

Los Angeles Clippers

Media Conference

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Doc Rivers

Press Conference

Q. I wanted to ask about the process of with everything that's gone on the last few days, kind of getting back into the groove with basketball and practice and then preparing for Game 6.

DOC RIVERS: Well, it's just a process. It's been good. You know, listen, we'd only had two days off, it just felt like it was a week. I think guys are ready. Yesterday's practice was good. I think they needed to go up and down, which we did. Other than that, we'll see. We'll get a good idea.

I think it's tougher today for the guys that are playing to have only had one practice. At least we'll be able to get in the gym twice, so that helps.

Q. You said yesterday that you feel like -- maybe you were talking about all coaches, but that you needed to keep a closer eye on the mental health inside the bubble. What added process -- is it just talking to guys?

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, talking to guys, listening to the guys I've always thought is probably the better thing for coaches, all of us to listen more. And then just trying to make this enjoyable, more enjoyable. It's not like it's torture here. It's nice. They've done a great job. But we can do even more, provide them with more stuff, as much as we can, just even little things, gifts, things -- just anything daily that we can do, so my staff, I've got a great staff of people, we've talked about it over the last couple days, how we can try to enrich their environment.

Families come next week, and I think that'll be a huge burden lifted. I just think mentally alone that will be something big that -- after games they can go and see their families and then come back to their rooms. I think that's going to be an enormous lift for the guys that are in the bubble.

Q. About the mask that you're wearing, how important is it to have these guys first register to vote so that they can take that next step, and have you guys talked



to them about, hey, guys, are you registered to vote, are your fans registered to vote?

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, we did. You know what was cool was in the meeting, it came up in the players' meeting that let's walk the walk. We can't just do the talk. So all the players -- I think it's 20 percent of the players voted in the last election or something like that, and to a man they all -- we're going to get them registered here in the bubble. We're going to try to get every team registered, every player registered to vote.

It's so difficult for players because most of the time it's in the middle of the season and players are from so many different states that it's a lot of absentee voting, and we're going to get them all done. We want to get up in the 80s, 90s, 100 if possible percentile as far as players and coaches voting.

Q. Going back to Paul, what Paul talked about on Tuesday about how he was feeling, you have DeRozan, you have Kevin Love, it's become more of a publicly acceptable topic for players to be vulnerable like that. At what point do you feel like in your time around the NBA that was something that people were saying the quiet part out loud, that they felt it was okay to talk about that?

DOC RIVERS: I still don't think it's there. I think it's becoming. We're starting to wake up to the reality that there's no difference between a sprained ankle and something going wrong with your brain. The brain is probably even more important. It is more important. But it's been such a taboo subject in society and probably even more taboo in sports because of the machismo. We're so tough and we've got to reflect this toughness about us, this macho about us. Anything with the mind is weak, you know. That's been the messaging throughout society.

I think it's more and more Kini Ko, the great shoe designer, came up with that campaign that I got involved in during COVID about the mind and making it -- it's okay to not be okay.

I just think we've just got to keep talking about it. The more we talk about it, the more we make it normal. There's people out there in our league that will open up that we didn't know had issues, and then we can give them help.



Q. The actor Chadwick Boseman passed away last night and I saw NBA guys Tweeting about him. Did you know him at all in your Hollywood encounter?

DOC RIVERS: I got to meet him. I didn't know him. You don't know anybody, if you know what I mean by that. I did have the pleasure of meeting with him a couple times. I met him at the Soho House one night and had a decent talk with him. Really sad. Looked like -- this was an actor that actually had been in the game for a long time but had finally started getting noticed, and then to die was really sad for a lot of people, especially when you factor in the movie "Black Panther" and the meaning behind Black Panther and what it suggested. Just a sad day for not only just Hollywood but for the sports world and probably for everyone.

Q. I was wondering with everything that's been so unprecedented in this bubble in the last like three days, when your team which has been so focused on winning a championship is prepared to walk away and literally walk out of a room together to stand behind a cause, how do you think this has brought them together in a way that it never would have been in a normal regular season? How much do you think this will improve the chemistry or help these guys?

DOC RIVERS: You know, I don't know the answer. Great question. I don't know the answer. I think every team is closer because of the last 48 hours. But I think what really is closer is just the players in general as a group. You know, as much as they all know each other, when you get on a team, you don't know each other, you just know the guys on your team. So I think the whole exercise of that has brought everybody -- when you see guys in the room that are talking that probably don't know each other, I mean, there's some smart young players in this league, I can tell you that. I saw a player do a Power Point in front of the other players, and it was a lot of impressive stuff going on.

I think it was good for everybody. Definitely good for coaches. I mean, they were impressive. So I think for ours, it was really good to see.

Q. Just to follow up on the earlier question about Chadwick, for a guy like yourself, teenagers, kids, what did he mean as an icon in terms of seeing the first Black superhero on an American film who was an icon?

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, I mean, I don't know what it means because I'm older. I would love to know what a young kid probably it meant to them and to actually be able to look up to a superhero and it be Black. You know, "Black Panther,"

if you know the history, had been trying to be made back in the late '80s. That script had been out for that long and had been turned down by studio after studio. The script had been sold for pennies. So the history of the whole Black Panther, just getting it made, for me, being older, I understand how long that was in the process, and then finally seeing it come to and then all the young people being able to see it was pretty cool.

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