

NBC Sports Group Media Conference

Monday, March 2, 2026

Sam Flood
Bob Costas
Doug Collins
Hannah Storm
Press Conference



THE MODERATOR: Hi, everyone. Welcome to today's NBC Sports Throwback NBA media conference call ahead of tomorrow's game in Philadelphia on NBC and Peacock at 8:00 p.m. eastern between the San Antonio Spurs and the Philadelphia 76ers.

In a moment we'll be joined by NBC Sports executive producer Sam Flood, play-by-play announcer Bob Costas, analyst Doug Collins, and studio host Hannah Storm. Mike Fratello was unable to make today's call due to travel adjustments.

First up we'll begin with opening remarks from Sam Flood.

SAM FLOOD: Thank you all for joining us. We're very excited about this opportunity to honor the 1990 to 2002 NBA and NBC seasons. It was a lot of fun, a lot of fond memories for the whole group.

Our graphics department has had a lot of fun recreating the look. Our music is already there with Mr. Tesh, so we're excited about that. And even the old animations, Neil Wright our graphic designer from back in the day reached out last night and told me how excited he was to see his work back in the mix.

So we're thrilled to get this going and to get this talent team together.

Just so everyone knows, this will not be a one-and-done. We plan to do this in future years. Not everyone around the table will join us this year on the show, but there will be invites, plenty of other former NBA and NBA stars as the time goes forward, so everyone will get their opportunity to join us again.

To have Bob, Doug, and Mike in the booth calling this

game. Will be a lot of fun to have Jim Gray on the sidelines again. Big thank you to ESPN for allowing Hannah to join us. We had the fun of working with Hannah for a long time throughout the years and produced NBA Showtime with her back in the day.

And then Isaiah and PJ joining her in the studio group. It should be a lot of fun, but you're not here to listen to me. Let's start with Bob Costas.

BOB COSTAS: Well, I think I can echo some of that. We're all looking forward to this, to the reunion as much as the game itself. I don't want to shortchange the game, but seeing everybody in one place at the same time for the first time in a long time is really heartwarming and it's going to be funny, and there will be stories exchanged, some of them on the air and some of them not.

If the game is close in the second half, we're going to narrow the focus to the game, but a lot of this is going to be big focus: The difference between the league when we last left it and the league now, the influence of the three-pointers, load management, the statistics are startling. The average team shoots five times as many threes as the average team shot per game when we last left the NBA.

The league has changed. That doesn't mean it's changed for the worse, but the perspectives of Fratello and Collins and Carlesimo, and Thomas will be enlightening, not just about memories but about what they see in the modern NBA.

And I would imagine Sam would be better able to address this, but I imagine that going in and out of commercials and during the extended pregame show that Hannah will host an hour-long pregame show on Peacock. Could be a lot of flashbacks to actual moments.

So you'll hear Marv and you'll hear Tom Hammond and see Ahmad Rashad and Peter Vecsey, and everyone that is not with us this time but might be with us the next time.

Doug?

DOUG COLLINS: Well, exciting time for me. NBC opened up a whole new life in basketball for me. The 1972 Olympics obviously was a huge part of my life, and then



when I signed to come to NBC and NBC having the Olympics, I got a chance to do 2004, 2008, 2012, 2016.

So that was such a big part of my life. And NBC changed my life. Dick Ebersol, a huge part of my growth as an analyst, when he introduced to me the importance of storytelling and who's playing, why do we want to watch this game. More so than just the analysis.

Then Bob had talked about how we're going to do a lot of storytelling.

I'm really excited because I think so much of the focus is on Victor Wembanyama, which it should be. It's a shame that Joel Embiid is not playing. But I'm looking forward to the perimeter play of Stephon Castle and De'Aaron Fox and Dylan Harper and Devin Vassell versus Tyrese Maxey, VJ Edgecombe and Quinten Grimes.

I just think those are such electric perimeter players I'm looking forward to seeing, and I'm not going to be afraid to tell you that Tyrese Maxey is my favorite player to watch in the NBA. Plays the game with such joy and skill.

I spent 13 years with the 76ers. I came here as a 21 year old kid drafted to a team that was 9-73. I played here. I got my broadcasting start here and then ended up coaching here three years, so 13 years of my life in Philadelphia.

To be back here and to celebrate that wonderful time for me to be back also, too, with all my NBC friends.

BOB COSTAS: We can see that Doug is in full analyst mode already.

HANNAH STORM: Yeah, the entire starting backcourt of both teams, which I love. Yeah, the rebounding totals will be really interesting tomorrow.

This is Hannah. I'm really excited. I'm really grateful, as Sam said, to ESPN for loaning me and bringing me back home, really, to NBC. Of all the things that I've done since that time many moons ago, I am really associated with the NBA on NBC.

A lot of people say I grew up watching you, not to date you, but you were part of the voice of my childhood. It's really special to be spanning the generations, and I feel very fortunate that we were there, all of us together, Sam with us.

It's a really magical time when we were not only able to chronicle Michael Jordan's incredible career and the story of the Bulls, but the other great players, you know, from

Carl Malone to Hakeem Olajuwon to Charles Barkley to Patrick Ewing.

To see these Spurs that we're going to see tomorrow and their championship DNA, which started during our era with Gregg Popovich and really a sensibility that I think is so reflective in the modern day San Antonio Spurs.

We are going to have some flashbacks. I am privy to a few of those, and they're a lot of fun.

We had a good time, and I think to echo what Doug said, I just feel a great sense of gratitude, not only to be here tomorrow to remind people of where we've come from and where we are today, but just the fact that all of us were able to be a part of that era is really defining, I think, for all of us in our lives and our careers.

Q. Bob and Hannah, what has been one of your favorite games or memories that you have called or been a part of?

BOB COSTAS: You mean during the NBA on NBC?

Q. Yes, sir.

BOB COSTAS: If I have to take one, it's easy. It's Game 6 in '98 in Salt Lake City when Michael Jordan in effect closed out his career. We know he came back and played for the Wizards. Doug was his coach at the Wizards. I don't mean to downplay that, but that's a relative footnote in Michael's career. That was 6 for 6 in the Finals, six times as the MVP.

And if you think about a conclusion in team sports, I can't think of a greater closing act than that. Ted Williams hit a home run in his last time at bat but it wasn't in the World Series. John Elway won back-to-back Super Bowls, but there isn't one image, the last pass he threw wasn't a touchdown pass, as I remember.

This image of Michael Jordan, it was almost like he was posing for another statue at the United Center as he let go of the classic jump shot. And the game was such a good game right down to the last possession. That stands out.

Game 7 of the Western Conference Finals in 2000, which Doug had to miss because his daughter Kelly was graduating from college. So I was with Snapper Jones and Bill Walton, who were a great duo. We will miss them for sure. We will be mentioning those who have left us as such an important part of the NBA on NBC.

That Game 7 where the Lakers were down 15 in the fourth quarter and came back to beat a very good trailblazer

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team, that would be No. 2 on the list, but it's clear the Game 6 in '98 in the Finals is No. 1 for me.

HANNAH STORM: I think I would be the same. That would be my No. 1. It's one of those moments in your career when you feel like it's going in slow motion, like it literally -- as it was unfolding you're understanding the enormity of what you're part of. I will never forget being there and seeing the ending of that game.

One of the things that we're going to talk about in relation to Bob bringing up the Lakers, and one of the interesting things that we were privy was the very beginning of Kobe Bryant's career and what he was, and what, honestly, some of the questions were about Kobe at the very beginning in the early years of his career, and we also pay homage to how he's inspired so many players since.

But that's part of his depth, I think, and part of the interest in what we're going to be talking about tomorrow, because we were there when people were becoming.

BOB COSTAS: Jordan was already a star and had been on CBS, both in the NCAAs and the NBA, but he really became an NBA icon beginning with the very first season. So our time with the NBA began with the first Bulls three-peat, and it ended with the Laker three-peat.

What we tried to do, not just in the game coverage but in everything that surrounded it, it wasn't hyped. We took what was already there, the legitimate drama and theater that was already there, and we framed it and emphasized it. We didn't make it up.

HANNAH STORM: And to go a little bit off -- I guess one of my overarching memories off the court was spending time with David Stern in his office. We would go in there on a regular basis, Bob, myself, Sam and others who were involved in the broadcast, and we literally would talk about the features we were going to run that week and what storytelling, as Doug said, that we were going to lean into that week. For the commissioner of the NBA to be so involved, along with Dick Ebersol in every single detail of what we did I think added so much texture and care into that era of broadcasting.

DOUG COLLINS: For me, I just want to take a piece of that game that we were talking about, Michael's last game. I vividly remember standing, getting ready to do our opening in Salt Lake City, and we rehearsed it, and I remember seeing that red light go on, and I just visualized how many million people were looking at me at that moment as we were getting ready to do that game, and I thought about this kid who, when he was in seventh grade, for a week, didn't sleep because he had to give a

three-minute speech, his seventh grade, in front of the class. I don't know how many millions it was.

HANNAH STORM: Most watched Finals in history.

DOUG COLLINS: That little red light above it and I actually -- my knees were shaking. I said, "Lord, just let me get through this open and let us get us over the end and be able to do the game."

That was always, Bob, my thing is let's have a clean open so we can go over and do the game.

And, Bob, we did that game, the Memorial Day game in San Antonio with the Spurs in Portland.

BOB COSTAS: '99.

DOUG COLLINS: '99. And it was when Sean Elliott, they came out of a time-out, we had all the great pictures, and I remember I could read lips, and Sean Elliott was looking at me and he says, I've got one more in me, I've got one more in me. They hit him in the corner, he hit the three to win the game.

It was interesting, we had to go back because we were not sure if his heels had touched the end line, and we had all these great pictures of his heel not touching it or whatever. That was a great moment.

And then Reggie Miller's shot against the Bulls --

BOB COSTAS: On Memorial Day.

DOUG COLLINS: -- on Memorial Day where he hit that running right in front of us, Bob, that three. Those are some vivid moments.

But the one thing I think we can all share is how the pictures and the words and the graphics always told such a great story. They had a sense of purpose of -- it wasn't just a throw it up there that told the whole story. Our camera work and some of the things we had for those pictures were second to none.

BOB COSTAS: Yeah, the synchronicity between the booth -- in the NBA you don't have a booth, you're courtside. The studio, the truck, the producers, the directors, the researchers, Tommy Roy --

HANNAH STORM: Tommy Roy was unbelievable.

BOB COSTAS: David Neal, Andy Rosenberg, John Gonzales, those names resonate in the business. Those of you on this call, you can Google them and figure out the

background.

HANNAH STORM: They were our lifeline.

BOB COSTAS: We were so in sync. You said something and they had the shot, or if they had the shot first you knew why they took it. So you were able to say something that wasn't captioned in that shot. Nothing came out of nowhere. It was like dance steps, and we knew all of them.

DOUG COLLINS: Also, too, being an analyst, I always felt like the replays and all that were coming out just were so good, and there was a trust developed to where a lot of times they would say, well, let me show you with these replays. There became a trust where they might go, hey, Doug, we've got these three replays for you, boom, and they trusted that I was going to be able to talk through them.

So we could do things on the fly. It didn't have to come after a commercial.

BOB COSTAS: It's live sports. You can prepare all the want and you have to prepare, but some of this is just going to happen, and you'd better be able to react to what happens.

HANNAH STORM: That was a long answer to your question, by the way.

Q. This is for Bob. Obviously you've been on my podcast a couple of times about the play-by-play, the final years at CBS, baseball. This is the first NBA assignment that you've done in 24 years. I think you had done a couple in the 2002 Playoffs for NBC. How do you approach it? Do you see it as a play-by-play assignment or maybe more of a master of ceremonies, navigating a non-traditional game broadcast in a certain way?

BOB COSTAS: It's both. You have to have some nuts and bolts play-by-play, but it wouldn't be a throwback game if we were just going there to do what we do in any of the other 81 regular-season games. There's going to be a lot of overview stuff. There will be flashback stuff. I'll be asking Mike and Doug for impressions that you might not ask them for if it was a generic game.

So it's a blend of the two of them. The game will dictate that in the second half. If the game is very close and very exciting in the second quarter, then I'm asking Doug what he thinks will happen out of this time-out.

I'm not asking him to compare Wemby to Wilt Chamberlain

at that point.

Q. Having not done basketball for that many years, is there extra preparation you do to feel totally in command in the booth?

BOB COSTAS: I have no idea if I'll feel totally in command. I hope that I'm adequately in command. But I watched both games yesterday. Spurs played the Knicks on ABC and the Sixers played the Celtics on NBC, and I watched them as if I was calling the game. I didn't call it out loud, but I was silently identifying all the players.

That's what you do even when you've done it over and over again on a regular basis when they go through the outline then you make sure you've got the face and the number and the body type.

So I did that yesterday. Didn't miss a single dribble or either one of those two games. Now we'll see what I can remember.

DOUG COLLINS: While you were doing that, I was doing the analysis of both games, as well. We were embedded yesterday.

HANNAH STORM: We were. We were.

Q. You mentioned the graphics are having a throwback element. Are there any other throwback elements?

SAM FLOOD: We're going to use the modern cameras with high frame rates. We're not going to go back to black and white, even though we were well past the black and white era.

But the graphic kind of built off the old Rice designs and Sue Bennett, who were the two graphic mavens back in the day. Built off of their old looks. We still use the laser Peacock at the top of the show, so that has carried on even in the games we have every week.

But in this case, there's some new elements that reflect back on how we used to do the games. But it will feel like the old game and you'll see the old graphic look, the old chyron insert look.

We didn't have a scorebook back then. We used to put the score in. Tried to fool people if it was a good game or a bad game, but now the scorebook will be in the whole time, so we'll be playing the game the right way.

Q. For Doug, with Tyrese Maxey, of course you mentioned him earlier, emerging; recently became the



Sixers all-time leader in three-pointers, passing Allen Iverson. Curious from your perspective if there's any comparison between those two as well as your thoughts on VJ Edgcombe who of course is a very talented young rookie.

DOUG COLLINS: Well, Tyrese Maxey, he just has that star quality. It's more than just the way he plays. But it's the joy with which he plays. That's one of the things that always jumps out at me. I've been 50 plus years in the NBA in some capacity, and I've always said to myself whatever I was doing at that moment there was no place else I'd rather be. I think Tyrese Maxey is that way.

It's interesting, I think Bob talked about the proliferation of the three-point shooting. Well, the reason he was able to break this record so quickly is because there's five times more threes being taken than there were back then.

But I think Iverson had -- the fans loved him. They loved his heart. They loved his pound-for-pound toughness and the way he played, and they felt like he epitomized the city of Philadelphia, and I think the Sixer fans feel the same way with Tyrese Maxey.

I see a young player like this, and I say, just let him stay healthy. I don't compare myself, but my career got knocked out right in its prime with injuries. Andrew Toney, the same way here in Philadelphia. I just want him to stay healthy. I want him to play so long where these fans can really get a chance to enjoy him.

VJ Edgcombe has such humility, the way he plays. I was listening to the telecast yesterday, and they talked about how Maxey and Edgcombe, how Kyle Lowry has taken these guys under his wing and how he's trying to teach them being champions in all the things they do and the way they play.

When I think of those guys, I think Philadelphia -- the hardest thing right now for the Sixers is, first of all, their report card doesn't come until when the Playoffs start, so regardless of what goes on right now, how far have they got to go in the Playoffs because of Embiid and his availability.

I think when we watch the Sixers, when Embiid is there they play sort of a certain style. When he's not, they play another style. So I think you're going to see a really fast, up-tempo game like you saw against Boston, a lot of three speed quickness, grind, three guard attack.

So I think you're going to see a very fast-paced game because that's the way the Spurs like to play, as well.

Q. Sam, I was just looking if you would be able to expand on how the broadcast will look and feel the same as the '90s versus what the NBC Sports broadcast in 2026 look like.

SAM FLOOD: Well, first of all, it's the group of talent assembled that we're all part of the years from -- at some point along the way, from 1990 to 2002. So we'll have their voices and perspective as part of that era of the NBA on NBC.

And then visually, you'll have graphics that were used in the mid-90s, and that's the look we've settled on as a reflection of kind of that era of basketball for us. So the graphics team has been hard at work in the midst of this amazing February that we've just completed. They were able to find time to make sure we honored this date and have the right look for the graphics.

People who know will know these are the elements that were in there, and then we'll have obviously a number of tape elements to reflect back on those moments.

If you watched yesterday the NBA on NBC we had the video of Bob and Pat Riley playing with each other's hair in the NBA Showtime Shootout, which went down to the very last shootout.

It started the first show where Bob and Pat Riley would end each show with the free throw, and it came down to the Finals, on court in Chicago, Bob happened to win it, so he won the hair deal.

BOB COSTAS: I'd like to point out, it wasn't a single shot. We actually ended the studio portion dead even. Magic Johnson says to me during warmups before Game 1 in Chicago, Bob, why did you miss that last shot? Because I shot it too high and it hit the studio lights.

They were betting that wherever they were against Portland or something where it was the Conference Finals, the players were betting who would win, their old coach Pat Riley. Now we shot 10 free throws, John Paxson rebounding. We shot 10 free throws. Riley made seven. I made nine. I made nine.

Now, when you have a relatively sparse athletic resume, you tend to emphasize those high points. That and a triple on Bob Gibson in a fantasy game in 1984 pretty much completes the list.

DOUG COLLINS: So you were one of the first prop bets going. We now know the betting era started with Bob Costas.

BOB COSTAS: FanDuel is going to do a throwback aspect.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you all for joining us today for today's media conference call.

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