ABC Welcomes Basketball's Return With NBA Countdown 'Restart' Special July 25



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ABC will get to air NBA games again starting Aug. 2, but the network is getting an early jump on the league's eagerly-awaited return with a live prime-time special airing a week earlier.

The two-hour event, called NBA Countdown Presented by Mountain Dew: NBA Restart, will air Saturday, July 25 on ABC at 8 p.m. ET, the network announced today.

Produced by ESPN, the special will be hosted by Maria Taylor and feature analysts Paul Pierce, Jalen Rose and Jay Williams, as well as ESPN senior NBA insider Adrian Wojnarowski. It will also include live reports from the ESPN Wide World of Sports Complex in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., where this year's season will take place.

The two-hour NBA Countdown special will preview the restart of

the season, look back at what has changed since the season was postponed on March 11 due to the pandemic and spotlight how the league is responding to the Black Lives Matter movement.

As the NBA resumes following the shutdown, 22 teams will play eight games before the start of playoffs, which will end by Oct. 13.

The season officially resumes on Thursday, July 30, with a TNT doubleheader: The Utah Jazz take on the New Orleans Pelicans (6:30 p.m. ET) and the L.A. Clippers meet the Los Angeles Lakers (9 p.m. ET).

ESPN will then air a doubleheader on Friday, July 31, with four games the following day.

ABC will resume its NBA coverage on Sunday, Aug. 2, with the Portland Trail Blazers taking on the Boston Celtics (3:30 p.m. ET) and the Milwaukee Bucks playing the Houston Rockets (8:30 p.m. ET).

As NBA and the MLB set their return, TV is eagerly awaiting the influx of live sports ad revenue that the industry has largely been missing for almost four months. Altogether, the NFL, NBA, MLB and NHL generated more than $6.5 billion in national ad revenue during their last full seasons, according to Kantar Media, so media companies are eager to see sports advertisers spend money again.

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