

# Los Angeles Clippers Media Conference

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## Doc Rivers

### Postgame Press Conference

Denver Nuggets 104, LA Clippers 89

**Q. Recap the big picture, the emotion, everything that started with the talent on hand and the stated desire to win a title?**

DOC RIVERS: Just disappointed. I thought we had so many opportunities over the last three games to win. But listen, you have to give Denver credit. They kept playing, they kept executing. They kept playing together. Right now, just disappointed. You know, honestly I thought just you could see the difference in the two teams. That team has been together, we haven't, and you could see it as the games went on. They just knew each other so well.

I thought offensively, even though -- listen, we had great shots. I mean, great shots, all night. I still didn't think we trusted. You know, we did at the beginning of the game. We did coming out of the third quarter. We got a 7-point lead but right when they put pressure on us, honestly, I just thought we didn't come through.

**Q. This team never was able to reach its full potential. How good did you think this team could have been and the expectations, were they ever too heavy for this team?**

DOC RIVERS: No. We didn't need them. That's the bottom line. I'm the coach and I'll take any blame for it. But we didn't meet our expectations, clearly, because if we had, in my opinion, we'd still be playing.

**Q. Game 7 a lot of times --**

DOC RIVERS: Well, Game 7 are a make or miss game, at the end of the day -- I don't think it was those two, it was just as a group. It wasn't those two. If you look at our shot quality, it was pretty dang good. You know, but the ball didn't go in. And you know, on those nights, you hoped that you can lean on your defense. And I just didn't think -- you know, even though the numbers say we are a good defensive team, I just think we didn't ever realize that part

of our game at all.

**Q. The fourth quarter -- what were your emotions?**

DOC RIVERS: It was hard because I've got a good group of guys, I really do. Man, we got -- if you just look at the shots, we were getting -- I mean we were getting point-blank looks, but it didn't go, you know, and they kept playing. The whole difference, they went through stretches like that, too. They just kept playing.

I thought especially in the fourth quarter, I just thought, you know, we start missing shots and you can see us trusting less and less and less. I mean, listen, obviously I could have done something more. I always think it's me no matter what. I don't care what we had. I don't look at this and try to figure it out, but you know, it's very disappointing.

**Q. I know Kawhi and PG didn't shoot the ball that well tonight but overall they were pretty good for the postseason. But it seemed like the supporting cast performance was a little bit surprising of you not having that consistent third guy after throughout the whole regular season having that. Were you surprised by that and what do you attribute that to?**

DOC RIVERS: I don't know. Part of it is our guys missed a lot of the bubble. Trezl was phenomenal tonight overall, but he missed 30 days. Lou missed 14 days. Pat missed 16 days in the bubble. You know, some of that came back and haunted us.

I thought conditioning, we kept having to take guys out because they were tired. You know, we're in the playoffs, and you had to do it. Guys were asking to come out. So you had to do it, you know. But that's not typical for Game 7, but it is what it is. You had to do it. I thought it hurt our rotations at times. But again, man, let's give Denver credit. I thought Murray before the game, I said the one guy that we have to slow down is Murray and I thought we did that and then right before the second quarter, he got going, and the second half, he was literally unstoppable.

**Q. Obviously in a series like this, there's blame to be thrown around. Who is to blame here and how does that factor in as a motivating factor for next season?**

DOC RIVERS: I'll let you do all the blaming. I don't play



that game. You can figure that one out on your own.

**Q. You talk about Denver's familiarity with each other and their trust to keep playing. Obviously you guys not just in the bubble but all season, you were up-and-down as far as who was available. If you had a full season together, would that have made a difference?**

DOC RIVERS: Who knows, you know I'm not going to make an excuse. Denver beat us. Denver was the better team. We had 35 or 40 different layups. We had all that stuff. But once you get to the playoffs, throw that all out the window and you've got to perform. You've got to perform better. You've got to execute better. You've got to trust better. You've got to play better as a team. I thought Denver played better as a team throughout the playoffs.

**Q. When you're up 3-1 in this series, are you thinking on the trust issue you're where you need to be or are you still worried at that point that it's still not quite there?**

DOC RIVERS: I was never comfortable, I just wasn't. I just knew conditioning-wise, like we had guys that just couldn't play minutes, and that's hard, you know. I mean, there were two or three times a night where we actually started getting it going and a guy had to come out. I mean, it is what it is.

So no, I was never comfortable, I can tell you that up front. I told our coaches that.

**Q. I've kind of heard you speak this year just about guys's mentality and I've also heard you in the first round, you call guys emotionally weak, but I've heard your sentiments change over the last three games. Do you feel as though kind of not just the pressure, but also all of the extra surroundings that are going on with that environment got to the guys?**

DOC RIVERS: No, it didn't get to Denver. So you know, I just think Denver beat us, all around, and so for me, right now, I'm in the place of giving Denver more credit, and you guys can figure out where all the blame goes and all that. But I'm just going to give Denver credit. I thought Mike did a phenomenal job. Jokic was literally unstoppable most of the series. Tonight when you look at his scoring numbers, you don't see it but then you see the passing and the rebounds. He dominated the game in a lot of ways.

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