

# Washington Mystics Media Conference

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**Lauren Betts**  
**Angela Dugalic**  
**Cotie McMahon**  
Media Conference



**Q. Cotie, reading something about your season last year and what caught my eye was it was talking about how no matter late you got back from a road trip, you always watched the film right away. How long have you been doing that? When did that start? Is that something you anticipate continuing in D.C.?**

COTIE McMAHON: Yeah, I've been doing it for kind of a while now. That's kind of my way of relaxing myself after a game because I definitely don't go right to sleep. So I just thought, well, since I'm up, I might as well just watch film because by the time we get home it's late and nothing is on TV anyway.

It's something I've been doing for a while, and it's definitely something I will continue to do, only because, like I said, I've found that that helps me relax my thoughts and allows me to just rest my mind after watching film.

**Q. Lauren, for you, day one of practice yesterday; how was it having teammate Michaela instead of Coach Michaela? Any surprises there?**

LAUREN BETTS: It was really interesting. It's kind of weird, I'm trying to get used to being on the court with her. But she's amazing and she's always been super helpful for me and very supportive. Just asking her for advice, for tips, and she's always there and she's got my back. It's been really nice having her.

**Q. Lauren, you're coming in with a team that already has two great post players and we saw what Kiki was able to do her first year in the W. How do you feel like coming into this environment that has already seen the development of a strong post player can set you up for success in year one?**

LAUREN BETTS: Yeah, Kiki has always been really

helpful for me. I played my first year at Stanford with her, so I think she's going to be a great help.

Just learning from her, being able to compete with her in practice, making each other better, I think it's going to take this team really far and we're going to be able to help each other out.

I think for me, just trying to get better every single day, ask great questions, be a sponge, learn from everybody else, and yeah, just continue to get stronger in my postgame.

But yeah, not trying to -- not comparing myself to anyone. Just continuing to get better.

**Q. We are now a week from the draft, what had previously happened, and now you're here. What has the last week been from learning you were going to be a part of the Mystics, throwing out the first pitch at the ballgame and being here on media day?**

LAUREN BETTS: Yeah, it's been a really crazy couple weeks. I feel like I haven't really breathed since I left UCLA. To be here is pretty unbelievable.

Yeah, just really thankful. This team is amazing, and everyone has been really nice, all the coaches, the staff, the players. Everyone has been really helpful for us in our transition.

Just taking it day by day and just trying to breathe and stay present and just focus on getting better one day at a time.

COTIE McMAHON: I would have to agree. I feel like they're making this transition easier than I thought it would be. Especially our teammates, they just really have our back and are really instilling confidence in us and making sure that we just stick with what we're good at and making sure that we kind of focus on that, and everything else will come.

As far as all the activities outside of the court, it's been pretty fun, so yeah.

**Q. Cotie, last year Ole Miss you were able to unlock**

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**even more of your perimeter skill set, shot 29 percent from three, 39 percent from three your junior season at Ohio State. What was it about your comfortability on the perimeter last year that has best set you equipped for WNBA hoops?**

COTIE McMAHON: Yeah, I just knew I had to unlock something else in my bag. Obviously my downhill game is something that will forever be strong, but I just knew that in order for me to be successful throughout my whole career, I would need to be a versatile player, not just defensively but offensively.

And honestly, it only took confidence for me. The work, I put in the work, so everything will come with that. But honestly, for me it was just confidence and realizing that whatever I work towards, it's all going to come. So just having the confidence to take those shots and continue to take those shots even when the ball is not going in or whatever like that.

**Q. Lauren, what kind of jump stylistically do you want to make within your skill set in the pros?**

LAUREN BETTS: Yeah, continuing to get more comfortable on the perimeter and being able to take those shots and put the ball on the floor and then just continue to get better with my perimeter defense. The guards in the W are a lot faster than the ones in college, so just being able to move my feet and they've got my back here, so I know I'm going to get better throughout the season.

**Q. With training camp being such a short period of time, is there anything that you're looking to accomplish or work on before the season starts, which is really right around the corner?**

COTIE McMAHON: I was going to say, I guess the biggest thing would just be adjusting to the W. But Coach isn't really asking of us to do anything that we weren't already doing. I know for me, he just really instills just remembering what I'm good at and to stick with that, and I don't have to play out of character or out of body.

So just showing up, being the same player I was in college to here, I feel like that's going to make this whole transition easier, but just learning how to adjust and find ways to play with my teammates and utilize my game around them, as well.

**Q. For all three of you, what advice would you give to young girls who look up to you and want to be playing where you're playing today?**

ANGELA DUGALIC: Yeah, I mean, as a young girl I didn't

know what sport I wanted to play. I played a multitude of sports and I think that's the first step is get yourself out there. That's how you're going to create community.

I fell in love with basketball because I played against my brother a lot, so that was just a lot of competition, and then grew up watching Elena Delle Donne actually when she was at the Sky, but then continued to obviously watch her when she was in D.C., as well.

The other piece of advice would be don't be afraid to try hard. I was always the type of person where I tried hard and everything that I did I got a lot of slack for it. That can sometimes put someone down, and you want to make yourself almost smaller because you want to just be like everybody else, but don't be afraid to be who you are. Just because somebody else wants to be smaller, you don't have to adjust to them. Be yourself and be true to yourself.

LAUREN BETTS: I would say have fun. The whole reason why I started playing basketball is because I just wanted to make more friends because I had just moved to Colorado. Just enjoy the journey, be okay with making mistakes. You're going to fail along the way, and that's okay. It's the way that you bounce back and the way you come back from that.

Yeah, just remember why you're doing it. I feel like I have a lot of moments throughout my career where I just have to ground myself, remember why I started playing, and there's so much joy that can come from this. It's not just a job at the end of the day.

COTIE McMAHON: Kind of to piggyback off them, don't be afraid to stand out, especially when you do become like really good at what you do. Honestly, I would say even when you have a different level of focus than everybody else, it can definitely put you as an outcast, but don't be afraid to stand out because I feel like everybody's gift is special and everybody has a different path that's written. Everybody is still trying to figure life out.

So stay the course, don't be afraid to stand out, and stay confident.

**Q. Cotie was saying earlier this transition was actually a little easier than you guys might have expected. Transitioning to the league as part of such a big group of rookies and on a team that was already young, what's the experience been like so far knowing that it's not like any one of you has to be the rookie; you're doing this as a whole group?**

ANGELA DUGALIC: Yeah, for me personally, I think it helps so much, the fact that we have such a large rookie

class. Obviously coming in with Lauren and Michaela, I already knew some people, and then slowly got to meet everybody else - Cotie during the draft and everybody else during this process.

Obviously at the beginning you have to sort of break the ice, but once that happened, we were just yapping the whole time. We went into a team dinner and there was not a moment where there was silence. There was no awkward silence. We were talking about each other's lives, our college experiences, everything you could possibly imagine we talked about, and it was really nice because I think we have the same mentality of we're obviously trying to make the team and that stands, but at the same time, we can make this process enjoyable.

We talked about with Coach Syd working hard every single day and being serious during practice but also finding joy, as well. So I think we're doing a really good job of that.

LAUREN BETTS: Yeah, what Ange said. It's just been really fun. I feel like we just finished the season and I played all these girls, so I feel like we have so much to talk about. We're all transitioning to this at the same time, so it's just really special to kind of have that connection with all of them. So it's been really nice.

COTIE McMAHON: What they said.

**Q. What kind of food did you have at that team dinner? Where did you guys go?**

ANGELA DUGALIC: Sequoia. That's where we went. We started off with this big seafood platter. It was oysters and shrimps and all this stuff. It was a new palette for some people, so it was fun to see everybody try it. It was just your basic -- not basic restaurant but basic upscale restaurant. Very nice.

**Q. The Mystics in this community are a team that are known for really giving back and representing more of kind of like the D.C. area. Have you guys really been able to understand now the level that you guys are at, WNBA players, with the presence you guys have in the community, and do you embrace that as something that you want to have as a part of your career, someone who's known as a community member that really builds that?**

LAUREN BETTS: I can answer that question. I know specifically for Ange and I, coming from a program where that was really instilled in us was giving back to the community, that was something that Coach Cori really wanted from us and she always told us we're more than basketball players and this is something that we do. And

with the platform we're given, we need to make the most out of it, and I feel like all of us are going to bring that back to this program, to this team.

I think, like I said, I think it's bigger than basketball, and with the position and the power that we have, just making sure that we're giving back to everybody who gives so much to us. We wouldn't be here without the people and the village that got us here. Just making sure that we're being good humans at the end of the day because that's what really matters.

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