

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

TRANSCRIPTIONS



**General Manager John Lynch, Head Coach Kyle Shanahan
& QB Jimmy Garoppolo
Press Conference – February 9, 2018
San Francisco 49ers**

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Opening comments:

General Manager John Lynch: “Good morning. Welcome, everyone. Last time we were here, [QB] Jimmy [Garoppolo] called an audible, and you're perfectly welcome to if you want, and start off again. But if not, we'll get going. Congratulations to Jimmy. Congratulations to his family. I want to acknowledge his family. His parents are here, Tony and Denise, his brothers, Mike, Billy and Tony are over there, and family is important to Jimmy and it's wonderful to have them here with our family, the 49er family. I want to acknowledge some people that worked really hard along the way in this process, starting with [chief strategy officer & executive vice president, football operations] Paraag Marathe and his team, [director of football administration and analytics] Brian Hampton, can't thank you enough for the job you did. At the same time, I'll thank Don Yee, who represents Jimmy, and Carter Chow and Steve Dubin who are here today. Thank you guys for your professionalism, for your diligence, and for seeing this through the finish line. Deals like this aren't easy. They're a lot easier when you both have the same motivation, and the motivation was to do great things as a team and to do them together. So everyone involved, I was really proud of the process and the work that went into it. Finally, it's easy spending other people's money, but [CEO] Jed [York], I want to thank you. I think [head coach] Kyle [Shanahan] and I, we talk a lot on a bigger note. I want to thank you. It's kind of like a year anniversary, as well. I want to thank you for all your support. You've let us do our work. You've supported us throughout, but any time I come to you and say what do you think you say that's why I hired you, and you say the same thing to Kyle. We can't thank you enough. To Jed and Danielle, to [Co-Chairman] John [York] and [Co-Chairman] Denise [DeBartolo York] and Jenna [York] and Mara [York], Tony [York] all the Yorks, we thank them. This is a big day for them. It's a big day for our franchise. You know, ultimately there was a parade in Philly yesterday, and that's where we want to be. So we have a lot of work. A lot of our players back here. And I think when you watch those things, understand that we have, that's where we want to go. And we have a lot of work to get there, but we feel like this is a big piece. From day one, when Kyle and I started having conversations, we all know it, this position is key. If you don't have one, you're looking for one. We feel like we've got our guy now, and we're thrilled about that. To that note, Jimmy, I don't want to steal your thunder, we feel like we've got a couple that we're really pleased with, [QB] C.J. Beathard, [QB] Nick Mullens. We've got a strong room. That's a great position to have a

strong room at. It's a foundational piece, and we talk about the work and Jimmy, that's the great thing about him, he talked about through this process, and I remember the last day of the season before he checked out, he came up to my office, and we had a great talk about what our aspirations are, how we want to go about this together, how much he enjoyed working with Kyle and [quarterbacks coach] Rich Scangarello and his staff and how much he enjoyed his teammates, and we talked about where we want to go. He's very driven by that. So that makes us proud. It was about three months and a week ago we sat here in this very room and we had traded for Jimmy, and we thought we had a special player, but I really commend Kyle for having the patience to see this thing through, that we didn't rush him into it. We waited until it was the right time, and C.J. helped us with that because he was playing well. But even then, it was a rush, but Jimmy's diligence and his work ethic and the way he bonded with his teammates, we talk a lot about talent and spirit, the things we look for. We look for guys that love football, that love their teammates, that are naturally competitive, and that kind of thing is contagious. And so as much as we could see, and Kyle had studied him way back at Eastern Illinois, we saw the physical traits, but really what we learned in these last three months is what kind of person this guy is, and at that point we were full speed ahead on trying to get this done. I'm going to hand it over to Kyle here, but the only thing I would say is we're fully aware of all the work that we have to do. This is a big piece, but one of the reasons this was the urgency, if there was some, for us, heading into free agency, this is a big deal. It's 75 degrees and sunny outside, we've got this guy, who wouldn't want to be here? We want to become that. We want to become a destination where everyone wants to be. We've got a long way to go. We were 6-10, okay, so this is a big day for us, but we have a long way to go, and we're fully aware of that. We've got to earn it just like this guy has. He's earned this deal, and so we're real proud to have him as a Niner for a long, long time. So congratulations, Jimmy."

Head Coach Kyle Shanahan: "John pretty much wrapped it all up. He always says it much better than I would. But guys, I'm excited. I think obviously I know our players are. I know our fans are. I know our coaches are. Excited to get everyone back. We've had a little time off. We've been away from guys. I can see some guys here that it's the first time I've seen them since the season. We've got a piece of the puzzle today, and it's definitely a big one when you talk about the quarterback position. Plan on continuing to get better in a lot of other areas, and as soon as phase one starts of the offseason, we've got a lot of work to do. We know we haven't accomplished anything yet, but we're real excited about these pieces we got, and can't wait to get started."

QB Jimmy Garoppolo: "Yeah, I guess it's my turn now. Yeah, I mean, first off, I just want to thank everyone for coming out today to this. Thank the York family, especially Jed, Dr. York, Denise, everybody, for just all the support, John and his team, Paraag, for getting this thing done, and Kyle for believing in me from the first day I got here. I thank my family for coming out with me. We avoided a snowstorm in Chicago, so that's always a good thing. And my teammates, thanks for coming out guys, I appreciate it. I'm excited. It's been a long time coming for this thing. I think we've got it figured out pretty quickly, though, and I'm very happy with how it got figured out, so I'm excited for this

next year. But, like John said, we've got a lot of work to do, so we're looking forward to it."

Based on your nine weeks here, what convinced you that this was the place that you wanted to be long-term?

JG: "You know, I think it was a number of things. The team, the acceptance that they had of me when I first got here from the get-go, the coaching staff, Kyle and Rich, just it was a very welcoming environment, and I really liked that. We had some success down the stretch, and you could see that pieces were falling into place. We've got a long way to go, but I think we're moving in the right direction."

Hoping both of you guys can comment on this: Did the Washington Redskins QB Kirk Cousins situation in Washington, the year-after-year franchise tag, did that influence the decision to get something done now and just have it done for the next five years so that it's not a year-by-year process?

JL: "You know, I'll speak for the team. We became convinced that we had that as an option. We didn't want to use it. We wanted to make Jimmy a 49er for a long, long time. Is there, do you have to have some faith for that? Absolutely, but he earned that faith that we have in him. I know it wasn't a super long time, but like we said, we felt like we had a good grasp on the talent. That was only confirmed when he got here. But what we really learned about is what kind of person he is, what kind of teammate he is, what kind of competitor. And when you see that and you have the two things, that's pretty special. It has an opportunity to be special. And then the team did pretty well when he was in there, and what excites me is that he hadn't even had an offseason, and now when he gets to sit down with Kyle and understand a little bit about the thought process behind the plan, I think it's only going to get better. And so, we understand that there will be adversity, there will be tough times, just like there is for any player, but at that point, we didn't, we tried to treat this situation as a unique one, and I think that's where I have so much appreciation for the two sides is yeah there's a lot of noise out there, but let's focus on what our motivations are and try to get something done."

JG: "Yeah, I think like John said, the two sides coming together and having the same common goal really made things easy for us. Personally I knew I wanted to be here, and I think it got figured out fairly quickly. You know, I'm really happy the way it worked out and I'm glad to be here."

Conventional wisdom was if you had waited, they could franchise you, waited for Kirk Cousins to sign, other things happen and the quarterback landscape changes, you could have squeezed more money out of this. Why didn't you do that?

JG: "Because this is where I want to be, honestly. I wanted to get this deal done as fast as possible, and it's only going to help our team going forward, going into free agency, and it's 75 degrees out here. It's not a snowstorm like Chicago. We just came from that, so I can speak on that. It's a lot better here. You know, I don't know. There's other factors that go into it, too. That's a big part. And so it's just, I don't know, I wanted to be here I was excited to be here, and I'm happy we got it done as fast as we did."

You've had seven starts in the NFL, but you're the top-paid player in NFL history. Does that strike you as almost unreal, and do you realize that this does put a little bit of a target on your back?

JG: "Talking to my brothers about it the last 24 hours, flying here and everything, if you would have asked me as a little kid if I thought this was a reality, probably not. But you always dream about being that NFL quarterback and everything, and this is just taking another step in that direction, I guess."

What do you want to accomplish over the next five years?

JG: "Next five years? You're really looking forward here. I think if we take it day-by-day, one year at a time, and we've got a big offseason ahead of us. I think getting in the playbook and fully understanding that this offseason with Kyle will really help me going into next season, and we'll take it small steps at a time."

What have you been doing since the season ended?

JG: "Kind of just hanging out, you know, relaxing, working out and stuff. I like to cool off after the season, let my mind get away from football for a little while, and now I'm getting back into it, and this is an exciting time."

Have you been in Chicago?

JG: "Yeah."

Was there a moment, a specific game or a time where you went, yeah, this is where I want to be, or was it a gradual process over those last two months of the season?

JG: "I wouldn't say it was one thing in particular. I think, like I said, from the first day I got here, my teammates, the coaching staff were very accepting of me, and it's kind of rare in an NFL locker room. There's a lot of different types of personalities in there. For them to accept me so quickly, it made my life a lot easier. So I think just as the season went on, I mean, it was just, it was an easy decision for me."

As someone who had to grind and prove yourself and work your way here, with a number like that, do you think it'll be easy to keep that same mentality?

JG: "Oh, yeah. Not much is changing in that perspective. We have one goal in mind, and that's to get to a Super Bowl and win it. We want a parade just like Philly had one, and that's our goal here."

What do you think about what's gone on with your former team in the last couple of weeks? Were you watching them in the Super Bowl? Was it weird to watch them and not be there with them, and did the New England Patriots offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels thing surprise you at all?

JG: "Yeah, I watched the Super Bowl. I watched it with my brothers and some of our friends. It was actually a really good game, I thought, a lot of offense in it and everything. It was a tough loss for those guys, but they had a good season."

What's the aspect of when you report back for the offseason program that you're most interested in seeing about where this offense can go, where Kyle's offense can take you?

JG: "Well, I've never been here for an offseason, so everything will kind of be new for me, just like the season was. But, I think getting into phase one, phase two and really being able to talk through the offense to some of the finer things that I didn't get to get involved into during the season, I think it'll really help me take steps forward in learning this."

Kyle, I don't think you can talk to Jimmy about football stuff, but you can talk to us about football stuff. What are you going to be looking to do with Jimmy when you get him here in April?

KS: "It's nice to start from scratch and to go at a slower process. He got a crash course, and he did a hell of a job picking it up, but some things he's out there and he's just going, but he doesn't truly understand why and things like that. But he did a great job of getting through the week to where he had a chance to do it on Sunday, and now where the rush isn't quite the same, I think you start from the beginning, start on the first page, not the 50th page, and you get a better foundation. And when you have a better foundation of where you're coming from when you're learning, I think it gives you a chance to play at a higher level. You know the why's and things like that. Obviously I think everyone knows he played very well in the games he's played for us. But, I think when he goes out there, it'll give him a chance over a longer time to be more consistent and just really understand it better."

During the season you were careful to say whether or not you wanted to be here long term. Why was that?

JG: "I wasn't careful. I knew I wanted to be here. I think it was just a matter of getting everything figured out, and I think we did that fairly quickly this offseason. I'm excited about it, that it got done so fast. It's an exciting time right now."

Having come from New England and go to the Super Bowl almost every year, how close do you think the 49ers are to something like that?

JG: "I think we're working in the right direction. Like John said earlier, there's a lot of pieces that come into play. I think we're putting those pieces into place, and now once the season comes, we have to actually go out there and perform, and that's really what this league is about, going out there, executing, and performing on Sundays, and the results will speak for themselves."

New England Patriots QB Tom Brady has been the gold standard for the better part of 15-plus years. Playing behind him you had exclusive insight on what it takes to be the best. What's been the single most important thing that sticks in your mind that you learned from him on what it takes to be a champion year in and year out?

JG: "I think his love for the game, obviously, is a big part of it, and I clearly have that. The way he prepares, that was one thing I picked up from him, just being around him for

three and a half years. It makes the difference. And week-in and week-out, to be able to be mentally tough enough to do that and physically tough enough to survive the games, it's all that coming together, really."

John, you've seen a lot of players handle pressure in different ways. You've got a lot of money. You've got a lot of prestige. What makes you certain he will be able to handle it? What is it about Jimmy that makes you comfortable?

JL: "Well, I think Kyle and I spent a lot of time, as I said, just observing the person, watching the way he interacted with his teammates, watching the way they responded to him. And for me, hey, there's never any assurances, but there are qualities that the really good players in this league, the great players in this league, that they share. And he demonstrated a lot. Was it a short sample size? Sure. But it was convincing. So I think as Jimmy said, do you love the game, absolutely. We saw that. Do you have those innate skills that makes everyone else around you better? We saw that. Do you put your teammates before yourself? He did that. He kind of kept just checking the boxes as we were watching. You know, that was a cool thing. That's why we're here, because he wanted to be here, and we wanted him to be here, and some hard work was put in to get it done, so we're ecstatic about it."

You mentioned Philadelphia, a team last year that went 7-9, and most of the teams in the NFC were below .500 last year, and you look at what the Jaguars were able to do. What is it about the NFL landscape that allows teams to turn it around so dramatically in a year's time?

JL: "I think the system is set up for parity, and so it's a fine line between being 13-3 and being 6-10. It's a real fine line. And so, that's one of the things that made this attractive to Kyle, and then Kyle got me on board. We kind of had a clean slate, and there was a lot of money at our disposal. Was it daunting at times? We felt like we had a long way to go, sure, but we also felt like we had an opportunity to shape it the way we wanted to. You know, seeing that fall into place has been fun. I also know that each and every year is a new year in this league, and the teams that understand that, they do better. Winning a bunch of games at the end of the year, is that a good thing? Absolutely. But does that guarantee us anything? No. The work we do this offseason, that will guarantee us what our prospects are and what our success is going to be."

Putting up five wins for a team that had only one win, the NFL is just not supposed to be that easy. When you look back on those five games, what jumps out at you? Why were you able to succeed?

JG: "I think a big part of it was the coaching staff put me in a good spot to succeed. I think that's where it all starts, preparing throughout the week and getting a good game plan together. Kyle, Rich, all those guys, they put us in a good spot to succeed, and we just went out there and executed, and I think there's a lot more that goes into it, but I think that was a big part of it."

I think it's been almost exactly 100 days or a little bit more since you showed up from that trade. Coming off that flight, I remember you were just looking around meeting people. How would you compare yourself as a player and a person after

this 100-day whirlwind with a new system now as opposed to when you first showed up in October?

JG: "There's a lot of things that are the same. There's a lot of shock going on from then to today. But it's exciting. I don't know, I don't think I've changed much as a person, but getting those five starts and learning my teammates and how to play with them and get on the same page as them, I think it's only going to help us going forward. I think there's a lot more to be done and this offseason will be big for us to really learn each other's style and get the whole playbook down, but I think we're moving in the right direction."

Not long after the trade you had talked openly about the franchise tag was probably the most realistic thing. At what point generally do you think you thought okay maybe a long-term deal could get done? What convinced you of that?

KS: "You know, a few games into playing. I think once we started and we first got Jimmy, we knew exactly how we felt about him, but where we were as a team at that time, where Jimmy was in his situation, I thought it was going to be hard for him to go in there and really get enough time to where he could show us and himself a deal where we would be comfortable with. Didn't think about it too much because you always had that franchise tag, and we knew Jimmy was a guy we wanted here badly. When he did get his opportunity and how we started out versus Chicago, then versus Houston, Tennessee to Jacksonville to the Rams, each week kind of got better, and the more Jimmy was here, the more comfortable he was, the better he played. I thought the guys around him played better. I thought our team got tighter. Any time you get to be with the guy, and we always felt very strongly about his talent, but when you get to be with a guy for that long and you have that success and the guy is the same every single day, you get a better idea of how he will be long-term and how he would be with a bunch of money and things like that. I think John kind of talked about it, but it always starts with talent, but when it comes to things like this, character and who he is as a man is everything, because you guys talked about what makes teams win and the parity in the NFL, and there's a few teams that are more talented than others, but there's not a big difference between number one and number 32, and it's how you respond to injuries, how tight your team becomes, what you guys go through in a year. We were a much tighter team at the end of the year than we were at the beginning of the year. We were healthier at the end of the year than in the beginning of the year. Jimmy played at a very high level. I think that all added into us winning. You watch teams like Philly and stuff and just watching them at their parade yesterday, that's a tight team. They got close through a lot. It's not always like that through the year. You go through some highs and lows, and we did that, and we got a chance to finish very strong with Jimmy and to see who he was as a person, who he was as a player, and I think we felt very strongly that that was enough."

How important was it to get a long-term deal done early so you have this as a selling point that Jimmy is here for five years and all of that?

JL: "Well, you know, I think Paraag and a lot of people kept saying, hey, it's a difficult process. It's complex. And what I tried to do is keep pushing the button. Hey, he wants to be here. We want him here. Let's get it done. Why wait? And so, you know, I think,

again, I keep giving them credit, but they deserve it. I think you could belabor it. You could take it in, and people, a lot of people are going to have a lot of ideas on what could have happened. What I'm concerned about is that he's right here, and he's signed for five years, and I love that. I think it took a lot of teamwork to get that done, and I'm real proud that it did.”

How did you go about celebrating last night, and what are your plans for the next two months before you come back for OTAs?

JG: “You know, we got a nice little dinner last night. We just got in yesterday, me and my family. We had a nice little dinner up in San Fran. Still trying to experience some of the Bay Area. I'm excited to make this my home for the next five years, hopefully more. I hope to be here for a long time and get to experience all the good things about this area. We got to go out to dinner. Don't really have too many more plans other than that right now.”

You mentioned how close the teams can be. Are you comfortable that you've got your quarterback now and you went 5-0 at the end of the season, that the playoffs can be expected out of this next season?

KS: “No, absolutely not. That season is over, and we'll start a new one this year. I'm excited about it. Got a much better feel for our group. I think our players have a much better feel for our system and our coaches. That makes you tighter going into an offseason. But every year is different. There's some different coaches. There will be different players. There always is turnover. How will we respond to our schedule this year, to trying to win our division, things like that, and how do we respond to injury. There's so many things that go into a year. Each year is different. Obviously we're more excited going into this year because we know our team and we've added guys and we've kind of built this the way that we've wanted to. But by no means are we done or even close to done. We have to continue to get better every single day, and it'll start with free agency, that comes first, and then it'll be the draft and then it'll be working in phase one, two and three, all the way into OTAs, and then it'll start with training camp. There is no quick answer to anybody. All the favorites very rarely win it, and sometimes people think those that aren't going to win anything surprise the heck out of everybody. This league is so balanced, so competitive, it is so hard to win in this league that you never go into a year saying, alright, we're good, we're playoffs. You have to earn everything you get, and if you think anything differently, you will be humbled and embarrassed very quickly in this league. That's why I'm ready to go to work.”

John, do you have enough cap space to make additional high-priced signings this offseason and do you envision doing that?

JL: “Yeah, I think after this there's two teams with more cap space. We're going to be aggressively prudent and always make wise decisions and look out some years and do things, though, that we feel are a fit and give us an opportunity to be a better organization. We're going to make those moves. This takes up some of that room, but that was a trade-off we were happy to make, and we still have a lot left. We're excited about that, as well.”

Along those lines, you've mentioned you've talked about Jimmy being a piece of the puzzle. How do you go about now putting players around him or bringing in players that can protect him, support him? Does that become a focus of trying to put the right people around him to get the return on the investment?

JL: "Right, good question, and we've been going about that. Hey, earlier this week we signed [DL] Cassius Marsh. We think he's a big part of where we're going. We're going to continue to try to re-sign our own players that we think are a part of this puzzle, and some of those we have to let go free agency and see where the market shakes out. We're getting ready for the Draft. We're getting ready for free agency. This thing always is moving. That's great."