

NBA Draft

Wednesday, June 25, 2025

Brooklyn, New York, USA

Will Riley

Q. Just take me through the emotions of a day like this and what was going through your mind when you finally heard your name called?

WILL RILEY: It was a surreal feeling hearing my name called, the suspense through it all, not knowing where I was going to go. It was a crazy night. But I'm super excited that it happened and I'm super excited to spend time with my family, as well.

Q. How do you think playing in the Big Ten kind of got you ready for the NBA?

WILL RILEY: I feel like it's a very physical league with a lot of older guys. It prepared me in that way. It's a very fast-paced league as well. I feel like in the NBA, a lot of teams are playing very fast. I feel like it helps in that transition.

Q. Could you talk about the influence of your coaches from your childhood, Coach Erošević (phonetic) all the way to Coach Brad Underwood in college?

WILL RILEY: Yeah, I started with Coach Erošević at a very young age. He taught me the fundamentals in a lot of ways. I've got to thank him for that. I learned a lot from him.

Similar in that way, him and Brad Underwood. They both like to get on their guys. I kind of like that kind of coaching style, so that pushes me to be better. They're similar in that way.

Q. What was your reaction when you found out you were headed to Washington?

WILL RILEY: Yeah, I was super excited. I had a great visit with the team. I really enjoyed the coaches, all the staff. I'm just super excited to meet all the players as well.

Q. Did you get a chance to speak with them yet?

WILL RILEY: Yeah, the coaches really like my versatility. They like my ability to shoot. They like my guard skills, and they like my IQ a lot.



Q. What's it like for you to represent Kitchener on a stage like this?

WILL RILEY: It's huge. Obviously there's another guy who represented Kitchener before me (Jamal Murray) and it's just super exciting to be here and super exciting to represent Kitchener as a whole.

Q. How do you feel like Illinois prepared you for this moment, and what did it mean to have Brad and some members of the staff here?

WILL RILEY: Illinois prepared me in a lot of ways, I feel. There was a lot of guys on the team who are vets and they led the way for us because they helped us get through a lot of things. I faced a lot of adversity, as well, and I feel like that happens to most freshmen. I feel like my expectations aren't the same in a lot of ways. I feel like I already went through all that adversity, so I know how to deal with it now and I know how to stay confident and stay modest through it all and stay level headed.

Q. How do you think you'll play off Tre Johnson?

WILL RILEY: He's a great guard. He can create his own shot very well. Super great guy. We've talked a few times. I'm super excited to play with him.

Q. You and Kasparas going back-to-back picks, what's it mean to go into the league with him and to have that moment where you guys were representing a place where you come from and a guy you're pretty close with?

WILL RILEY: Yeah, we went through the whole season together, and we got to compete against each other through the whole season. It was amazing building a brotherhood with him. Just going back-to-back picks, it was super nice. Family for life, for sure.

Q. What do you know about D.C. just in general, the city, all that kind of stuff, and how many times have you visited?

WILL RILEY: The first time I visited was when I went to work out for them. It was a great city. It's a sports city in a lot of ways. They've got, I'm pretty sure, three sports,



baseball, hockey and basketball. I don't know if they have any other sports. But it was great when I visited there. It seems like the fans are very passionate. The people are very nice. It was a very good vibe overall.

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