

Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

Wednesday, August 26, 2020
Orlando, Florida, USA

Doc Rivers

Press Conference



Q. You mentioned you were sleepy. How are you feeling after all the events of the last few hours? And wondered if you caught much of what Paul George had to say after the game and what you made of his openness about his mental health.

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, I think we all should talk about it, so I was very happy with it. There's no difference with mental health than sprained ankles or anything like that. I think it's something that we should be open about, and so I found it to be very refreshing.

Q. Just wanted to ask if you think anything new on Pat Bev for tomorrow, and also there's been some talk about the Celtics and Raptors possibly discussing boycotting their Game 1 to do something to impact change. What do you think of that?

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, I just think it's to each person and whatever the group thinks. I think our players have a voice. I think we should allow them to have a voice. I already voiced my opinion on that yesterday.

But I support what they support. I think we have to let our young people lead us. I think that would be great, in whatever they do.

Q. We've heard all morning from Celtics and Raptors talking about how some players just want to go home, and we heard last night from PG talking about the difficulty of kind of navigating the last week without family around. I'm curious, for as good a job as the NBA has done, do you sense that the bubble experience is wearing thin at all on guys?

DOC RIVERS: No, I think it's hard. It's hard on everybody, but also the NBA is doing a fantastic job overall, and I think it's different for different people. I talked about it yesterday, we lose that tough game the other night, and a lot of times you go back to your family. But now you go back to your hotel room and what's even more strange is that you get up in the morning and you go eat and you see other players

from other teams. They're thinking like, ahh, tough game. It's just a different environment for sure.

But we knew that coming in, we just didn't know how different it would be. And again, I just keep going back to overall the NBA has done an amazing job. They've provided us with as much as they can, including people to talk to if we need someone to talk to. I think that's been fantastic.

Q. Some guys like Fred VanVleet and Marcus Smart have said boycotting is something on their minds. I know what you said yesterday: Follow your dreams and sort of disregard the rest. But when you were a player, can you remember anything that you felt passionately about sort of off the court that you thought maybe this is something I might do?

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, I'm too old. Honestly, I know there are things. I just literally can't remember what those things were. So I don't have an answer for you.

Q. As a follow-up, what kind of -- did something happen in your life or did you get experience that made you kind of go on your present advice where you say, hey, go do what you do?

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, I don't know, I've gone through a lot in my life. You know my history. I don't want to go through it, but I've had some awful things happen to me, and through racism, house being burned down by skinheads. I don't know. I just think you grow up through the '60s and the '70s, I think you've gone through it. You've seen it. You've seen a lot. I think all that forms what you say and what you do.

Q. There's kind of been a zigzag nature to this series where you guys won Game 1, they won Game 2, on and on. How do you keep that focus and momentum from Game 5 to Game 6?

DOC RIVERS: Listen, we've just got to come out and play and play well. I thought we had great focus last night. I thought that was the hardest overall team effort we had last night. We obviously made shots and it's always a make-miss league to begin with. But when you add that to execution and game planning and following game planning and effort, you have a better chance, and I thought we did



all those things.

Q. What did you make of Marcus having to defend himself about whether or not he was trying to hurt Doncic? And also when you sat in your hotel room with PG and just talked about basketball and life, I was wondering, how many times have you done that with your players before?

DOC RIVERS: Well, you always do that with your players. It's part of your job as a coach. And the Marcus thing is absurd. I don't even know why we're actually talking about it other than someone is trying to -- whoever it is is trying to push some type of narrative. That to me, I was shocked when I -- I didn't hear it until this morning. It's absolutely absurd, whoever is pushing that.

Q. Paul spoke to the importance of his teammates helping him get through some tough times, and from afar watching the game last night, it really seemed like the bench was super engaged right from the opening tip. What have you seen from that in terms of togetherness?

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, it was funny, I think both teams, a lot of talking on the floor. Luka talked as much as anybody on the floor, and so did we, and it's okay with that. I don't know, I think maybe they all talk anyway. With fans we just never hear them. I think now with no fans, I think all the teams, you see it every night, I think the players kind of feel like they need to get involved and support their teammates, and you hear it. Every shot you hear something from one bench or the other bench.

You know, it's a different thing. You can hear me complaining, or Rick, I can hear every word he's saying. It's just a different thing, that part of it. Pretty interesting, actually.

Q. On Paul George opening up yesterday, I can't imagine that was easy, and with I think the league trying to normalize talking about mental health and depression, how detrimental are comments from former players saying keep that s--- to yourself?

DOC RIVERS: Well, that's the old-school thought. We also used to foul whenever we wanted to, and if you dunked on someone you had the right to take them out of the air the next play. So we don't do any of those things anymore. Some of them I wouldn't mind if we could return them. But everyone that -- like I don't mind, everyone has an opinion. It's okay. You don't have to agree with PG. I think PG is right and I think the league is right in what they're trying to do.

But everyone is not going to agree with everything, and that's just the way life is. But I wouldn't get all out of sorts about it.

Q. Obviously you've been through a situation before where you had a team who wasn't sure if they should play basketball given some of the things going on which we're seeing now. I get a sense that coaches don't know how much they're supposed to say, how much they're supposed to listen. What's the role of a coach in this situation as far as leading versus listening?

DOC RIVERS: I think you do both. I think you give them guidance. I think it's okay with every coach and every player giving their opinion, and then you come into a team thought.

You know, it is different, though, in this case. I would say that the biggest difference is in this one, it's every team that is making the decision, and whatever year that was with us and the Warriors, it was our team. We were the only one that was left with making the decision.

I think at least in this case it evens the playing field for everyone. I think every team has to decide what they want to do, and honestly, I hope everyone plays.

I just think showing the excellence in doing your job, there's nothing wrong with that. But also fighting for what's right is important, as well.

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