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Clyde Frazier Chats Fashion, Knicks

The Knicks great discusses his book, *Rockin' Steady*.

by Kyle Stack / @KyleStack

Clyde Frazier has maintained his swagger and sense of fashion since he came out with his groundbreaking book in 1974, *Rockin' Steady: A Guide to Basketball and Cool*. The book, co-authored with Pulitzer Prize-winning sports reporter Ira Berkow, is part basketball instructional guide, part style guide. It's been re-issued with new material, as Frazier feels there's much for a younger generation of NBA fans to learn about him and his philosophy on many facets of life. Now a Knicks game broadcaster for MSG Network, Frazier was at the NBA Store yesterday to sign the book for fans. I was able to catch up with him to talk about the book, the Knicks and more.

SLAM: How has your sense of fashion evolved since your book came out in '74?

Clyde Frazier: Well, I'm really astounded that I had that perception so far back. I think I know how to coordinate fashion better because of experience. My discipline with diet and exercise and things I was doing three decades ago have me in this position now. People think I could still play; I'm still physically fit. I'm still into styling and profiling, so it's kind of a revelation. The book still has my concepts of basketball, my philosophy on the game, how you should choose to defend some of the more prolific scorers — [Oscar] Robertson, [Jerry] West, Earl "The Pearl" [Monroe], Dave Bing.



And even then, I was big on teamwork. That was the essence was our team, playing together, being successful. Just looking good while you're doing it. [Smiles] I have a section in there on grooming, how I used to shower, comb my hair and do all the things I did before games, my neatness with my uniform, how I kept the perspiration off of me. I think it had an impact on the kids of that era. Now, I think a new generation of kids who know me as a Knicks announcer can get insight to me as a basketball player.

SLAM: Jerry Rice used to say that his uniform had to fit perfectly before he went onto the field. Did you feel the same way about your uniform before you went onto the court?

CF: Yeah, yeah, I used to tape my [ankles] in my underwear, not in uniform. I put my uniform on last. [Laughs] I didn't want it all wrinkled up. And then I started the laces, shoes laces. Knicks colors are blue and orange — I had orange [laces] on one shoe, blue on the other. That was when I was with Converse. And then of course I started endorsing the Puma shoe. I was the first guy to have a shoe endorsement.

SLAM: Did you used to have a ritual of how you put on your uniform and shoes. Left foot, then right foot?

CF: You always go from left to right. But I try not to have superstition because it's too much stress. You know, if it's the playoffs, you don't want to go this way, you don't want to walk that way. It's just extra burden on you.

SLAM: When you're getting dressed for a game broadcast, do you have a certain routine you go through at home to get ready?

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CF: Yeah, a lot of people ask me what my closet looks like. I say my closet is a room. [Laughs] I have a room with racks and racks of clothes. So, sometimes in my spare time I'll just go over certain outfits, see what goes with them. A day before a game, I might already have that suit laid out. What I do after I wear them is I take them loose. Sometimes I don't know what combinations I wear with a suit; I have to keep my creativity going.

SLAM: Do you pay attention to what the players are wear before and after the game?

CF: They're very casual. They wear warmups. [Amar'e] Stoudemire is pretty sharp; he likes a more tapered fit. [Chris] Duhon is a guy who used to wear suits all the time when he was on the team. I tell people when we were coming up, there were The Temptations, The Four Tops...these guys were our idols and they wore suits all the time. So, all the players were competing to see who could dress the best. Now, these guys' idols are rappers, so they dress like rappers.

SLAM: Do they ever come to you for fashion advice?

CF: Well, they give me compliments.

SLAM: What tips can you give to the everyday guy on fashion and grooming?

CF: Well, it's not necessarily how expensive clothes are — it's the fit. Try to get something that fits you. And the color, a little pizzazz. The pocket handkerchief. I think that dresses you up.

SLAM: Do you agree with the dress rule David Stern set with the players a couple years ago?

CF: It was long overdue, man.

SLAM: Do you think they could take it further?

CF: Well, I think while they're working they should look professional. All these guys are millionaires, so it's only for two hours. You should come representing when you're playing.

SLAM: When you travel around the country, do you have any shoe shops or suit shops you visit?

CF: No, I only shop in New York. [Smiles] When I was a rookie, that's where I got the wide-brim hat, was in Baltimore. What happened is I used to pacify myself because I wasn't playing well. I always bought clothes. [Laughs] I went out all the time buying clothes. My philosophy now is if I can't find it in New York, then I can't find it in Cleveland or Detroit or somewhere else.

SLAM: Who do you hope gets the most out of this book? Younger guys?

CF: Well, I know what they'll get out of my book — discipline. Primarily having a game plan. I also talk about my youth...humble beginnings in Atlanta, Georgia, oldest of nine kids. So if you have a plan...because people don't plan to fail. They fail to plan. So, if you have a plan and you have confidence in yourself, motivation. My motivation was my mother, wanting to help her problems with all the kids. If you have a tenacious work ethic and you can communicate and work as a team, nothing can deny you.

SLAM: You mentioned you got burnt out playing. Why haven't you been burnt out announcing?

CF: Because I'm trying to do the perfect game. [Laughs] Which is impossible. Yeah, I'm always striving and trying to do that perfect game and keep it entertaining. But I'm still learning, actually. Most of my time was on radio. Now, I'm doing TV. I think I'm still getting better learning the nuances and relating the game to the audience. So, right now I haven't been bored.

SLAM: When we talked a few weeks ago you had mentioned [Raymond Felton](#) was the most important Knick aside from Amar'e. His play sure has ignited the team.

CF: He's the orchestrator. You got to have an orchestrator to get things going and keep the guys in line. Felton has been marvelous in doing that.

SLAM: [Landry Fields](#) has been kind of a revelation. I don't think people were expecting him to have this kind of impact this quickly.

CF: Yeah, he's the chemistry guy. He doesn't need the ball to be effective, the intangibles he brings. It's all fallen for the Knicks right now.

SLAM: When [Kelenna Azibuike](#) returns, what does he bring to help the Knicks?

CF: Another two, a guy who can shoot. He's very physical. So, he'll fit in with the solid play they have right now.

SLAM: What about [Anthony Randolph](#)?

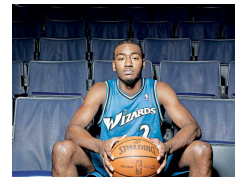
CF: He's the odd man out right now. He's talented but lacks experience. I don't know his work ethic at this moment. He's facing adversity right now; sometimes that makes a man or it breaks a man. Now, you see [Shawne] Williams is ahead of him. Williams has moved in; before it was [Bill] Walker. So, how does a guy handle that type of adversity?

SLAM: You've spoken about confidence. With Randolph struggling or even [Danilo Gallinari](#) struggling with that, is there anything that you can say to them, being an former NBA player?

CF: You can coerce them. Talking to them helps, and that's what the coaches are for, as well as family and friends.

SLAM: You have a unique take on [LeBron](#) returning to Cleveland, since you played there for a few years. Do you have an understanding for why Cleveland fans have been acting the way they have towards him?

CF: Yeah, yeah, because now they know they're going back to mediocrity. Whereas before they were facing a championship. It's human nature to strike out against something or someone that has hurt you. I think that's what they're doing.



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 will there ever be an NBA player who's cooler than just being cool?
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[Clyde Frazier Chats Fashion, Knicks – SLAM Online | Shoe Club USA](#) Posted: Dec.8 at 1:04 pm
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[Run'n'Gun219](#) Posted: Dec.8 at 1:49 pm
 Im sorry clyde, but Amare' is one of the worst dressed players in the NBA. KG, Melo,Boozer,and Caron Butler are the best dressed in the league to me.

[Clyde Talks Current Knicks | TheKnicksBlog.com](#) Posted: Dec.8 at 3:17 pm
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[King Henry the 2nd](#) Posted: Dec.8 at 3:42 pm
 Stylin' and Profilin', Posting and Toasting, Bounding and Astounding...Walt Clyde is the man.

[IAMORANGE4EVER](#) Posted: Dec.8 at 6:40 pm
 Walt "Clyde" Frazier has such a great philosophy for hoops and life. I'm LOVIN his book Rockin' Steady. It's all about stayin' cool. Never let them see you sweat.

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