last time I was really a ball-dominant guard was in high school, which feels like

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forever ago, and it's just not the same.

So it definitely took getting used to. I would say it's still, like Coach said, something I really want to focus on in developing my game, just being more comfortable with it, being able to create for myself, for others, and just ultimately be very comfortable handling the ball under all circumstances. That's definitely something I'm going to work on this season.

But it was definitely a challenge. Yeah, it was a challenge. Something that I'm happy happened because I got to learn from it, through it. Now I know what I need to work on. So kind of seeing the good in those challenges, but yeah.

**Q. You've said this year you've let the game just come to you and just come naturally and you make decisions out of that, but we also know as players become better with their craft, part of it is kind of dictating how games are played and how -- just how players react to it. Do you feel like there's a point coming soon where you need to start being a little bit more aggressive and dictating what you want to do, whether it's on the offensive end or the defensive end with the skills we know you possess?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, absolutely. I think that's another part of my game that I want to get better at is just ultimately being more aggressive on both ends of the floor. Like you said, I'm very much a flow player, so my shots and all that come with the flow of the game. Sometimes that's a great thing. Sometimes not so much if it's not going how we want to go. I think that's kind of where I need to insert my aggression more so, which I think at times I didn't do, so it's definitely something I want to work on.

**Q. What has surprised you the most about this experience of being in the WNBA?**

SONIA CITRON: I'm really not -- I think I came into the season having no expectations. I kind of said that before. I just wanted to embrace everything that was going to happen, the ups, the downs, all of it. I wouldn't say I was really surprised with much because I didn't have any expectations to begin with.

But I would say one thing was being an All-Star was definitely not anywhere on my list, in my mind. Like that was certainly not something I would have thought would ever happen that year, being a rookie.

**Q. Talking about team chemistry, it is rare, the accolades have been given about your remarkable team chemistry here with the Mystics as well as remarkable having two rookies that are All-Stars and**

**the individual records. In what role did this rare occasion contribute to your individual successes this year under the concept of team chemistry?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, I mean, I think it meant everything to me. I don't think I would have been able to do what I did without the people around me, without this team, without the coaches and everybody in this program. They kind of instilled a confidence and trust in us as rookies, which is surprising, but we -- me and Kiki could really feel that -- all the rookies, me, Kiki, Lucy, Georgia, could feel that they trusted us, and so we were able to kind of just go on the court and play free, which I think is the best way to play, just play free, not being scared, not being nervous to make mistakes, and that was a product of them. Like they made that environment where we felt safe and seen.

I definitely wouldn't have been able to do what I did without them.

**Q. Your season has ended, but the NFL season has already begun. Any plans for any games down in Texas that might pop up on your schedule soon?**

SONIA CITRON: Absolutely I will be there this Sunday when we play the Giants. One might think that that's a hard game for me, but absolutely not because it's go Cowboys all day.

**Q. I wanted to ask you real quick, I asked Kiki the same question, but you had exactly 28 losses in your college career and then you have 28 losses this year. What did the journey look like for you kind of accepting losses as part of the journey and giving yourself grace and also just having fun playing basketball?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, I mean, it was definitely a challenge. Like you said, I'm not used to losing so much. But I think our coaches and vets did a great job of making us realize that it's the W and it's one of the -- it's the hardest league in the world.

So really just realizing that -- you just have to learn through it, and if anything, it's going to make us a better team. It's going to make me a better player, learning through those losses. So just really realizing that and not letting ourselves get too high or too low and just being consistent, not letting the score, wins, losses deter us from what we're trying to do.

**Q. And then real quick because you talked about some of the skills you want to work on. You didn't see deep threes. You shoot them in warm-ups before every game. You got one the other night. Curious,**

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**when do you think we're going to start seeing you look for them? Because I'm not even going to give you the option to say you're not going to. When do we think we're going to see that?**

SONIA CITRON: That's definitely something you can add. I forgot to say that. But yeah, range, I will definitely be working on that this off-season.

**Q. I remember at the beginning of the season you said that head coach Niele Ivey at Notre Dame said for you to just be yourself. Can you assess who that is for you, what that has become after completion of your rookie season?**

SONIA CITRON: I can try. I think that's hard. I think I'm still working on what kind of player I want to be. But ultimately I'm just a player that thrives when I'm playing free, when I'm having fun and not overthinking, and just being confident, being myself and having faith in my abilities.

I think for the most part, I did that this season. I think there was a couple ups and downs, but through those downs, I think I learned from it and I'll be better for it next year.

But yeah, just someone that wants to play free, wants to have fun, and is just confident.

**Q. Was there anything that Niele said to you after -- I know it just ended last night, but was there any comments from her and her assessment of what she saw in you as a rookie this year?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah. I mean, I haven't talked to her since the season ended because, like you said, it was yesterday. But when I played in Chicago and she came to the game I got to talk to her after, and she really just expressed how proud she was of me and just what a blessing I was and just got emotional. We both did.

But yeah, just expressed how much she's just grateful for everything, for being able to be part of my story, and then again, just being really, really proud of me. And I expressed the same thing, that I'm very blessed to have had her as my coach and just to still have that relationship with her has been amazing.

**Q. Sticking with the coaching theme here, with Sydney Johnson, what was that adjustment? I know that was a quick turnaround also after the collegiate season and coming into a brand new professional philosophy. What have you gleaned from how he was able to encourage you, instruct you and mold you as an All-Star rookie?**

SONIA CITRON: Yeah, I mean, Coach Syd is amazing. From the beginning he kind of made it easy to play for him. I think he's just done a fabulous job really setting the culture with this team and then also just pushing all of us to be the best we can be and being hard on us so that we can get better but also being the first person to congratulate you or tell you what a good job you're doing, so you kind of just get both sides.

He just, again, just really makes you feel seen. There was a couple times this season where he would just call me or just talk to me and just say, like, basically that he just appreciates me and things of that nature. But again, he's going to be the first person to push you and make you be better and also the first person to say like, hey, I see you, you're getting better at this or whatever.

He was a really easy coach to play for.

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