***Donovan Mitchell Selects Aspiring Sports Writers from His High School to Exclusively Reveal His First adidas Signature Shoe, the D.O.N. Issue #1***

**Portland, ORE., December 27** – adidas Basketball today released a preview of the first signature shoe for NBA stand-out Donovan Mitchell, the “D.O.N. Issue #1”. Appropriately titled to embody Mitchell’s **D**etermination **O**ver **N**egativity, the shoe’s name also pulls inspiration from classic comic books displaying issue numbers on the front cover as a testament to Mitchell’s nickname, “Spida”. To celebrate the reveal of D.O.N. Issue #1 and disrupt the traditional sneaker unveil, adidas and Mitchell worked with his alma mater, Greenwich Country Day School in Connecticut, to select two aspiring sports writers and provide them with the opportunity to be the first to interview Mitchell about what this moment means for him and his family.

Rory Ashmeade (9th Grade, above right), is a freshman in high school with interests in sports, writing, music, and an intention of inspiring others. She admires Donovan because of his overall work ethic, humility and talent on the basketball court.

Blaise New (8th Grade, above left) is currently a student at Donovan’s alma matter and has known Donovan since he was in 2nd grade. He comes from a family of athletes (his older brother played basketball with Donovan at GCDS) and plays basketball and lacrosse himself, all while being an academic honors student.

Together, the two students met with Mitchell and his family in New York City so they could witness the moment where Mitchell saw the final version of his signature sneaker for the very first time, interview him about the experience, and tell their story:

**RA: This product is really cool.. and I was wondering, what kind of message do you want to send with your shoe?**

DM: “My message with this shoe is that it’s for kids not only your age, but younger than you guys, older than you guys, just [for those who] believe that they can do anything. I want my story to be told as such - this was so unexpected for me. You know, it’s only my second year in the NBA, to now have a shoe… I want to help inspire kids so they feel like they can do anything. You don’t have to be the number one recruit, you don’t even have to be a basketball player. I just want this to send a positive message to make kids feel inspired that they can be what they want to be.”

**BN: Coming into the league would you have ever imagined having your own signature shoe?**

DM: “It was a thought, but it wasn’t a realistic thought. It was one of things, you know, maybe, but for this to happen the way it happened, and how fast it happened, no it wasn’t even a thought.”

**RA: People often [mention] positive disruption with you, whether it be on the court or off, what does that mean?**

DM: “I think for me as a player on the court, disruption is a way of playing defense, whether it’s causing havoc on the floor on the offensive end, dunking the ball, and off the court, looking for positive ways to help other people out in their everyday life. Anything I can do to send positive vibes, is something I want to do.”

**BN: What made you come up with [your nickname] “Spida” in the first place?**

DM: “My teammate’s dad gave me the nickname, and it was with me for a long time, I had the name but it never really stuck. Then as things started to progress, everyone started calling me Spida and it kind of just took off on its own.”

**RA: How will this shoe in particular differ from others?**

DM: “Well, I think the accessibility will be a lot different. We obviously have the Hardens, the Dames and others, but for me, I wanted the shoe to be accessible to all people, both price-wise and color-wise, and I wanted everything to be relatable to the everyday person that can’t spend $250 on shoes. I wanted to work with adidas to find ways to make sure the shoe was accessible to everybody who wants to wear them.”

**RA: How do you feel about athletes using their platform to advocate for social issues? Do you feel any pressure to do the same?**

DM: “I think it’s a great thing that athletes use their platform to do good. One of my teammates, you know, has his own book club and has his own topics and discussions where he talks about real life stuff, and I’ve taken to that as well, where I will, you know, address things that I feel need to be heard, because there’s certain people that may not have that opportunity to publicize their story, it may not get out. So for us as athletes, I feel like we play an important role because of our platform, because of our following, because of who we reach, you guys up to everyone in this room, we reach all types of ages, and I think it’s a pretty big deal.”

**BN: How is it going to feel when kids around the world are going to be wearing your own shoe?**

DM: “I still can’t get over the fact that people wear my jersey, so I think it will take a little while to get used to this. It might take a little while for ME to get used to wearing my own shoe, so… it’s going to take a while, but I’m blessed.”

**RA: What do you want to accomplish in the NBA? What do you want your legacy to be?**

DM: “I want to go down as one of the greats, obviously a guy who works hard, finds ways to do things that other people can’t, just trying to be the best player that I can be. You know most people will say I want to win MVP, I want to win this, but I want to win a ring, most importantly. That’s my first goal, and hopefully everything else will fall into place.”

**BN: On draft day were you excited to be drafted by Utah or did you want to land elsewhere?**

DM: “Yes, I was, because I got drafted by Denver (laughs.) I tell this story all the time, I came to Utah really not knowing much about it, and I sent my mom, like 50 different pictures when we were flying in, and I fell in love as soon as I got there. They had the 24th pick that year, and obviously I didn’t want to go 24th in the draft (laughing) so I was hoping to find a way, but they moved up fortunately, and I got in.”

**RA: What is the greatest challenge in being a professional athlete?**

DM: “I would say the greatest challenge is how huge social media is. You can’t always be the same person… you can’t always say what you want, you can’t like photos, you have to be cautious, not just on social media, but in life, of whatever you do, and that’s one of the things as a 22-year-old who came right out of college, to now being here, was a big adjustment. Also, eating (laughs.) Eating is huge. Going from playing 33 games in a season to 82 is a lot different, plus all the traveling, so you need to be able to adjust at a different pace. I would say those two things for sure!”

**BN: Players like James Harden, D Rose, and Damian Lillard all have their own signature adidas shoe. How does it feel to be put into that category as those guys?**

DM: “It’s an honor to be in the same category. I know Dame and James on a personal level, so it’s pretty special to be up there with them. Two years ago, I never would have thought I’d have a relationship with those two, or even be put in the same category as far as having a signature shoe. So for me to have this, it’s a blessing and one I won’t soon forget.”

**RA: Outside of basketball, who inspires you?**

DM: (Points at his mother and sister) “These two right here. My mom worked so hard and fought through a lot to get me here. So now that I’m here, I gotta do everything I can to stay here.”

**RA: What advice would you give to a kid who wants to go professional?**

DM: “I would say… don’t ever listen to what people say, as far as what you can’t do. People like to put their limits on you, what they can’t do. Whatever sport it may be, whatever profession it may be. If you want to do something, then go be it. There’s so many stories of current athletes, actors or models who have been told no before.”

**BN: Who do you like better, Lil Baby or Gunna?**

DM: (Laughs.) “Probably Lil Baby, for sure.”

**BN: I have one last question… do you think you can guard me?**

DM: “The question is can you guard me?!”

**BN: No, but you can’t guard me either.**

DM: (Laughs.) “We’ll have to see!”

More details on the D.O.N. Issue #1 will be revealed in 2019. In the meantime, follow the conversation @adidashoops on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/adidashoops) and [Instagram](https://instagram.com/adidashoops/?hl=en).