

Olympic Spotlight: Maya Moore- Gets a shot at Olympic Gold

Written by Yolande Y. Lezine, Sports Editor
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It has been an incredible 12 months or so for former UConn and current Minnesota Lynx point guard Maya Moore.

As a rookie in the WNBA she helped lead the Minnesota Lynx to their first WNBA title last fall and followed it up with Euroleague and Spanish League Championships this winter as part of Ros Casares.

Now, as the Olympic athletes and their families arrived in London, England this week, she hopes to cap her amazing run with an Olympic gold medal. Winning it all in London will make Moore part of an elite club. She would be just the seventh player to win titles in college, the WNBA, the FIBA world championship and the Olympics.

Moore has been a winner both on and off the basketball court her entire life. Not only was she a great basketball player at UConn, but she was also a great student-athlete. Since entering high school, she has a 326-16 mark. That doesn't even include her perfect 22-0 record while playing for USA basketball.

Yes, its true! That's 16 losses in almost 10 years. The 22-year old point guard/forward remembers every single one of her defeats in vivid detail. She easily rattles them off as if they happened within a 24-hour period, instead of the last decade.

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“When you lose you learn from it and try not to let it happen again,” Maya Moore said. “Some of those losses have been heartbreaking. When that happens, the teams that I’ve been on try to learn from it and not let it happen again. History usually happens right after that loss.”

While all of those defeats have stayed with Moore, the one that really eats at her is a defeat in high school to her former UConn teammates Tina Charles and Lorin Dixon.

Noted as one of the most humble players in all of women’s basketball , Moore doesn’t pay much attention to all the victories. They seemed like they are more of a blur. Don’t get me wrong, she does remember the championships, winning three in high school and two at UConn. Not to mention the one for the Lynx last season. She helped UConn set the NCAA record for consecutive victories with 90 straight wins and also has Minnesota off to a great start this season.

Moore is quick to point out that she has been in some good places for basketball, which has made success easier. UConn was well-established as the premiere program in women’s basketball and Minnesota had a very good WNBA team before winning the lottery and drafting her.

“Maya has been in situations where she hasn’t been expected to be a superstar right away,” Lynx head coach Cheryl Reeve said. “It’s helped her grow as a player and taken a little of the pressure off.”

Teammates, coaches and opposing players all say what makes Moore stand out from others is her unbelievable work ethic. She’s never satisfied to just live on her incredible athletic talent.

She’s always one of the first in the gym and one of the last out of the building,” Coach Reeve said. “That’s what sets apart the great players from the good ones.”

And its that attitude that will give her , the first Olympic gold medal!