

Miles Plumlee Interview: Athleticism, Phoenix Suns, Point Guards, and Alex Len

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Miles Plumlee may be one of the less heralded additions to the Phoenix Suns this off-season, but he may very well be a player that fans should keep an eye on.

Miles, who is the older brother of this year's 22nd overall draft pick Mason Plumlee, was also the 25th overall pick just a year earlier...In what many believe to be a much better draft class overall.

Now, this isn't to say Miles is better than Mason. However, he's certainly more than just trade or camp filler. Miles is a strong, athletic 7-footer who is versatile enough to play both the power forward position as well as center.

Add to that he already has one year of NBA and D-League experience under his belt from his time with the Indiana Pacers last season, and comes to Phoenix ready to compete for playing time amongst the other bigs who are currently on the Suns' roster.

So how does Miles fit with the new Phoenix Suns?

Yesterday, Miles attended the Phoenix Suns' media day, and provided some insight into what he brings as a player, his assessment of the coaching staff, and what he thinks about some of his new teammates. Here is some of what he had to say:

When Miles was asked about what people didn't know about him or what may surprise them he said,

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My size and athleticism. I'm a hard working guy, a lot of energy so I think I'm going to fit in well with the program. I think we're going to play really fast up and down the court...I like to run and jump, so I think that will play to my strengths.

This certainly makes sense. Plumlee is a very underrated athlete, and although he wasn't a star player at Duke like his brother Miles, he showed a lot of potential. He could definitely surprise some fans with what he can do on the court.

He was then asked if there was anything that stood out to him about the Suns in general, or anyone he's played with in his brief time in Phoenix...This is what he had to say:

We are really fast. We have point guards who can really create off the dribble and get the ball to everyone.

Again, this certainly fits with everything else that's been reported about the style of play being embraced by the new coaching regime, and what is known about the young players....Good to hear the same opinion from one of the newest members.

When Miles was asked about the kinds of things he's been working on with the coaching staff since he arrived in Phoenix, he answered:

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Improving my offensive package, working on all my pivots and moves to make them more natural....footwork.

This is an important statement because it is something Miles lacked in college. However, in Summer League with the Pacers, Miles impressed with not only his athleticism but also his finesse and skill in the post. Still, this is an area of his game he must continue to improve upon.

Miles was also asked about the Suns' coaching staff and how detail oriented they care. He responded:

Across the whole coaching staff everyone's got a great attention to detail. Even though it's pick up they're letting us know if we're not guarding ball screens correctly, or what we should be doing. A lot of teams during the summer just kind of let you play.

No surprises here. Hornacek is a technician, and it stands to reason he would surround himself with other coaches who would also demand precision and correct execution with everything they do.

Miles was also asked about new teammate Alex Len, and what he brings to the Suns. Miles had this to say:

I swear I think he's taller than when I played against him at Maryland. He's a big kid and he's got a lot of potential. He's really skilled and the more you get adjusted to the NBA game which is a slower process for bigs...I think he's going to be a great player.

Here's where things get a little interesting. When asked about whether or not thought Len would eventually be a top five pick when he played against him in Len's freshman year at Maryland...He replied:

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I could see that...I mean, it's hard...it all depends on how things culminate one season. But I knew he had a lot of potential and I thought he was a really good player. I guess I wouldn't have said he'd be a top five pick, but once he was I wasn't necessarily surprised...He's earned it.

So Miles didn't necessarily see Len as a top five pick at the time, which is a very honest answer given the fact that Len was still a very raw freshman when they played against one another. But it's also apparent that Miles was very complimentary toward Alex overall...so nothing more to read into that.

Next, Miles was asked whether he thought his athleticism and mobility is his biggest advantage compared to the other centers on the roster...To this he responded:

If I had to hang my hat on something I'd say it's my athleticism and running; especially with the guards we have...you know, catching lobs, getting rebounds I shouldn't (be able to) get. I got to play with Gortat a little bit and Len. Obviously Gortat is really athletic as well. So I think we've just got a really nice blend of big guys.

Miles seems to understand his role should be an energy/hustle guy to begin with. He probably won't see a great deal of playing time to start with, so it will be up to him to earn minutes with his play.

Finally, Miles was asked about which if the point guards have really stood out to him thus far. Here's what he said:

Among the (point) guards who has really stood out to you?: All three of them in their own way have such an ability to really see things developing and hit you (with a pass)...I'm not used to getting hit (with passes like that) as a big guy...I haven't played with guards like that in a long time. I've gotten hit in the nose a few times...It's a great problem to have.

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This is the politically correct response...One wouldn't expect him to single anyone out. If anything though, it does speak to the learning curve that bigs face as they adjust to playing at the NBA level...A very different animal altogether from college. The speed of the game and the talent of the players is difficult to get used to for many younger guys, but hopefully his year of experience with the Pacers and their D-League affiliate will serve him well.

Only time will tell what type of future Miles Plumlee has with the Phoenix Suns. However, he's certainly an intriguing player that fans should keep an eye on in the preseason...He just might be one of this year's surprises.