

# Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

Thursday, September 10, 2020  
Orlando, Florida, USA



## Doc Rivers

### Press Conference

**Q. Obviously nothing here is normal or anything like that, but game day schedules you can at least tell your body I'm going to nap, do the stuff that I normally do. What about off-day schedules? Have they gotten?**

DOC RIVERS: A lot of things are normal if you want to turn them into that, and I think we've accepted what's not. So on a game day, to me it's no different than being on the road at times. You get on the bus, you go to shoot-around, you watch film, you get back and depending on the game you set your schedule. So to me the game days are the most normal days.

You know, the times I would say are so different because they're not the same, and they're not the same during the regular season, when you go somewhere and you go somewhere. I think that part of it is pretty good. The off days are different. In some ways I think you get a little more work in than you would than normally because you're so close that you can do more film watching, you can walk through a play here and there, which feels normal. I think some of these days you may even do nothing because you don't want your guys to get in the car and drive and do things.

It's after all that that you leave, like whatever we're about to do, that's when it's not normal. It's not normal to just go to a room. That's the only thing that's not normal.

**Q. What time do you go to sleep after a 9:00 start?**

DOC RIVERS: Oh, gosh. I would say between 4:00 and 5:00 has been the average with most of our coaches, yeah, or every coach I would say.

**Q. Kawhi has been "surgical" is the word that we've heard. "Robotic" would be a disservice to him, but how would you describe just his method and the guy he is that you're coaching?**

DOC RIVERS: I think he did it well. "Surgical" is a good word. "Robotic" is not a good word. He has a system to

what he's doing. He has a belief in what he's doing. He sticks to it. I mean, his ability to work and get what he needs to get in and know when he's there is amazing. It's rare that you find a guy that just knows his game and knows what he needs to work on, and it's awesome some nights when you see him shooting. I think you can tell he's way over his number, but in his mind he's not to the comfort level that he needs to be in. When you watch guys through their career shoot and they're having a tough night and they stop, he's not going to. It just tells you about who he is.

**Q. I understand you obviously want to work towards something greater and continue to build and get better. You made the comment the other day that we're still learning and growing together. With that said, after last night's performance do you feel like particularly defensively this is the best you guys have played all year?**

DOC RIVERS: Well, it's the most guys we've had on the court all year, so I think we're getting there. I do. And I think everybody is probably going to keep getting better through the playoff process because you just do. But I think our ceiling is so high, how much we're going to keep improving game to game, because of all the things that have happened in the bubble and even during the regular season where we didn't have our guys.

We learn, we grow. Defensively yesterday you could just see how connected we were. All we talked about the day before the game is that we've got to be more organized defensively in what we're doing, and we can't have the individual thinking. It's got to be team thinking. And I thought last night was as close to that as we've had so far. But we can get better.

**Q. After the game last night, you said that you felt the team came out with a sense of urgency because they were tired of win, loss, win, loss, kind of some inconsistency and wanted --**

DOC RIVERS: I didn't know I said that. I must have said it with my eyes.

**Q. But you talked about wanting to have like a dominant stretch of just reeling off a few wins in a row, having a winning streak. How important do you think**

**ASAP** . . . when all is said, we're done.®  
sports

**that is at this point in the season, just having a stretch of dominance like that?**

DOC RIVERS: You know, honestly, I don't know. I don't remember saying that --

**Q. PG.**

DOC RIVERS: Oh, PG said it, okay. I'm not worried about anything other than the game we play next, for me, quite honestly, because I think if you do that right, all the other stuff will take care of itself. I'm not a looker ahead, like if we get dominant and play all this; I just want to win tomorrow, and I want our focus to be singular. When that happens, you do put them together. So I think for me, that's where my focus is.

**Q. Before this season started way back last off-season, Lou was doing workouts and sending videos to the guys and obviously during these Playoffs he's really bought in defensively. What does that sort of say about his appreciation of this moment and this opportunity and his leadership?**

DOC RIVERS: Well, I think it says a lot. You know, guys, especially the older guys, rely -- they don't have a lot of opportunities, and some of them had zero opportunities. They've been in the league for a long time. I think that's what it says, that sense of urgency and awareness of where they're at.

**Q. Last couple games or at least last game, you brought Pat off the bench with Lou in that second unit. What have you liked about that lineup defensively because Lou has also done a great job defensively there?**

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, he really has. We just want to -- we have our own combinations that we want to have offensively on the floor, and we have some combinations that we want to have or avoid defensively, and so that's what we're trying to do.

**Q. Paul said last night that he knew coming into the series that the team felt they couldn't give the Nuggets any life knowing how emotional of a first round they went through. I'm wondering how much stock do you put in or how much do you remind your guys going into that the next game that Denver did come back from a 3-1 deficit?**

DOC RIVERS: I think they know that, and again, I'm more worried just about us. Like we've just got to come out and play. You play well and you play hard, good things happen. If you don't and all that other stuff starts

happening, then you're probably not playing hard enough because you're thinking too much. I just think we need to stay focused on our jobs.

**Q. I think yesterday marked two months since you all got to the bubble. Does it feel like two months to you or does it feel like it's gone quicker, faster, and what do you have to tell the guys to prepare for the next month that you hope to be there?**

DOC RIVERS: I'm worried about tomorrow as far as that part. You know, it doesn't feel like two months. Now that Dan is here, it's starting to feel a lot longer (laughing). No, it doesn't -- it's quick. I don't know, it's funny, I would say that's a better question for the players probably. For coaches, I mean, we're curmudgeons. We do what we do anyway and our life doesn't change that much. So I don't know. I would say that's probably a better question for them.

**Q. I have two questions for you. The first one is I've asked you before during this bubble run kind of how your mental health is and how you deal with your players' mental health. Now that you all have family and things of that sort in the bubble, I wanted to get your thoughts on that. And then I also wanted your thoughts on what your message is with your teams usually for close-out games like you all are kind of headed towards?**

DOC RIVERS: Yeah, I don't really talk about it being a close-out game, I can tell you that. I talk about what we need to do in the game to win the game. So that's what's important for me.

The mental health, listen, I think it's something that we should talk about all the time, not just in the bubble but any time. I think mental health is a major issue in this country, you know, that we just need to keep talking about it openly because it should be talked about openly and not having a stigma behind it.

I have no problem with guys expressing it. I see a therapist when I need to see a therapist all the time, and I always have, and I've never had a problem with it.

**Q. With all these empty head coaching positions available in the NBA right now, do you get a sense that that's something Sam Cassell is interested in?**

DOC RIVERS: Sam Cassell should be a head coach, period. He's got an incredibly high basketball IQ, and I just hope he gets a shot. He's paid every due that's possible. When they talk about paying dues, he's paid every due that is possible, and he's yet to get a job. So I'm hoping that

happens.

FastScripts by ASAP Sports

