

49ers Clips – March 2, 2017

Local Media

John Elway Endorses 49ers GM John Lynch, VP of Player Personnel Adam Peters

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/John-Elway-Endorses-49ers-GM-John-Lynch-VP-of-Player-Personnel-Adam-Peters-/f09780cc-d215-43ec-8280-1901ef8ba608>

Rival Executive Evaluates 49ers New Regime

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

<http://www.49ers.com/news/article-2/Rival-Executive-Evaluates-49ers-New-Regime/8814a5c7-86ab-4eb4-8e24-b3cd3d767bc0>

49ers Carlos Hyde draws Kyle Shanahan's endorsement

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/03/02/49ers-carlos-hyde-draws-kyle-shanahans-endorsement/>

What's Shanahan looking for in a QB? No fear

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

<http://www.sacbee.com/sports/nfl/san-francisco-49ers/article135809833.html>

49ers could begin planning for the future along offensive line

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

http://www.espn.com/blog/san-francisco-49ers/post/_id/23683/49ers-could-begin-planning-for-the-future-along-offensive-line

Rating how active every NFL team will be in 2017 free agency

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_page/32for32x170302/rating-how-active-every-nfl-team-2017-free-agency

Salary-cap flexibility grades for all 32 NFL teams in 2017

By Kevin Seifert, ESPN.com

http://www.espn.com/nfl/story/_id/18799620/salary-cap-flexibility-grades-all-32-nfl-teams-2017

49ers considering moving Jimmie Ward to safety

By Curtis Crabtree, ProFootballTalk.com

<http://profootballtalk.nbcsports.com/2017/03/02/49ers-considering-moving-jimmie-ward-to-safety/>

National Media

John Schneider: Seahawks want to add experience on offensive line but also build from within

By Bob Condotta, The Seattle Times

<http://www.seattletimes.com/sports/seahawks/seahawks-gm-john-schneider-says-seattle-wants-to-add-experience-on-offensive-line-but-also-wants-to-build-from-within/>

Key defenders moving out? Cardinals brace for free-agency impact

By Kent Somers, The Arizona Republic

<http://www.azcentral.com/story/sports/nfl/cardinals/2017/03/01/key-defenders-moving-out-cardinals-brace-free-agency-impact/98596654/>

Lions GM Bob Quinn: New deal with Matthew Stafford 'a priority'

By Dave Birkett, Detroit Free Press

<http://www.freep.com/story/sports/nfl/lions/2017/03/01/matthew-stafford-contract-extension/98600968/>

Doug Pederson: Eagles interested in RB Jamaal Charles

By Eliot Shorr-Parks, NJ Advance Media

http://www.nj.com/eagles/index.ssf/2017/03/jamaal_charles_eagles.html#incart_river_index

Mike Glennon could possibly land with Bears or Jets

By Marc Sessler, NFL.com

<http://www.nfl.com/news/story/0ap3000000788783/article/mike-glennon-could-possibly-land-with-bears-or-jets>

Local Clips – Full Version

John Elway Endorses 49ers GM John Lynch, VP of Player Personnel Adam Peters

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

There may not be anyone more apt to evaluate the San Francisco 49ers new front office than John Elway. The Denver Broncos executive vice president of football operations and general manager was full of praise for John Lynch and Adam Peters at the 2017 NFL Scouting Combine.

Elway knows both men well. Starting with Lynch, Elway brought the 49ers general manager on as a consultant one offseason following his playing days. They explored a full-time opportunity in Denver's front office before Lynch opted to continue with the broadcasting route.

That's why Elway wasn't among those who were surprised by Lynch being named San Francisco's new GM.

"John is a very bright guy and he knows football. Ultimately, that's what that position is all about," Elway said. "He's got a lot to learn administratively and the different rules that go along with that, but John is smart enough to know what he doesn't know. Once he gets some time with this, he knows the game of football, and I think that's the most important thing. I think John Lynch will do very well in that position."

Peters worked with Elway for eight years in Denver, most recently as the Broncos director of college scouting. Now as San Francisco's vice president of player personnel, Peters will have the chance to make a name for himself as Lynch's right-hand man.

"Adam is a very hard worker and a very good evaluator," Lynch said. "We didn't want to lose Adam, but I'm excited for him. He worked his tail off for us, and it's a tremendous opportunity for him. He knows John, and so they'll have a great working relationship."

"It's a very positive things for the 49ers to have those two."

Rival Executive Evaluates 49ers New Regime

By Joe Fann, 49ers.com

John Schneider's new NFC West adversaries are far from strangers.

The Seattle Seahawks general manager has had many a conversation with John Lynch during Lynch's eight-year run as an NFL broadcaster. Schneider recalled one specific chat leading up to a 2012 road game against the Buffalo Bills.

"I was able to sit down with him and take a ton of notes; pick his brain about the safety position," Schneider said. "The safety position is one of the harder positions in college football to evaluate. It was great for me to get to sit down with him and get his thoughts on everything."

Schneider admitted that was still caught off guard when the San Francisco 49ers announced that Lynch would be the team's new general manager.

"I was to be honest with you," he began. "I was at first, but when you sit back and look at it, the guy is the ultimate competitor. I would think he missed the team aspect, working with other people, the self sacrifice and everything that goes into having that feeling of putting something together and accomplishing a great goal."

"He's just a football guy, a football junkie and a great person. Obviously (the 49ers) are getting a great leader."

Schneider's interactions with Kyle Shanahan have been equally as impactful, albeit far more peripheral. The Seahawks faced the Atlanta Falcons twice during the 2016 season. As Atlanta's offensive coordinator, Shanahan helped the Falcons carve up Seattle's defense on both occasions.

That included a 36-20 drubbing against Seattle in the NFC Playoffs in which the Falcons racked up 422 total yards of offense. Schneider recalled the unpleasant memory upon being asked generically about San Francisco's head coach.

"Are you trying to rub in the Divisional (Round) loss in Atlanta? That's cool," Schneider joked at first. "He's a phenomenal play-caller. I don't know him personally, but some of my good friends who know him brag about how his football mind is off the charts."

Schneider will get to know Lynch and Shanahan much better in the coming years. San Francisco's new regime will look to revitalize what has been a one-sided rivalry against the Seahawks in recent years. The twice-annual matchups could return to be marquee matchups on a national stage.

49ers Carlos Hyde draws Kyle Shanahan's endorsement

By Cam Inman, San Jose Mercury News

INDIANAPOLIS — Injuries have kept Carlos Hyde from playing a full season but he's still done plenty to make a positive impression on the 49ers new coach.

"Right now I see Carlos as being our back," Kyle Shanahan said Wednesday at the NFL scouting combine. "We studied a lot of the guys on tape. He's the guy that's got the most."

Hyde came up 12 yards shy of his first 1,000-yard season last year, derailed by a knee sprain in the penultimate game.

A contract extension seems feasible for the 2014 second-round draft pick out of Ohio State who is entering the final year of his rookie contract, at a base salary of \$822,047.

"Carlos is a guy who I was a fan of coming out of college. He had a good career there," Shanahan said. "I looked at him hard when I think I was in Cleveland and I had a good feeling he was going to be a great back then. I don't think he's the finished product. There's a lot more to his game. I look forward to us helping him bring that out."

Hyde has appeared in 34 of a possible 48 games over three seasons, and he missed nine games in 2015 because of a foot fracture.

Devonta Freeman and Tevin Coleman flourished in the Atlanta Falcons' backfield for Shanahan, who downplayed how his scheme fits certain backs.

"If you're a real good running back, you're going to be a real good running back," Shanahan said. "Carlos was a great running back in college and he's put some real good things on tape so far in the NFL. That's why I look forward to having him and working with him. That's the team across the board.

"People overrate a little too much with scheme. If you're a good running back in this league, you're going to be good in your scheme, whatever that is."

What's Shanahan looking for in a QB? No fear

By Matt Barrows, Sacramento Bee

INDIANAPOLIS -- When Kyle Shanahan is evaluating quarterbacks, he doesn't want to see skittish feet or wide eyes.

"Do they watch the rush? Are they fearless?" Shanahan asked in his first-ever press conference at the scouting combine. "If they're watching the rush at all and things like that, it's very hard to make the reactions you need to make in this league with how quick the windows close. So you see how quick their decision making is, not on the board, but in the pocket when they're under duress."

Shanahan and the 49ers have plenty of work ahead in that area. Once Colin Kaepernick opts out of his contract – he can do so as soon as Thursday – the 49ers will have no quarterbacks on their roster. They will probably need four for their offseason practices.

The 49ers hold the second overall pick in the draft. One of the issues, however, is that many of the top quarterbacks – Clemson's Deshaun Watson and UNC's Mitch Trubisky, for example – ran wide-open offenses in which the passer spent little time in the pocket.

"It makes it tougher each year to evaluate," Shanahan said. "The more spread out it gets, the more up-tempo it gets, a little more sloppy it gets. That happens at the NFL level, too. When guys get tired, and you go no-huddle all the time, it does affect things."

Shanahan said his challenge will be figuring out how quickly those quarterbacks can process what's in front of them.

"You can tell (in) talking to people who's capable of processing a lot," he said. "But the smartest people aren't always the best quarterbacks, either. You can't over-process things."

49ers could begin planning for the future along offensive line

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- The free-agent market is scheduled to open March 9 and teams may begin negotiations with those poised to hit the market beginning March 7. We'll count down to that with a position-by-position look at what the San Francisco 49ers have in place, who is set to hit the market, what they might need and who might fit the bill.

Position: Offensive line

Under contract: Joe Staley, Zane Beadles, Joshua Garnett, Daniel Kilgore, Marcus Martin, Trent Brown, John Theus, Alex Balducci

Pending free agents: Andrew Gardner, Andrew Tiller

What's needed: There weren't many places on the 49ers' roster you could point to and see improvement in 2016, but the offensive line was one of them. While there were some positive steps, including the development of young players such as Brown and Garnett as the season went on, the Niners' line still was far from perfect. This unit gave up 47 sacks in 2016, third most in the NFL.

Moving forward, the Niners seem to at least have five quality candidates for starting jobs in Staley, Beadles, Kilgore, Garnett and Brown. But there are some things they will have to sort through this offseason, most notably the need for more depth and identifying future options to eventually replace Staley and Kilgore.

Staley will be 33 when next season begins and he's coming off an injury. His name also came up in trade rumors last year, though the Niners were steadfast that they had no intention of dealing him. Theus got some valuable reps and could continue to develop but there isn't an heir apparent in house just yet.

Meanwhile, at center, Kilgore has been a steady and reliable leader for the line, but also has struggled with injuries in recent years. Coach Kyle Shanahan pushed for the Falcons to sign center Alex Mack a year ago, proving that he puts a premium on the position. Martin hasn't impressed with his opportunities as a backup and Balducci is still a work in progress, which could make center a priority sooner than later depending on how new offensive line coach John Benton sees things.

If the Niners want to make a splash on the offensive line, they could make a push for someone like Green Bay center J.C. Tretter or Cincinnati guard Kevin Zeitler, which would allow Beadles or Kilgore to provide veteran depth.

In the grand scheme, most of what the Niners need for the offensive line probably is best sought through the draft. There, they can get young players who can be given some time to develop and eventually step in.

As for free agency, the Niners could look for some backup help, particularly on the interior. Bringing Tiller back wouldn't be a bad idea and there are others such as Atlanta's Chris Chester, Tennessee's Chance Warmack and Philadelphia's Stefen Wisniewski who could create competition and provide depth.

Possible fits: C J.C. Tretter (Green Bay), C Matt Paradis (Denver/restricted), C/G Stefen Wisniewski (Philadelphia), G Chance Warmack (Tennessee), G Chris Chester (Atlanta), G/T Luke Joeckel (Jacksonville)

Rating how active every NFL team will be in 2017 free agency

By Nick Wagoner, ESPN.com

Aggressive

Before free agency even officially begins, the 49ers signed three players. If that's any indication, this will be a busy offseason by the Bay. The Niners have more salary-cap space than almost every other team in the league, but they also need bodies, and new coach Kyle Shanahan and general manager John Lynch want to begin rebuilding with players who have strong "football character." That doesn't mean they will try to sign all the top names in hopes of a quick fix, but it's reasonable to think they'll try to land a couple big-ticket items mixed with some role players capable of establishing that culture.

Salary-cap flexibility grades for all 32 NFL teams in 2017

By Kevin Seifert, ESPN.com

Health grade: A+

San Francisco 49ers

Approximate space: \$79 million

The 49ers' new management duo, general manager John Lynch and coach Kyle Shanahan, have inherited a relatively barren roster. The good news is they have enough cap space to do just about anything they think can improve it. That includes pursuing a veteran quarterback who would require a premium contract, but their spot at No. 2 overall in the draft might represent their more likely direction.

49ers considering moving Jimmie Ward to safety

By Curtis Crabtree, ProFootballTalk.com

The San Francisco 49ers are considering moving Jimmie Ward to safety after spending most of his first three seasons in the NFL as a cornerback.

New 49ers head coach Kyle Shanahan said on Wednesday that they are considering moving Ward back to the position he played as a rookie with San Francisco in 2015.

"I'm not sure yet," Shanahan said, via Matt Barrows of the Sacramento Bee. "But that's definitely the subject of discussion. Because I know he's capable of doing both."

The 49ers intend on adopting the same Cover 3 defense employed by the Atlanta Falcons and Seattle Seahawks. Putting Ward at free safety could fill a crucial role in that scheme. To truly work at a high level, the defense requires a rangy free safety that can handle center field duties and alleviate the burden on the cornerbacks on the outside.

Ward did serve as a backup at safety at times but has primarily played in the slot and as an outside cornerback in his three years with the 49ers. He's appeared in 35 games over that span with 18 starts.