

Guard Diamond DeShields

Media Availability

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On how she's enjoyed her experience in Florida

"I feel like I'm pretty open, free spirited. The bugs, I mean they're just so big. I've never seen a grasshopper that's got kneecaps. It's crazy, but it's been cool. It's an adventure. I'm so happy to be here with my team, and we're just be making the best of whatever comes our way."

On if anything she's done in her life has prepared her for this experience

"Probably just being in college. Not really having freedom and this is where you eat, when you eat. You stay on the campus for the most part. It feels like college, you got a roommate. I would definitely say like it's more like a college, a college feel to me."

On if it feels like AAU

"To me this is worse than AAU because your neighbors are the GM and athletic trainers of another team. You're very close to all members of the WNBA from the staff to the players. And that's kind of weird because there are eyes on you all the time."

On how she's used the extended time off to prepare for the season

"The same as you would anytime you get some time off. Just trying to learn and improve. Been in the gym and working out, watching film. I mean it's interesting because I feel like for the first time we've actually had some semblance of an offseason, which has been really cool to see. All the pickup games played between like women's pros, college players coming together and just making each other better. So, just been working, same old same old."

On if there's one area of her game that she's been working on

"I wouldn't say it's one area specifically. I'd like to just stay on point in every dimension of my game. Whether it would be defensively, 3-point shooting. I have been working a little bit more around the basket, like back to the basket."

On making the transition to being confined in one space

"You just do what you're supposed to do. We're not here on vacation, or I'm not. You know what I mean? The Chicago Sky is not here on vacation. If you just are mindful of what you came here to do, then it's really not that hard to unwind. We came here to play basketball. We came here to compete for a championship. We're not here to go to the pool. We're not here to be on the beach. We're not here to play golf. So regardless of who's around, it doesn't really matter."

On how she can build off last season

"I think the biggest thing for me is going to be relying heavily on consistency. I think I caught a rhythm, like I found my pocket in the second half of the season last year. And so just allowing that to roll over and keep that up and then the other piece of that is like being more of a leader. I know I'm going into my third season. I've been here a little bit. And so just being more vocal and allow my teammates to feed off my energy more. I think those are the two major keys for me."

On what is the expectation for success

“Last season left us all with a sour taste in our mouth, and although we did accomplish our goals of making playoffs obviously we have our sights set on something greater. And that’s a championship. I would just set the bar there for our team. If you’ve already made playoffs, what’s next to do? That’s to just to go all the way. If we get to the finals, it’s not enough just to play in the finals. We want to win everything.”

On if there’s enough time to build a cohesive unit in just two weeks

“Well, that’s the blessing about our team. We came into this season already a cohesive unit. We didn’t make too many roster changes. Obviously [Jan]tell [Lavender] isn’t here, and we added z [Azurá Stevens] and Stella [Johnson] and Ruthy [Hebard]. But as far as team cohesiveness, we are pretty solid there. We spent two weeks prior to even coming out here in market working out and spending time with each other. So, I think we gave ourselves a good head start as far as cohesiveness and chemistry.”

On the importance of her energy to get the team in a position to win

“I like to think that my energy matters because just being the player that I am here within this organization. But everybody has to just come in and be positive and make sure that we’re pouring into each other. It’s not enough time to be negative and to behave in such a way that it will take away from the team. And so for me and for everybody else it’s like we all have a job here to do and it has to be done properly each and every day. Not much room for error.”

On if she will pursue her defence of the WNBA All-Star Skills Competition

“I have no idea. I mean I would obviously try to defend my title in the skills competition but don’t quote me on this but like I don’t really think there’s gonna be anything like that taking place out of here.”