

# Los Angeles Clippers

## Media Conference

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## Doc Rivers

### Press Conference



**Q. Coach, I want to ask you about -- I know you don't want to talk about players that aren't there, but I'd be remiss if I don't ask you about Montrezl. Was this an excused absence? And what's the reintroduction process for him to come back into the team?**

DOC RIVERS: I actually don't know the process. You know, things happen in our lives, so we've just got to leave it there.

**Q. I wanted to ask you about the passing of John Lewis. I wondered if you'd ever met him, and obviously it's a big deal in this country.**

DOC RIVERS: It is a big deal, and yes, I had the pleasure of meeting him several times. I'll tell you a quick story. I was young, I was playing for the Hawks, and I got to know Andy Young really well, and Andrew was running for governor, and I went on a campaign trip with John Lewis and Andy Young. Just think about that, I was a -- I don't know, 26 maybe, 27. I don't know how old I was. And we flew to Albany, Georgia, of all places, and Andrew young gave a speech at an all-white church, and he was fantastic. It was an absolutely amazing speech.

The crowd was going crazy. We get on the plane, and we're talking, and Andrew young turns to me and said -- he used to call me Young Doc. He says, Young Doc, what did you think about the speech, and I jokingly said, Well, Mr. Young, I thought the speech was great, but I don't think you're getting one vote from that church, and everybody started laughing. John Lewis piped in and says, well, we're not trying to get all of them, we're just trying to get one at a time, and eventually it will be all of them. I thought that was just one powerful statement.

Really sad day for our country. What's amazing is when you think about right now, some of the stuff that John Lewis was fighting for, we're still fighting for. Voter suppression right now is at an all-time high. It's amazing how hard -- we have a group of people who are trying to get people not to vote. Latinos, blacks and young people

are the targets. That's who they're trying to get not to vote.

It's amazing when you think about how long ago that was, and yet we're still fighting that fight.

**Q. I was wondering, it's been about a week of practice so far for you guys.**

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, yeah.

**Q. How are they coming along with these practices?**

DOC RIVERS: Oh, great.

**Q. How are you trying to push them the right way?**

DOC RIVERS: You know, I don't know the right way. I don't think anyone does. This is not normal, where we're practicing, for this long, number one, and in the same -- in different gyms every day for the most part. But it's all good. Like our guys -- I'll tell you, they're coming together. We're not there yet, but you can just feel it, and it's great.

The spirit, though, is absolutely off the charts, and that's what you need.

**Q. To follow up with the Montrezl thing, I know you don't know the protocol to have him reenter, but are you looking to have him back for the scrimmages or are you looking towards the regular season game?**

DOC RIVERS: We don't know. It's obviously a personal matter at home that he did need to go to. So we're just going to wait for him. Like when he needs to get back, he'll be back.

**Q. I remember the weekend before everything shut down being in your office, and we were just kind of shooting it around. Who's your MVP? It's a two-man race, LeBron, Giannis, so now it looks like we're going with the body of work we have. What do you think?**

DOC RIVERS: I'm just going to make it an eight-game race. Whoever plays the best in the eight games wins it.

**Q. These eight games aren't going to count?**

DOC RIVERS: Oh, they're not counting the voting?



**Q. No, no, it's just the body of work we've already seen, so the restart games will not count for MVP.**

DOC RIVERS: Oh, I don't know, I don't know. They both have had great years. Giannis has just been dominant. I don't think I'm upset at either one. I'm taking the easy way out on that one. I'm good with either one.

**Q. I know one of the great advantages of this whole situation is the team bonding, but where is that line between bonding and getting sick of each other, being around each other a little bit too much, and how valuable will the scrimmages be to break that up a little bit?**

DOC RIVERS: It's funny, I don't sense that at all. It reminds me, again, of the greatest basketball camp in the history of mankind. But I think the league has done a great job of giving us -- we have so many things we can do, and it's going to keep becoming more once the campus opens more. They have the card room for the players, golf, guys are at the pool, guys are fishing, bike riding. I mean, there's just a lot of stuff to do, and so far that I haven't heard. But I do think the games will help, so I think it'll be nice to see some new meat, some new blood instead of practicing against ourselves every day, that's for sure.

**Q. I wanted to know how much time have you had to break down players individually to see where they can actually be better on the floor at this time?**

DOC RIVERS: Well, we've had a lot of time. I think that's probably the biggest thing we've had is because we've had so many days in a row -- I mean, again, usually camp is what, five days, and you're playing exhibition games. This has been two weeks. So there's been a lot of individual work.

One of the things the league has done that's pretty smart, like today we practice at 10:00, right, and every night at 7:00 you get two more hours in the gym to just do individual stuff, and it's not mandatory, but a lot of guys go. So we're able to really break down some of the things that we do as a group and then break down individual stuff, which has been really good.

**Q. I know these decisions are extremely personal, when to come to the bubble at all and for some guys if they need to take these absences. Have you let it at all enter your mind or have you had discussions with family members what situations might require you to leave, or is that just something you can't think about or it's not constructive to think about?**

DOC RIVERS: No, well, I mean, there are situations, but we don't ever know what they are. We are in an unreal life. Being in the NBA, I always tell our guys that. And then real life joins in all the time. I think the NBA is probably learning that lesson, probably seeing all the different personal reasons why guys have to leave. That's real life.

And one of the things we do here at least is we want our guys to be part of the real life, so we understand that.

But no, there's not -- you can't target things. You just have to react to things.

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