

NBA Draft

Thursday, June 23, 2022

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Paolo Banchero



Q. What will you bring to Orlando?

PAOLO BANCHERO: Man, I plan on bringing everything I have to Orlando. First off, just a winning mindset, a work-first mindset. Just ready to get in with the guys and get to work.

This is one of the best moments of my life. I'm super excited. I couldn't be happier to be a member of the Orlando Magic.

Q. Paolo, how much of a dream come true is this to be a No. 1 overall draft pick in the NBA, and also, how do you feel you'll fit in with the Orlando Magic?

PAOLO BANCHERO: No, this isn't even a dream. I feel like this is a fantasy. I dreamed of being in the NBA, but being the No. 1 overall pick, this is crazy.

What was the second part?

Q. How you feel you'll fit in.

PAOLO BANCHERO: I feel like I'll fit in great. The Magic, they have a lot of talent. They're very deep. They also have a lot of dynamic forwards like myself with Wendell, Franz Wagner. Adding myself, I feel like that's going to give teams a lot of problems.

That's three 6'9", 6'10", 6'11" guys who can dribble, pass and shoot, have high IQ. I think that's going to be a huge advantage for us and a struggle for other teams to game plan for.

Q. We saw some tears up there. What are you feeling right now? What did it take? And what's your advice to all the young players that one day want to be on that stage?

PAOLO BANCHERO: Yeah, you know, it was a very emotional moment. I've never cried tears of joy in my life, and I was telling everyone I wasn't going to cry no matter what pick I was picked. It just hit me. I couldn't stop it.

But any advice I would give is just take it day by day. Don't look too far ahead, don't look too far in the future and focus

on what's in front of you day in, day out. Just work hard and stack days together, and it's going to pay off.

Q. What are you wearing? You told me you were wearing Dolce and Niemen's. Is that Dolce Gabbana?

PAOLO BANCHERO: Yeah, provided by Niemen's and Dolce.

Q. When did you know you were actually going to be drafted by Orlando, and did you have a feeling during the day that things were kind of changing and you were going to be the first pick?

PAOLO BANCHERO: I had a feeling from the information I was being told is that it was just kind of up in the air. Orlando wasn't really sure yet, and just to be ready for whatever.

I didn't find out, though, that I was actually getting picked until about 20 seconds before the commissioner got on the stage. I didn't even have time to really think about it or anything. It just kind of happened. I can't believe it, but I'm ready. I'm ready.

Q. What's the first thing you're going to buy with your official NBA paycheck, and who are you looking forward to playing against?

PAOLO BANCHERO: First thing I'm going to buy with my paycheck? Probably a car, nice car, or somewhere nice to stay.

Second question was who am I looking forward to playing against? Really anybody. I'm just looking forward to playing in the NBA. That's the best competition in the world. Every game is a challenge. I'm really looking forward to just competing night in, night out.

Q. Can you reflect on your journey from shadow watching your mother and your cousin Chris win a state championship and your mother playing professional basketball? Can you reflect on the people who paved the way for you?

PAOLO BANCHERO: Yeah, it's been a long journey, growing up in Seattle and, like you said, just being around



my mom, always in the gym, watching Chris. They taught me a lot, especially my mother. She stayed on me, always held me accountable and made sure I was on the right track.

I just developed a real strong work ethic at a young age and continued it on through my high school and college days. I was also blessed by God with height and the physique that he gave me, and I just reflected on it. It's crazy that this is happening right now. It just is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that I'll never be able to forget.

Q. We talked about money. No state income tax in Florida. I'm sure your representatives must be pretty happy about that. Can you tell us what it was like to choose a representative? Are you prepared to handle that money? I was wondering how the business side of that came together for you.

PAOLO BANCHERO: Yeah, well, luckily both my parents are very educated and very smart with their money, so they've taught me to do the same. I'll definitely be smart with it and treat it the right way, use it for the right things.

Q. Have past Duke players reached out to you like Kyrie Irving, Jayson Tatum?

PAOLO BANCHERO: I haven't had my phone on me the whole time, but I'm sure that I have a couple texts waiting in my phone. I've got a pretty good relationship with Jayson, Zion, Kyrie -- all those guys I've met and talked to. I'm sure they'll have something, some words of encouragement.

Q. I wanted to ask you, one year at Duke, how did your working with Coach K and his staff prepare you to make the jump to the NBA?

PAOLO BANCHERO: Yeah, I feel like they really, really prepared me as best as anyone could. I was a good player when I came in, but I think they really took me to another level and helped transform me as a player.

They helped me with a lot of things, helped improve my game in a lot of ways. Coach K, especially on and off the court, he's a great, great advice giver, great leader and he's the greatest of all time.

Every day he was really giving us new gems, new pieces of advice that we could take on forever. So I thank him. I thank Duke. I'm always going to be a part of the brotherhood and the Duke basketball family.

Q. Italy produced another Italian first pick overall with

Andrea Bargnani. Can we actually say that we produced another with you?

PAOLO BANCHERO: I don't know if that would be fair to Bargnani. Bargnani is born and raised in Italy. I'm born and raised in Seattle, Washington. I don't want to take anything away from him, but I'm definitely proud to have Italian roots and being able to represent Italy, for sure.

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